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# Focus on Faculty

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## From the CTL Director

This semester begins CTL's tenth year of providing professional



development opportunities for MC faculty. As many of you remember, we started by offering workshops in computer applications as part of the Faculty Computer Awareness Program. Over the years we have added personnel and resources and expanded our offerings into improving instruction both with and without the use of technology. The CTL has also formed alliances with numerous other college programs and units to enhance teaching and learning: Critical Literacy (look to the back page for a description of their new initiative), Cultural Diversity, Community Conversations, the Paul Peck Humanities Fellows, the Evening and Weekend Office, the Office of Continuing Education, and CTL Fellows. We are delighted now to welcome two new instructional designers, who will add yet another dimension to the CTL's abilities to serve faculty's professional development needs. The adjacent article will tell you more about their strengths, interests, and plans.

--Helen Youth

## Instructional Designers Join CTL

by Erin Hagar and Juliet Szyproski


Even though the term "instructional design" has been floating around educational circles for a while, some people may scratch their heads and think, "What exactly does that mean?" More importantly, they may wonder how such an approach can be useful to them.

This summer the CTL hired us to answer these questions for faculty. In a nutshell, instructional designers are concerned with helping faculty maximize their teaching effectiveness to advance student learning. This broad mission encompasses all aspects of teaching—from the basics of lesson planning to expanding the instructors' repertoire of teaching skills, methods, and strategies.

At MC, we will be offering workshops college-wide, meeting with faculty individually, and offering assistance via email. We can help faculty by

- ❖ enlivening classes with group work and discussions
- ❖ reinforcing effective lesson planning techniques
- ❖ facilitating round-tables for faculty to share good teaching practices
- ❖ redesigning courses to include learner-centered strategies such as problem-based learning
- ❖ developing learning communities that emphasize collateral learning and other elements of broad-based education

We warmly welcome all faculty—full-time, adjunct and CE—to contact us with questions related to instructional design. We encourage faculty to visit the CTL's website [www.mc.cc.md.us/Departments/ctl](http://www.mc.cc.md.us/Departments/ctl) and view the schedule of faculty development workshops and events. In addition, faculty can receive assistance online by using the email link "Ask the Instructional Designers," accessible from the CTL website, or by directly emailing Erin at [ehagar@mc.cc.md.us](mailto:ehagar@mc.cc.md.us) or Juliet at [jszypro@mc.cc.md.us](mailto:jszypro@mc.cc.md.us). Finally, we encourage faculty to drop by our offices in Rockville HU/008 or Germantown SA/117 to say hello and ask questions. ❖



### Inside This Issue

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## A Real Touch

by Ruth Dalton

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One of the most basic lessons I learned in undergraduate educational theory classes, and one of the most enduring, I believe, is that students learn best if they see the relevance of what they are studying. Having a professor who is doing what s/he is teaching is a tremendous advantage for a student. I have long felt that one of the richest benefits MC offers our students is the significant number of adjunct and Continuing Education faculty members, many of whom remain “joined to” the main faculty because they hold professional jobs elsewhere.

Those of us who do not spend all of our professional hours on campus, as well as those full-timers involved in professional and community activities outside the usual working hours, have a unique opportunity to help our students glimpse how the academic theories of the classroom come to life in the professional world. I believe we can do this without compromising the academic rigor of our fields. We can inject timeliness into our courses in ways both grand and glancing, using major assignments as well as passing examples and anecdotes to offer our students the chance to value the relevance of all their courses to both today’s world and the one they envision creating in their future professions.

In my own efforts to liven up content, I sometimes schedule a complete assignment around relevancy. For example, when the EN102 syllabus added a section on logos, pathos and ethos to our logic study, I taught the basics in lecture, but finished with a video of a little-publicized press conference I acquired when wearing my journalist’s hat. The issue was the damage wreaked by land mines left behind in war-torn countries. The speakers were Elizabeth Dole, then president of the American Red Cross; Diana, Princess of Wales, in what turned out to be her final U.S. visit; and a teaching fellow from Georgetown University who had lost both legs to a land mine while on a charitable mission abroad. The conference was followed by riveting footage of land mine victims with and without prostheses, and I

followed up with hard copies of all available text and actual shots of the speakers. We discussed delivery and body language as well as the persuasive styles of the speakers, and my students wrote analyses investigating the impact of each style. Logic became very real that day, as did, I hope, the universality of human suffering, regardless of the national boundaries.

In addition to major assignments, our constant need for examples offers a great chance to sneak in some relevance. For instance, when my EN101 students needed to learn the organization and value of the “topic by topic” vs. the “quality by quality” outline in comparison and contrast, I put together a quick outline highlighting the shared priorities of Mandela and Aristide as they created fledgling democracies in very different countries. The students learned to convert one outline to another, but they also drew the obvious third comparison and hopefully valued a bit more the democracy from which they benefit.

Emphasizing the relevance of lecture material need not stem from hands-on experience. I have paired works of literature with contemporary news. For example, *The Washington Post’s* Donna Britt described her return to Gary, Indiana, for her father’s funeral, an odyssey in which she saw her loss of her father and our loss of a generation of workers against the backdrop of a city once throbbing with the life of the steel industry, and now a shell. At the time we were studying Hemingway’s “The End of Something,” in which the long term relationship of a couple cannot survive the disintegration of their mill town. Both pieces seemed to speak to the loss of values by a generation caught up in technological progress.

Some years back, I decided that not all my students’ forays into the professional world should be vicarious. In EN102, I often urge them to investigate an issue of contemporary concern in their selected fields and to formulate opinions/suggestions on the issue. Since students have the luxury of ample research time seldom available to active professionals, they come

## From the Editor

to entry-level job interviews with valuable thoughts to share. The research also serves as a reality check of their actual interest in their future fields. In addition, since we learn so much from our colleagues, I require all students to interview a professional, presenting themselves as pre-professionals in business attire, with research completed and interview questions in hand. We spend class time on interview strategies, and I suggest professionals to those without contacts. I know of four of my students who were offered jobs during these interviews, and two who accepted the offers.

One night a while back a wise adjunct math professor, whose name I never knew, spoke of his envy of the English professors. "In teaching your content," he explained, "you can walk the face of the entire earth." Like him, I have never bought into the notion that the real world exists only outside the classroom. All of us who are teaching walk onto campus from very different places, both literally and figuratively. My suggestion is that we pick up a few nuggets along the way and bring them into our classrooms. Allowing our students to sample the richness of our professional and personal journeys provides for them a very different form of distance learning. ❖

Many of us have shared this experience: we leave a class feeling good because a new idea we've tried worked well. We want to share our success, so we describe the lesson briefly to a colleague at lunch or in the hall. They're convinced of our enthusiasm, but they haven't time to hear the details. Because the exchange was so brief, they probably couldn't duplicate or even adapt our technique in their own classroom.

This publication is a place for faculty to go on record, in sufficient detail, with those ideas about what works in the classroom. Because the articles focus on our faculty serving our students, they seem especially compelling. After our spring issue, Mona Levine, Director of Institutional Projects, commented, "The articles were as good as those in *Innovation Abstracts*." Join the forum by writing an article for our next edition, by sending us feedback on a previous idea, or by suggesting changes in our mission or presentation.

--Betsy Becker

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### Cable TV Schedule

The CTL Show airs on Mondays at 8 p.m. and Thursdays at 9 p.m. on Cable Channel 51.

- October 16 ..... **CTL Instructional Designers**  
Erin Hagar, Juliet Szyprowski
  - October 23 ..... **Faculty Online Training Institute**  
Carol Decker and Bryant Davis
  - October 30 ..... **International Education**  
Gail Forman, Richard Mower and students
  - November 6 ..... **Macklin Business Institute**  
Jeff Schwartz
  - November 13 ..... **MOL/MCCT**  
Ron Liss, Noreen Lyne
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### Guidelines for Contributions to

#### Focus on Faculty

The deadline for submission of articles for the next issue of Focus on Faculty is November 1, 2000. Please submit typed, double-spaced, hard copies of your articles of no more than 800 words and a disk copy in Microsoft Word to:

Center for Teaching and Learning  
Room 008, Humanities  
Rockville Campus  
or send by e-mail to [ctl@mc.cc.md.us](mailto:ctl@mc.cc.md.us)

This publication was edited by Betsy Becker and produced by Pat Speir for the Center for Teaching and Learning.

## Training Scheduled for New Faculty

by Francine Jamin  
fjamin@mc.cc.md.us

On Friday, August 25, the Collegewide Critical Literacy Committee welcomed 37 new MC faculty members to a 90-minute Crit Lit orientation session, co-sponsored by the CTL. Using 20-minute presentations, we introduced 3 strands around which the new program will be structured:

- Critical Thinking Skills and Dispositions, facilitated by Diane Daniel and Chris McMahan
- Critical Thinking and Communication Skills, facilitated by Francine Jamin and Sara Smith
- Critical Thinking and Classroom Assessment, facilitated by Joan Naake and Margaret Latimer.

During the fall semester, each strand will be further developed through three subsequent 2-hour workshops: Skills and Dispositions at Rockville,

Communication Skills at Takoma Park, and Classroom Assessment at Germantown. In the spring, group facilitators will become mentors to workshop participants in trying out some new strategies in the classroom. Our expectation is that each of the three focus groups will constitute a learning community for the mutually beneficial sharing of ideas, advice, and experience.

We're thrilled to report that 92% of new faculty in attendance signed on for at least one follow-up strand, and almost half of these applied for 2 or 3 strands. Buoyed by our initial success, we hope in phase 2 to involve adjunct faculty in this program. Moreover, as the project expands, we hope to tap more and more of our Critical Literacy seminar alums to serve as facilitator/mentors. ❖

## CTL Associates and Fellows for Fall 2000

### Associates

#### Germantown

Bryant Davis  
Joan Naake  
Tom Price

#### Rockville

Betsy Becker  
Carol Decker  
Avis Jones-Petlane  
Alan Stover

#### Takoma Park

Francine Jamin  
Jim Sniezek

### Fellows

#### Germantown

Denise Dewhurst  
David Kieffer  
Lucy Laufe  
Lois Robertson

#### Rockville

Sonya Chiles	Linda Rogness
Vicky Dorworth	William Soderberg
Jorge Hernandez	Steve Thurston
Paul Lux	Galeet Westreich
Paul Parent	Nancy Higgins

#### Takoma Park

Ijeoma Otigbuo  
Sara Smith