

# Welcome to the Spring 2009 Center for Teaching & Learning Newsletter!

In this issue we'll give a recap on the programs we offered during the spring 2009 semester and look ahead to projects in the works this summer and fall. As always, **thank you** for your interest in and support of the many initiatives related to our various offices.

## Center for Teaching & Learning:

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## We're moving!

As you may know, the offices of the Center for Teaching & Learning, Academic Support Center, FYEX, & Instructional Technology are moving this summer into one centralized space on the first floor of the Scarborough Library. The new location will consolidate our offices into one building and give increased space to tutoring and other academic and faculty support programs. Stay tuned for more information about our new location!

## Focus On Student Learning (FOSL) Series

Each semester, the Center for Teaching & Learning hosts monthly discussions highlighting different aspects of student learning. This spring, FOSL tackled the following topics—thanks to all participants and attendees for making these sessions successful and always helpful:

### **FEBRUARY: *Creating Capstone Courses:***

Faculty and chairs from several departments discussed the benefits of offering a capstone course as students approach the completion of their major and how such courses enhance that major regardless of subject. Professors **Scott Beard, Gordon DeMeritt, Rhonda Smith, Tim Nixon & Kathleen Reid** led the sessions and encouraged attendees to consider implementing such courses in their own disciplines.

Dr. Beard stressed that capstone courses (also called “senior seminars” by some departments) are very relevant and provide a stepping stone for students preparing for post-graduate work, as well as a useful assessment tool for departments. One strength of capstone courses is that departments can adjust the requirements and approach to suit their specific needs and desired outcomes. Internships, oral presentations, thesis papers, assessment tests and group projects were just a few of the examples of potential capstone project formats. Students benefit from such a course as it requires them to unite concepts they've studied across disciplines and semesters in a culminating experience that asks them to reflect on the relevance and real-world utility to a concept.

### **MARCH: *Lesson Plans for Every Learning Style:***

In March, we focused on a topic relevant to all students and a challenge faced by most faculty – creating lesson plans for every learning style. This is an important concept because learning styles equate to work styles in the real world. **Michelle Baker** and **John Sheridan** shared lesson plans they developed for students in the provisional PHIL 199 course (both taught sections of the course this past fall semester). Baker developed a [PowerPoint presentation on Learning Styles](#) for her students in this course, which may also be useful to any faculty considering such an approach to lesson planning. Several survey tools are available for determining learning style, including the [VARK questionnaire](#), and [this one available on the](#)

[NCSU website](#). **Becky Mercado** shared a learning preferences quiz which she gives to her EDUC students on the first day of class. She uses the information collected to determine whether group work projects may be beneficial, how she can most effectively present material in class, and how assignments should be submitted to her (electronically vs. hardcopy, etc). She has found that offering small choices to students based on their stated learning style preferences can show that you value them as learners and care about their success.

#### ***APRIL: New Technology Showcase:***

Campus Instructional Technologist, **Lauryl Lewis** and Communications professor, **Monica Larson** led the April FOSL highlighting a variety of technological tools available to faculty and students in the classroom. Clickers, airlines and the Sakai Learning Management System (LMS) were the main tech tools discussed. Larson, a self-proclaimed “tech-nerd”, demonstrated some of the snazzier applications she has found useful when using Sakai with students. Wiki’s, polls, video sharing, and audio capabilities are a few of the tools used by students in Larson’s Game Design and Graphic Novel courses. Lewis encouraged attendees to stay tuned for new resources soon to be available across campus, including Mini-Macs and podcasting.

## **The 3rd Annual Celebration of Student Learning**

On Wednesday, March 4th the Center for Teaching & Learning hosted the 3rd Annual Celebration of Student Learning. The event allowed us to showcase various creative ways in which mini-grant recipients, both individual faculty members and entire departments, utilized CTL mini-grant funding to enhance assessment and student learning initiatives in their respective fields.

**Rachel Ritterbusch, Heidi Dobish, Anne Legreid, Momodou Darboe and Reza Mirdamadi** gave presentations and answered questions related to how mini-grant funding was utilized and the direct benefits which resulted.

Ritterbusch attended the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) conference in Orlando, FL to learn more about content standards, proficiency levels, and Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA) in her discipline of French language instruction. By attending this conference, Ritterbusch gained insight into new initiatives for language reform and the ability to give better constructive feedback to students, ultimately helping them become better students of French.

Heidi Dobish and other members of the PSYCH department used a mini-grant award to hold an off-campus assessment retreat at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) outside of Shepherdstown. This retreat gave the department an opportunity to strengthen their departmental brochures, mission statement, and assessment plan. Their aim was to better align the goals of the department with those of the nationally recognized American Psychology Association (APA). The changes they were able to enact during this retreat will benefit Psychology majors and advisees and better prepare the department for future APA accreditation visits and with Shepherd’s own updated mission.

Dr. Legreid realized as soon as she came to Shepherd the need for updated maps and resources for use in Geography courses. A mini-grant from CTL allowed her to purchase current maps, globes and other materials and her presentation on the importance of having such resources was both educational and entertaining.

Dr. Darboe acquired a mini-grant for a similar purpose for the Anthropology 399 course in need of a human skeleton to study. While this course was not offered this past semester as had been planned, it will be offered in the future and the skeleton purchased can also be of use to other departments such as biology.

Having this skeleton as a resource for anthropology courses will give a competitive edge to students studying forensic anthropology or those pursuing a degree with a concentration in Criminal Justice.

The CSME department is the recipient of a NASA grant which allows them to better prepare their majors and encourage undergraduate research. Additional funding of \$3000 from a CTL grant enabled the department to further this project by providing supplies and faculty stipends to those working directly with students on research projects. Dr. Mirdamadi and his department have also been able to create a “Center for Undergraduate Research” within the CSME department and have found that the scholarships, grants and proposals awarded to Shepherd students have been profoundly beneficial to their development as CSME majors.

**Those interested in applying for a CTL mini-grant during the 2009/2010 academic year are encouraged to [learn more by visiting our website](#).** Applicants should apply early, as funding is limited. Proposals that demonstrate that funding will directly benefit student learning and/or departmental assessment initiatives are given first priority. All requests are reviewed by the Assessment Task Force.

## NFLC 101 & 102

New faculty at Shepherd are encouraged to participate in a two year orientation program called the "New Faculty Learning Community". NFLC 101 is offered to new first-year faculty and the 102 sessions are a continuation of the program during the faculty members' second year.

During the NFLC 101, faculty connect with one another on a monthly basis during hour-long sessions to learn from senior faculty members and support unit staff about topics ranging from a guided campus tour, academic advising, working with the Registrar's Office, active learning strategies and more. The sessions give new faculty a chance to ask questions, express concerns and share ideas about teaching, as well as meet other faculty members from across a wide range of disciplines. During the '08-'09 academic year, many new faculty have joined the Shepherd community and we extend a big congratulations to you all as you complete your first year of teaching at Shepherd.

The NFLC 102 sessions focus on topics relevant to faculty teaching for their second year at Shepherd and continues to offer guidance, insight and support to those faculty in a variety of ways. Topics for NFLC 102 sessions typically focus on Promotion & Tenure, overseas and grant writing opportunities, committee basics for junior faculty, and scholarship and research guidance. Faculty who have attended these sessions have expressed a great appreciation for them as a way to learn more about campus policies and structure while working with faculty both within and outside of their own department.

Thank you to all first and second year new faculty members who attended NFLC 101 & 102 sessions this year, and also to the many other representatives across campus who helped by leading a specific session or providing support in any way during these discussions!

## CLA

This spring we continued the ongoing effort of assessing cross-sectional populations of Shepherd students using the nationally recognized Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) test. In March, 109 seniors completed the CLA, which is designed to test critical thinking, reasoning and communication skills that most agree should be the outcome of a college education. Results will be provided to Shepherd in an Institutional Report in the coming months and, combined with scores from freshman participants who took the test in the fall, can be used to measure our schools value-added on a comparative basis with other schools statewide and nationally.

**Click here** for more information about the CLA and to read about Shepherd's results during the 2007-2008 test cycle.

Thank you to the following volunteers for their assistance in proctoring sessions of the test, which were conducted over the course of three days: **John Sheridan, Gordon DeMeritt, Shannon Holliday, Lauryl Lewis, John Adams, and Kim Scranage.**

## Adjunct Training Workshops

Each semester, we offer training and orientation sessions for newly hired part-time faculty. The Adjunct Training Workshop is an opportunity for new adjuncts to learn about campus policies, student demographics, building location and support services, as well as work directly with faculty and staff who know and are willing to share the ins and outs of Shepherd University basics.

These workshops are offered in early August to faculty joining Shepherd in the fall and in early January for faculty joining the community before the start of the spring semester. Laura Renninger leads each session and is joined by representatives from various campus offices, including **Chris Johnson** with DSS/MCSS, **Barbara Byers** and **Rhonda Jackson** in Counseling Services, **Joe Green** from ASC, **Sandi Collier** with Telecommunications, **James Vigil** from Auxiliary Services, **Brian Hammond** from ITS and **Lauryl Lewis**

for Instructional Technology support. The workshops are three hour long intensive sessions where adjuncts receive and review a detailed SU Faculty Handbook outlining every aspect of campus life in one helpful resource. As an added incentive, adjuncts who attend the workshop receive a \$100 stipend for their time. These sessions provide new part time faculty with invaluable information. With adjuncts making up 50% of SU faculty and typically teaching introductory level courses where they can often be the first instructor a new student may encounter in the classroom, making them well-prepared and informed members of the SU community is a top priority of the CTL.

**Our next Adjunct Faculty Workshops will be offered in early August.** Faculty will have the opportunity to select the one session that works best for them. **Please help us in preparing for this workshop, by providing any information about new adjunct hires within your departments as it becomes available to you.** We strive to send a welcome letter and workshop invitation with enough notice that they can plan to attend and are aware early on of our efforts to extend a welcoming hand to them as they prepare to instruct Shepherd students in the fall. Please send new adjunct information to Shannon Holliday at [shollida@shepherd.edu](mailto:shollida@shepherd.edu).

Thank you!

## Assessment Update

**We are currently in the data collection phase of the current assessment cycle.**

**The next round of reports will be due in January, 2010.**

Departments and units should be collecting data relevant to their current plan and begin reflecting on what this data shows and how it may be applied to their goals, or in some cases, used to revise programs where needed. Don't put it off; you could be denying yourself and your students or fellow staffers an opportunity to be engaged in something altogether new and exciting.

Consider applying for a CTL mini-grant to fund an assessment retreat this summer or early next fall to provide your department with an opportunity to discuss data and begin work on preparing your assessment report. [Mini-grant applications can be found here.](#)

## TWINS!

CTL Dean, Laura Renninger and her husband, Dale Renninger, welcomed the birth of twin girls on February 20th, 2009. Katarina Olivia (5 lbs. 15 oz.) & Natalia Sophia (4 lbs. 6 oz.) join Laura, Dale and big brother, Tyler Renninger. Everyone is doing well and Laura will return to campus from maternity leave next month. *Congratulations* to the whole family!



## **FYEX: The FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE**

This fall FYEX will offer the following Learning Community, Interest Group and PHIL 100 courses:

**Learning communities for Fall Semester 2009:**

Written English/Music: Life is a Melody (Ethan Fischer and Cam Millar)

Written English/Psychology: Composition of the Mind (Heidi Hanrahan and Heidi Dobish)

Economics/Biology: The Cost of Living (Rudy Bropleh and Ruth Conley)

***Philosophy 100, Introduction to Liberal Arts Study, classes for Fall Semester 2009:***

There will be seven 3-credit sections of this course offered to students entering Shepherd as provisional admits. This course focuses on critical thinking and decision making skills and instructors include: TC Williams, Becky Mercado, Rudy Bropleh, Holly Frye, Virginia Hicks, Laura Neal and Adam Booth

***Interest Group classes for Fall Semester 2009:***

- Grillin' n' Chillin', Dave Cole
- Just Do It: Sports Trivia, Aaron Ryan
- Cooking 101: International Stews and Curries, Rachel Ritterbusch
- Anatomy of Funny: The Ultimate Comedy Experience, Nicholas Keresztury
- Yoga, Rebecca Goldstein-Hawes
- Treasure the Memories, Tracie Ellis
- Study Abroad, Beth Cauvel
- Paranormal U, Ellisa Woodbrey
- Tattoo Your Jeans, Mary Jo Wilhelm

- Zen of Knitting, Sharon Kipetz
- Bicycling in the Great Outdoors, Joe Jefferson
- Weight Training, Andro Burnett
- Culture of Japan, David Gordon
- The Labyrinth, Tracy Seffers
- Native American History, Larry Turner
- Writing About Science for Fun and Profit, Greg Durrschmidt
- Traditional Music and Dance, Jodie Blanton
- Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State, Scott Anderson
- Learning the Shepherd Way for Transfer Students, Kim Scranage
- Robots: Bots & Bits, Seung-yun Kim

Interest Groups earn one credit and are taught for 13 weeks on Tuesdays from 3:15 to 4:30 p.m. Class size is limited to 15 students. The goal of these classes is to welcome first-year students to the university community with ample support and resources, helping them become successful students. There are 18 Peer Educators trained to assist the Fall Semester Interest Groups.

# SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY COMMON READING, 2008-2009 *PERSEPOLIS* SPRING SEMESTER EVENTS

The Common Reading for the 2008-2009 academic year, *Persepolis*, proved to be very interesting and the events planned around the book were all highly successful. Events were free and open to the public through the One Book, One Community Program. The motto for the Common Reading is *Read, Think, Listen, Talk, Grow*.

*Persepolis* related events during the spring semester included:

## **Two lectures:**

“The Muslim World and Islam: Between the Historical Past and the Present Challenges” was held in the Center for Legislative Studies on Thursday, February 26. The speaker was Imam Yahya Hendi, an advisor at Georgetown University and the Imam of the Muslim temple in Frederick. The room was filled to capacity with seating on the stage and out in the hallway. There were at a minimum 100 people in attendance. The audience included students, faculty, staff and community. The Imam spoke about peace in the Middle East, intercultural relations, the Muslim faith and how it related to the Christian and Jewish faiths. The Frederick News Post and the Martinsburg Journal newspapers covered the event.

“The Culture and Architecture of Iran” was held in the Center for Legislative Studies on Thursday, April 9. The speaker was Dr. Mina Marafat who flew in from Paris while on a Fulbright Fellowship to give the lecture. Again, the room was filled to capacity with overflow in the hallway. Dr. Marafat’s lecture included beautiful slides of various buildings and mosques that illuminated the importance of architecture in Iran both past and present. She gave a concluding overview of Iran and how its culture evolved and how architecture is tied to that culture. She brought the themes of the book into her lecture and expanded everyone’s appreciation of *Persepolis*.

## **A musical performance:**

Roya Bahrami and ensemble performed in Reynolds Hall on Monday, April 20. The performance included a fusion of Persian and Spanish musical influences. Roya played the Santur, which is a precursor instrument to the hammered dulcimer and the piano. Two percussionists and a guitar accompanied her. Thunderstorms and heavy rain made the audience much lower than expected. However, those who were lucky enough to be there were delighted with the performance. Roya is an amazing artist and watching her play the Santur made us realize just how skilled she was at that instrument. I doubt there is anyone in the world any better.

**Library display:**

The Library created a display for Persian New Year, Nowruz, which ran from March 20-31. It contained many of the things shown in the book *Persepolis* associated with this important festival holiday – grass, eggs, fire, and other items familiar to those who read the book. I extend many thanks to the Library staff for creating this wonderful display.

**Bus trip to the Freer and Sackler Galleries:**

On Thursday, April 16, eleven students, faculty and staff went by bus to Washington, D.C. to the Freer Gallery for a docent-led tour of The Arts of the Islamic World exhibit. Seeing the items discussed in the book and by the various lecturers made it all come visually alive and lent a new appreciation for Iran, its history and its art.

**Student Appreciation Day ceremony:**

The winner of the *Persepolis* Student Writing Contest, Sarah Wall, received a certificate at the Student Appreciation Day ceremony. Even though Sara couldn't attend because of a class presentation scheduled for the same time, her father accepted her certificate on her behalf. Earlier in the year Sara received a \$250 gift certificate to the Shepherd Bookstore as winner of the contest. Her essay was chosen because she illustrated her feelings, ideas and perceptions about people in Iran and the Middle East and how these perceptions had changed after reading the book.

**In appreciation:**

A thank you is extended to Monica Larson from the Communications Department who created many of the flyers and posters advertising the *Persepolis* events. Also thanks are extended to Shannon Holliday who created programs and some flyers for various *Persepolis* events. The *Persepolis* Speaker Series lecturers, Mary Strasma, David Gordon, Kristin Urban, Monica Larson, Yahya Hendi and Mina Marefat are to be congratulated for adding to our appreciation and knowledge of the book. The Gateway Program is thanked for making it possible to take a bus trip to the Freer Gallery in Washington, D.C. The Library staff is thanked for producing such a lovely and informative Persian New Year's, Nowruz, display. The essay contest committee, Sharon Kipetz, Alan Tinkler and Helena Cole, who read all the student essays and picked a winner, is heartily thanked. Roya Bahrami is to be congratulated for giving a beautiful and enlightening performance. The faculty who used *Persepolis* in their classes this year are heartily thanked because they brought the book truly alive to the students. The university is thanked for providing the books free for first-year students and faculty. A final thank you is extended to the students, faculty, staff and community members who attended our events and hopefully came away with an expanded or new perception of Iran, its people, culture and religions.

As always something this large is never accomplished by one person, but by many, working in concert with an ideal and a goal firmly in mind.

## **SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY CHOOSES 2009-2010 COMMON READING: *ANIMAL, VEGETABLE, MIRACLE* BY BARBARA KINGSOLVER**

The process for choosing the Common Reading is as follows: book suggestions are requested from students, faculty and staff. These recommendations are narrowed down using [selection criteria found on our website](#). Next, an expanded committee of FYEX Taskforce members and other campus and community representatives reads the narrowed selection of books over Winter Break, meets in January and by discussion, further narrows the choices to a semi-final five. These five are placed on the Shepherd University Home Page to be voted on by all students, staff, faculty and campus community members. We are pleased to announce that the book chosen as the 2009-2010 Common Reading was *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life* by Barbara Kingsolver. It recounts a single year that the Kingsolver family spent trying to eat locally grown food. From one March to the next, the Kingsolver clan frequented farmer's markets to find fresh produce; queried grocers and restaurateurs about their vendors; tilled, planted and weeded their vegetable garden; raised chickens and turkeys from their downy youth to

squawking slaughter; baked their own bread daily; canned, pickled, and froze the bounty of summer; and rediscovered a rich tapestry of American agricultural possibility including many heritage varieties of flora and fauna that have been bred nearly out of existence by industrial growth practices. Her journalistic recounting of the experience compels us to recall a more organic connection to the food we eat, the land on which we live, and the bodies we need to sustain.

Events for next year are beginning to be developed around the themes of the book. Planting and maintaining a campus garden is one idea and a dinner using organic foods is in the beginning stages of planning by Dining Services. Stay tuned to our website for more information. Ideas are always appreciated. [Stay tuned to the Common Reading website for more information.](#) Ideas are always welcome - contact Judi McIntyre to discuss at 876-5396 or [jmcintyr@shepherd.edu](mailto:jmcintyr@shepherd.edu).

Hello Colleagues,

The summer 2009 **Sakai** sites are now ready for faculty use. Sakai, once again, is going very well this semester. I have been talking with various faculty members and they have expressed how much of an improvement Sakai is over WebCT. Again, I would like to remind those interested in learning more about this LMS that I am available for one-on-one Sakai training sessions. Bring your instructional material with you when you come for training and I will help you load it into the Sakai system.

#### **Turnitin**

I want to remind everyone that Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention program, is available for faculty use. For more information on Turnitin visit:

[http://www.shepherd.edu/ctl/EduTechCenter/turnitin\\_policy.html](http://www.shepherd.edu/ctl/EduTechCenter/turnitin_policy.html).

There are two **Airliners** available to faculty who would like to utilize this tool in their classroom for the spring semester. The Airliner is a handheld SMART Board and is portable. Think of it as a SMART mouse pad, but wireless—it works on Blue Tooth technology. Contact me for more information.

We also have **Senteo Clickers** available to any faculty member. Have your class take a test or practice quiz using the Senteo Clickers. There are many ways to utilize this tool for classroom instruction. Contact me for more information.

If you are thinking about using **Sakai** (or any other type of technology) for your summer 2009 course I will be more than happy to assist you. There are many training types available to faculty and staff. Here are a few: department training, one-on-one training, group training. I can also come to your department or faculty office. I am here to help you help others learn through technology integration. Please do not hesitate to contact me to assist you in implementing technology into your classroom.

Warm Regards,

Lauryl

My contact information is:

Lauryl Brown Lewis

Instructional Technologist

304-876-5059

[llewis@shepherd.edu](mailto:llewis@shepherd.edu)

## **Academic Support Center Spring Update**

### ***Online Scheduling***

When the ASC moved to an online scheduling format in Fall 2008, we hoped that the new process would be more convenient for students now that they had 24/7 access to the schedule. The scheduling system has definitely succeeded. The total number of tutoring sessions in the ASC increased from 2122 in 2007-08 to over 3400 in 2008-09 (final numbers aren't in). We wish to thank our tutors for their hard work and for learning a new procedure for making appointments and keeping records.

For more information about the online scheduling system, visit the Academic Support Center website:

[Academic Support Center Online Scheduling System](#)