

(Blogging, *continued from page 1*)

At the end of the fourteen weeks, the CTL blog course was over. As we reflected on the experience, we realized many things. Some of our realizations included:

- It was easier than we thought.
- It was actually fun!
- The flexibility of the time commitment worked great for the nursing faculty involved.
- We were reading many of our very own thoughts, ideas, and perceptions in our text. (It is always reassuring to know one is not alone.)
- We learned some new teaching strategies from both the text and each other to try with our classes.
- We learned a lot from each other.
- We felt closer and more knowledgeable of each other.
- Regarding the amount of actual time required to complete the required reading and actual assignments, the faculty were split. Some felt it was too much, some wanted more, and others felt it was just right.

In general, the ten faculty involved in this course felt like it was time well spent. For me personally, I loved it! Would I do it again? You bet I would, in a heartbeat!

Mertig, Rita. (2003). *Teaching in an Associate Degree Program*. New York, N.Y.: Springer Publishing Company, Inc.

Shaffer, S., Lackey, S., and Bolling, G. (2006). Blogging as a venue for nurse faculty development. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 27 (3), 127-129. ❖

Faculty Showcase!

November 13, 12:30 - 2 pm, HU 009 Rockville Campus

Here's a great opportunity to see how faculty have incorporated technology into their classes as a result of taking CTL workshops. Faculty will share on topics including, but not limited to, using:

Electronic forms to generate consistently formatted (and easier to grade!) student lab reports

Photos and color in PowerPoint to make pre-lab discussion more meaningful to students

MyMC Course Tools to support learning and communication in class

PowerPoint and GIS software to add visualizations to a geography class.

From the Director of the CTL



I would like to thank all of those who have taken the time to wish me luck as I begin my new appointment as director. Fortunately, the CTL is filled with staff that care about their mission to support faculty professional development and want to provide the excellent service that the CTL is already known to provide. I guess I don't need luck as much as just to step out of the way and let them all continue their excellent work.

This excellent work was exemplified by College administrators, professors, and CTL staff in their support of part-time faculty during Part-time Faculty Boot Camp: Orientation to Teaching. Kim Emery, one of the presenters, has written an article about the sessions that were conducted to help part-time faculty incorporate best practices, manage their classrooms, support their students, and expand their technological boundaries. A second article, written by Sylvia Pulliam Lackey of the nursing faculty, discusses using blogging in professional development. Gilda Haber has written a third article called *The Sound of Comparative Literature*, which is about broadening her students' boundaries by having world literature read to the class in the native tongue of the author.

I am also stretching my boundaries here at the CTL as I spend at least one day a week at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus, two days a week at Rockville, and one day a week at Germantown. I hope to have a chance to meet many old friends and make new ones as I learn more about what you, the MC faculty, want and hope to gain from the CTL as we all continue to widen our individual horizons.

– John Coliton, DCD

The Sound of Comparative Literature in Diverse Languages

by Gilda Haber, Ph.D., Adjunct Professor of English, Rockville

Each language has its own music. The sound of Hebrew reminds me of even breathing, of wings or hearts regularly throbbing. Sometimes, with the many “sh” sounds, it reminds me of the sea dashing rhythmically, eternally, against the shores of Ashkelon.

Reading sections of ancient to medieval literature with my World Comparative Literature class, I realized that, compared with the impassioned Hebrew, the English King James version of Creation sounded ordinary and as if Creation had happened in medieval England. Literature cannot be separated from language, history, and culture.

Since no one in the class knew Hebrew, I read part of Creation to the class in the original and projected the dark, block-like letters on the stark, white screen.

Students’ eyes glowed when they heard Creation read and saw it written in this strange, ancient, and modern language. They seemed so fascinated with the literature in its original tongue and script that, I thought, why not read parts of the literature in the original of all the countries being studied? Furthermore, students in the class came from so many countries that we could hear the literature of several countries read in its native language. About half of these 27 students were American born, a few were first-generation, and many were second-generation South American. Other students came from India, Thailand, Bangladesh, Korea, Spain, Peru, Nigeria, Africa, Thailand, Jordan, and Latin America: a fine diversity.

I wanted students to hear the *sound* of the story or poem read in Hebrew, Latin, Italian, Greek, Chinese, Japanese, Hindi, Sanskrit, Spanish, Arabic, tribal African, and Crow, or in other tribal languages. Students already had the English version of each work in their textbooks. I wanted them to *see* the artistry of each country’s writing.

After Creation, read in Hebrew and English, I read some Latin poetry. When I read Latin, it sounded to me soft and sibilant, without much resonance. The sound of Latin seemed contradictory to Rome’s martial history.

[Students] seemed so fascinated with the literature in its original tongue and script that, I thought, why not read parts of the literature in the original of all the countries being studied?

I also read some of Chaucer’s “Wife of Bath’s Tale,” after which a “minstrel” student in the class sang “Greensleeves” accompanying himself on his guitar. Another student, elegantly dressed for the occasion in a green velvet jerkin and tights, sang one of Shakespeare’s sonnets set to music, “Oh Mistress Mine,” one of my favorites, to which the class listened raptly.

What a difference! The students became alive and wildly enthusiastic with this experiment.

Although I read the Hebrew and Latin poems and prose in the original, there were no Chinese, Arabic, Greek, or Japanese speakers in my World Comparative Literature class. I recalled that my evening ESOL class included a Chinese student and that my argument class included two students who spoke Arabic. I asked these students if they could come to my morning class to recite and write literature in their native language. They all readily agreed.

Mr. Chang from my evening ESOL class came to read Chinese poems. First, Mr. Chang wrote a poem on the board in Chinese as well as showed it on the screen illuminated by the projector. The neat Chinese pictographs appeared on the screen, each “block” filled with artistic shapes like icing on a cookie but with complex meanings, which Mr. Chang explicated. The English translation appeared below. Each Chinese character was intricate, each character a work of art. Each pictograph has multiple combinations and meaning, yielding different information. We were fascinated by its ornamental yet artistic precision, the students riveted by his explanations and writing. How different from the bland English translation of Chinese poetry in our anthology! How delicate the sound and the carefully inscribed Chinese written symbols. Mr. Chang had thoughtfully included several English translations, which varied tremendously, of the same poem.

Mr. Chang then read a ninth-century Chinese poem about the exquisite joys of nature. Some students sat open-mouthedly with the musical sound of each word. His pace was flawless. I listened with pleasure to the music of his language.

(See Comparative Literature, page 4)

(Comparative Literature, from page 3)

Chinese sounded to me like a series of soft gongs in different tones. I saw Mr. Chang in a different light. When speaking English in our evening ESOL classes, he struggled to progress like a seal on land, but now, when he spoke his native Chinese, his words flowed fluidly and gracefully like a seal in water. When the class ended, students applauded.

Now we were coming to the literature of other languages. Which students could speak these languages?

When we came to Indian Literature, one of our two Indian students from the class read and wrote us poems and part of an epic in Sanskrit and Hindi. Students agreed with me – Sanskrit sounded like birds chirping.

When we came to studying Islamic Literature, I asked two students from Jordan and Bangladesh from my daytime argument classes if they would read and write from the Koran in Arabic. Arabic sounds fluid yet guttural, perhaps because of its many aspirated sounds. Since Hebrew and Arabic have a number of words and sounds in common, I recognized many of the Arabic words and translated some for the class.

After each speaker read to the class in his or her native language, the class and I spontaneously applauded the presenter.

When we studied South American literature, our three Spanish-speaking students presented Spanish poetry and prose. The native Spaniard, his Spanish as crisp and precise as flamenco read a poem by Garcilago de la Vega in class. His Old World Spanish compared to that of a Colombian student's Spanish sounded to me like Oxford English compared to American English.



Gilda Haber and her class

After the Garcilago de la Vega presentations, I asked students to write their opinion about hearing literature in the original language and about the group presentation of such work.

Here are some of their remarks:

The original languages are great additions, [which] renew our way of perceiving the literature. Kind of a reminder that English isn't the world's language.

When each student is afforded the opportunity to speak in front of the class, a great deal of personal insight is gained because the differing background of each student colors their objectivity. Such a great mix of cultures can create a terrific dynamic that bonds students together with similar goals in mind I enjoyed the chance to speak my mind and enjoyed hearing the thoughts of others in addition to my own.

The presentations allowed many of the students to showcase their opinions and research. Also learning about people's literature in their own language and in the students' own words is more genuine than a textbook.

Then, I realized that for a change it had been foreign students who held the limelight, if standing in front of the class and operating the projector can be called the limelight. I know some educators object to students presenting material to the class. I always made it voluntary and found students who loved being in the limelight.

Some American students in the class, I thought, might feel slighted. How could I give them their due?

There was a clique in the class made up of four high-achieving American students: a tall, elegant young man of Scottish descent; a long-haired, blond man with Polish grandparents; a tough New York lady who wore leather jackets splattered with glittering zippers and tight jeans like a member of Marlon Brando's Hells Angel-type motorcyclists; and an intense, pale, redheaded, blue-eyed young student who was usually silent in class but wrote brilliant essays.

(See Comparative Literature, page 5)

(Comparative Literature, from page 4)

Since we had studied so many tragedies, so much about warfare, heroes, and monsters and *Beowulf*, *Oedipus* and other epics, I decided we needed to finish the semester with a comedy. We could not learn the parts, but we could produce a reading on an impromptu stage in front of the class of Aristophanes' bawdy comedy *Lysistrata*.

I asked this all-American group and anyone else who wished to join in to stage a classroom reading of *Lysistrata*, inviting Miss Hells Angels, the motorcyclist, to play Lysistrata. She enthusiastically agreed. I then appointed her producer. Overall, nine students agreed to act in the play (5 more became actors at the last minute). The other 13 students and I constituted the audience.

On the last day of school, everyone showed up in high spirits. The audience followed the play in our anthology text. The clique had provided a Greek temple backdrop on the screen, as I had requested. The actors read their lines beautifully; our Indian student decided to sing his lines, and many times broke down in giggles. (The next time I teach this course, I shall play a recording of a Greek song. In that way we will hear the music of the language and the

language in music.) Miss Hells Angels was an ideal Lysistrata, and kept everyone in line. The clique redhead sat soberly, like a critic, in the audience.

Thus, all nationalities in the class contributed to the world's literary heritage.

The instructor often has a rich source of skills to draw on right in the classroom. Foreign students, who teach others, including the instructor, diversify our experience, become participants in the teaching process and helping the class bond. They demonstrate their own culture and language. Americans can see that they, too, are cultured.

I learned a great deal from students about Chinese, Indian, South American, and Arabic literature, history, and culture. They learned more about ancient Hebrew, Latin, Greek, and medieval English literature. We all learned that every language has its own music, shape, and form.

I have never had such a successful class. I felt a great sense of accomplishment, and, judging from their evaluations, so did the class. "Parting is such sweet sorrow."❖

【 鵲橋仙 】
宋·秦觀

纖雲弄巧
飛星傳恨
銀漢迢迢暗度

金風玉露一相逢
便勝卻人間無數

柔情似水
佳期如夢
忍顧鵲橋歸路

兩情若是久長時
又豈在朝朝暮暮

FAIRY OF THE MAGPIE BRIDGE

Poem by Qin Guan
Translation by Kylie Hsu

Among the beautiful clouds,
Over the heavenly river,
Crosses the weaving maiden.

A night of rendezvous,
Across the autumn sky,
Surpasses joy on earth.

Moments of tender love and dream,
So sad to leave the magpie bridge.

Eternal love between us two,
Shall withstand the time apart.

*The same poem in Chinese . . . and English.
Written and read by Mr. Chang, ESOL class.
Source: www.calstatela.edu/faculty/khsu2/poetry3.html*

CTL Workshop Topics Fall 2006

Civility on Campus
*Commenting on Your Students' Papers in
Word*
*"Compass:" Keeping Your Students
On Course*
Creating a Virtual Field Trip
Faculty Showcase
Googling for Learning Resources
Grade Management Using Excel
Holistic Teaching
MyMC Course Tools
Podcasting
Teaching Blended Courses
Writing in the Disciplines



Guidelines for Contributions to

Focus on Faculty

The deadline for submitting articles for the next issue of *Focus on Faculty* is December 11, 2006. Please submit your article(s) of no more than 800 words in Microsoft Word to:

Bryant Davis, 134 Humanities (Germantown Campus)
or
bryant.davis@montgomerycollege.edu

*This publication was produced by Kim Emery and
Bryant Davis for the Center for Teaching and Learning.*

Boot Camp: Part-time Faculty Orientation

by Kim Emery, CTL Instructional Assistant, Rockville

Thirty-eight part-time faculty gathered early Saturday, August 26, to orient themselves to the ins and outs of teaching at Montgomery College.

Ron Liss, Director of Academic and Student Services, welcomed the faculty and emphasized the importance of their contribution to student learning at the College. Part-time faculty then examined the need for a syllabus and determined essential components to include. They also reviewed some best practices for meeting the class for the first time. This session was led by Patti Bartlett, formally a CTL Instructional Designer and now the Acting Dean of Business Administration, Information Science, and Hospitality Management at Rockville.

Kim Emery, CTL Instructional Assistant, joined Patti in orienting faculty to services and resources available to them at the College as they move beyond the first day of class – reserving technological equipment, visiting the Service Centers at each campus, arranging for students to make up missed tests at the Assessment Centers, and referring students to learning labs. Karen Roseberry, Collegewide Dean of Student Development, examined on-going classroom management issues related to teaching, and Rose Sachs, Chairperson, Disability Support Services, and Janet Merrick, Professor in Disability Support Services, gave an overview of the services available to students with disabilities at the College. This three-and-a-half hour morning session concluded with an overview of faculty professional development opportunities available to part-time faculty through the CTL.

The afternoon session of Boot Camp was divided up into two parts, led by Kim Emery – an overview of the Smart Instructor Workstation (SIWS) and an overview of the MyMC Course Tools. Twenty-one part-time faculty attended the SIWS overview and learned how the SIWS is operated. They also received and shared a number of practical classroom uses for the SIWS. Twenty part-time faculty attended the MyMC Course Tools overview. They reviewed each online instructional tool – announcements, news, photos, files, message board, calendar, and chat – available to faculty and students involved in credit courses at the College. Several classroom applications of the instructional tools were also demonstrated. ❖