Welcome Back!

The mission of the Office of Instructional Development (OID) is to enhance the quality of teaching and learning at the University of North Dakota. In this issue of On Teaching, you’ll find announcements and information for some of the programs we offer. This year, OID welcomes Jeff Carmichael as Acting Director and Shane Winterhalter as Coordinator of the University Writing Program. Shane previously directed the University Writing Center on an interim basis from 2008 – 2009 before moving to Illinois to continue his graduate studies. Over the last six years, he has taught writing classes and worked with student writers at Northern Illinois University, Siena Heights University, and Bowling Green State University. OID would also like to extend special thanks to Dr. Christopher Basgier and Jessica Zerr for their job as Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) consultants, and to Kimberly Stewart for her work as Acting Coordinator of the Writing Center during the 2014-2015 academic year.

Communicating Science Using Theatre

Matt Gilmore, Associate Professor, Atmospheric Sciences

When I say, Alan Alda, you probably think of M*A*S*H. For 13 years Alda showcased his other passion by interviewing scientists on PBS’s Scientific American Frontiers. So, it was a natural fit when Alda teamed with the Stony Brook School of Journalism to create the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science. Their goal: train scientists to better communicate with the general public and other disciplines.

In June, thanks to support from the Dept. of Atmospheric Sciences and OID’s Faculty Instructional Development Committee, I attended the Alda Center’s Summer Institute. There, I joined 57 other faculty and science educators from around the country whose specialties ranged the sciences, theatre, and communications. My mission was to gather knowledge that would inform pedagogy for a new junior-level course at UND, “Communicating Science to the Nonscientist.”

The Institute had participants practice rapport development between a speaker and audience through improvisation exercises that are well known in the theatre community. These techniques help actors stay present, listen, think on their feet, increase confidence, and build trust with their audience. It turns out that these theatre games seem to have the same benefit for scientists!
In one of many rapport-developing games, we mirrored a partner’s bodily movements and facial expressions to practice our awareness of the audience - a valuable lesson for gauging whether the audience is with you, or left behind in a cloud of confusion. These games then aided in the distillation of our elevator speeches from 5-min, 2-min, 1-min, and then 30 sec. We were forced to hone the message, lose the jargon, answer the “so what”, and elicit emotion.

So does it work? Is it proven? I am not able to cite references of research proving the effectiveness of improv games for scientists - they don’t exist. What is real to me, albeit anecdotal, is the improvement in the comfortability, spontaneity, eye contact, and mindfulness of the participants following these exercises and the power of communication over jargon when speaking outside of one’s discipline.

Prof. Matt Gilmore invites you to a conversation about ways to improve science communication at UND at the “On Teaching” breakfast on Wednesday, September 23, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. in the Badlands Rm. of Memorial Union. See p.6 of this issue for details on registering for “On Teaching” seminars.

New Opportunities in Writing & Collaboration
Shane Winterhalter, University Writing Program

In the Writing Center, collaboration is at the heart of the work we do with writers, from students to staff to faculty. This collaboration allows the writers who use the center to not only gain useful feedback on a particular piece of writing, but also to learn how to prioritize and integrate that feedback into both their current and future writing projects. Writers who visit with our trained writing consultants often come to the same realization that many of us have in our own work: collaboration is an essential tool for successful academic writing. Perhaps this is why the Writing Center is able to count so many upper-level writers from among its regular visitors, including seniors working in seminars and capstone courses and graduate students from every discipline.

In order to maintain a true spirit of collaboration, it’s important that students use the center because they understand its value as a resource. This understanding depends on faculty working as strong advocates of the work we do in the center, not by requiring that students make appointments or by giving extra credit on a writing assignment, but by becoming familiar with the work that we do, by being able to speak to the various ways students can take advantage of the center, and perhaps by scheduling a short and informal presentation by the Writing Center. Faculty are even encouraged to bring their own work into the writing center.

This year, the Writing Center is offering a new opportunity for students to work with Writing Center Consultants. In addition to the drop-in and by-appointment

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**Continued from page 1**

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**Student Feedback**

**Fall 2015**

**Get Midterm Feedback From Your Students**

Arrangements for SGIDs (small group instructional diagnosis, a process for soliciting student feedback at midterm) can be made now. Anyone teaching a class at UND may request an SGID. This includes faculty, part-time instructors, and GTAs.

SGIDs are conducted by trained faculty who work as facilitators for the process in their colleagues’ classrooms. A facilitator will collect information from your students, summarize it in a report for you, and provide you with high-quality student input regarding their learning.

You’ll have this information at midsemester, rather than waiting until semester’s end when course evaluations are completed. Furthermore, the interactive nature of the process can motivate students to think more carefully and deeply, so SGID feedback is often more through than course evaluations, providing you with a clear understanding of student perceptions.

SGIDs are intended to be formative (i.e., for your own benefit as a teacher) rather than summative (they are not to be used as an evaluation of teaching, for example in promotion and tenure files).

To schedule an SGID, please contact Jana Diemert at 701.777.4998 or jana.diemert@UND.edu
one-one-one consultations we have always offered, the center has a limited number of appointments for students in Essential Studies courses that have the Communication designation or are Advanced Communication courses. For these sessions, pairs of students will work with a trained Writing Consultant in a weekly, recurring, one hour appointment. Faculty teaching an Essential Studies course that emphasizes written communication should consider recommending this opportunity to students who seem especially interested in successful academic writing. These sessions will build off of classroom dynamics as student writers learn how to adapt feedback from fellow writers as well as provide useful feedback. These sessions allow the Writing Center to offer more structured support to these students as they are often tasked with producing multiple writing assignments or an extended writing project. Additionally, as pairs of student writers work with the same Writing Consultant from week-to-week, they will gain a familiarity that allows them to efficiently build off of previous work throughout the semester.

For more information, or to recommend student writers who might be interested in this opportunity, contact Shane Winterhalter at 777-6381 or at shane.winterhalter@UND.edu.

OUTSTANDING FACULTY AWARDS

Please consider nominating a faculty member or department for a teaching, research, or service award this year! Deadline for 2015-2016 Outstanding Faculty Award Nominations: Friday, October 9, 2015 by 4 p.m. Visit oid.UND.edu (then “Awards” / “Outstanding Faculty”) for details.

FACULTY WRITING GROUPS

Each year the Writing Across the Curriculum Program sponsors one or more faculty writing groups. Some groups meet only for one semester, while others choose to be ongoing. In either case, the object is to create a supportive, collegial environment and provide incentives to get the work done!

If you’d like to take part in a faculty writing group this fall, or if you’d like to learn more about the groups, contact Shane Winterhalter at 777-6381 or shane.winterhalter@UND.edu

AUTHOR OF “MAKE IT STICK: THE SCIENCE OF SUCCESSFUL LEARNING” TO VISIT UND

Peter Brown, co-author of Make it Stick: The Science of Successful Learning will be visiting UND on Tuesday, November 10. In addition to meeting with this year’s group of Alice Clark mentees, Peter will be visiting with classes and will give a presentation based on his book. Please check the OID website (OID.UND.EDU) later for details.
Faculty Study Seminars allow faculty with common interests to learn more about a teaching-related topic. This semester the Office of Instructional Development will sponsor three. Each group meets four times a semester, at times mutually agreed to by participants, to read and discuss a teaching-related book (books provided by OID). Your only obligation is to read and to show up prepared for discussion. To sign up for a Faculty Study Seminar, e-mail the facilitator noted below with your contact information (e-mail and phone). You will be contacted to set an initial meeting date.

How We Learn: The Surprising Truth About When, Where, and Why It Happens

By Benedict Carey (Random House, 2014)

A common challenge for virtually all students (especially beginning college students) is to figure out the best (or most effective) way to study. The strategy employed by most students involves self-discipline, hard work, finding designated study areas (perhaps a carrel at the library), making flash cards, and avoiding distractions. These approaches, they believe, are key to acing their exams. But do they work? What if we could learn more, with less effort?

Carey addresses some fundamental questions about learning. Does daydreaming help the learning process? Is a designated desk the best place to study? Can you recall more if you alter your routine? Is distraction actually good? Is repetition necessary? Is it better to stay up late before an exam or wake up early for one last cram session? He takes the reader through decades of educational research about how our brain works at absorbing information and argues that, by default, we have the ability to learn quickly and efficiently.

Although some of the techniques offered by Carey may be counter intuitive, he suggests that they can lead to deep learning.

Who should read this book? All faculty members who spend time teaching undergraduate students (especially first year students) will be especially interested in this book. The approaches to learning discussed will likely translate into valuable advice to help our students succeed in the classroom.

Benedict Carey dropped out of college after his first year. But then after, “freeing his inner slacker,” he graduated from the University of Colorado with a bachelor’s degree in math and from Northwestern University with a master’s in journalism. He is currently a science reporter for the New York Times.

This seminar will be facilitated by Jeff Carmichael, Associate Professor of Biology and Acting Director of OID.

To join the group, contact jeffrey.carmichael@UND.edu.
Many UND faculty are paying attention to evidence of student learning, whether fully persuaded of the value or not. Given that reality, it is important to ensure that the time invested in that work is time well spent. A new book, Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education, written by the scholars at the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA), aims to offer “both a compelling rationale and practical advice” for “doing assessment” in ways that faculty will find valuable.

It sometimes seems like the constraints and pressures on universities grow exponentially. We read in the Grand Forks Herald that businesses aren’t sufficiently satisfied with the intellectual skills they see in the new UND grads they hire. That same refrain, extended to university grads in general, is found in the New York Times, the Washington Post, and an oft-cited study (detailed in Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses) by Arum and Roksa. Learning outcomes matter – both on campus and beyond. But how do we reframe the conversation around them in ways that make it genuinely interesting and useful for faculty?

That is exactly the question these writers address. Although external pressures from accreditors, and also from public conversations such as those cited above, may have been an early spur for assessment, that spur has led to an unfortunate association between assessment and compliance with “outsider” demands. These authors argue that it’s more productive – and much more satisfying for faculty – to adopt an approach focused on teaching and learning. Which classroom strategies, program curricula, and institutional practices prove especially useful in enabling students to achieve the learning we want for them?

“Harness[ing] evidence of student learning to improve teaching and learning and propel students to greater accomplishments is ultimately what matters.”

Who should read this book? Faculty who are engaged in assessment and those who are skeptical of the value of assessment will be equally interested in reading and discussing what these scholars propose as a newer – and better – approach to the work.

This seminar will be facilitated by Joan Hawthorne, who oversees assessment and regional accreditation for UND.

To join the group, contact joan.hawthorne@UND.edu.
Multimodal Literacies and Emerging Genres Edited by Tracey Bowen and Carl Whithaus

Over the last several years, digital and information technologies have allowed scholars to consider new possibilities for student research and writing. Multimodal Writing –writing in which we work “across multiple modes of communication”—offers new opportunities for students to learn, experiment, and make meaning that are increasingly critical to future success.

Tracey Bowen and Carl Whithaus present a collection of essays that explore “how understandings of genre and media can be used in classrooms to help facilitate students’ development as writers able to work across modes and across genres.” Understanding how these newer forms of communication are best integrated into the classroom provides students with a stronger sense of how to work as researchers, writers, and thinkers in a changing academic landscape.

Who should read this book? Any faculty member who is interested in increasing student engagement in writing projects.

Bowen and Whithaus point out that “Multimodal student writing is doing something new—it’s reshaping genre boundaries and changing what counts as academic knowledge.” As this book presents ways to think of shaping these new writing opportunities, faculty will be able to consider the best ways to take advantage of these possibilities as well as some of the potential challenges that come with no longer limiting writing assignments to the traditional academic essay or research project.

To join this group, contact Shane.Winterhalter@UND.edu.

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ON TEACHING SEMINARS

Fall 2015

On Teaching Seminars are an opportunity to share a meal and discussion of teaching issues with colleagues from across campus.

All sessions take place in the Badlands Room of the Union unless otherwise noted. Please note the seminar times and the deadlines for registration.

Communicating Science Using Theater: Lessons from the Alan Alda Center
Wednesday, September 23, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.
(register by Monday, September 21 at noon)

Best Practices in Distance Education: Opportunities and Constraints
Wednesday, October 14, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
(register by Monday, October 12 at noon)

Speaking Out: Teaching Presentation Skills
Thursday, October 29, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.
(register by Tuesday, October 27 at noon)

Managing “Hot Moments” in the Classroom: Turning Difficult Encounters into Learning Opportunities
Friday, November 13, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
(register by Wednesday, November 11 at noon)

Evidence-Based Reasoning in an Integrated Curriculum: Progress on the AAC&U Scientific Thinking & Integrated Reasoning (STIRS) Initiative at UND
Friday, November 20, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.
(register by Wednesday, November 18 at noon)

Teaching With Performance Tasks
Tuesday, December 1, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.
(register by Friday, November 28 at noon)

To register and reserve a meal, visit oid.UND.edu.

For information, contact Jana Diemert at 701.777.4998
The North Dakota ACE Women’s Network Conference

The North Dakota ACE (American Council on Education) Women’s Network will hold its 2015 conference at North Dakota State University in the Memorial Union. A follow-up to last year’s highly successful ACE Women’s Network conference at UND, this conference will feature a keynote address by Senator Heidi Heitkamp as well as panels and break-out sessions on topics such as:

- Women in Higher Education Leadership,
- Leadership for Faculty in STEM and Research Disciplines,
- Becoming a College President,
- Work/Life Balance on the Path to Leadership.

Additional conference information can be found at:

https://www.ndsu.edu/diversity/

Click on “ACE Women’s Network toward the right of your screen.

UND women are strongly encouraged to consider attending this one day event, held Monday, September 21, 2015, with registration beginning at 7:45 a.m. and a closing reception concluding at 4:00 p.m. Lunch is provided.

UND’s Office of Instructional Development (OID) will cover the registration fees for up to 20 faculty attendees on a first-come, first-served basis.

If you would like to attend this conference and have OID cover your registration fees, please email the following information by 1:00pm on Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 to: und.oid@email.und.edu with “ACE Conference” in the subject line:

- Your name
- Your department
- Telephone number

Please do not register on your own as an individual. You will be contacted with additional details soon.

Funding Available from the Faculty Instructional Development Committee (FIDC)

The Faculty Instructional Development Committee (FIDC), elected by the University Senate, provides support for course and curriculum development that goes beyond the means of the individual faculty and academic units.

The committee is responsible for all decisions having to do with FIDC Travel Grants, Materials/Software/Minor Equipment Grants, Developmental Leave Supplements, Summer Instructional Development Projects, and Summer Mini-Project Grants. The committee also advises the OID Director on other matters.

2015-2016 FIDC Members

- 2016 Julia Ernst (LAW)
- 2016 Sarah Robinson (A&S)
- 2017 Thyra Knapp (A&S)
- 2017 Kari Chiasson (EHD)
- 2018 Daba Gedafa (CEM)
- 2018 Leslie Martin (JDO)
- Joan Hawthorne (VPAA, ex-officio)
- Jeff Carmichael (OID)
- Jeanne Boppre (secretary)

2015-2016 FIDC Deadlines

- September 01, 2015 Travel & Materials
- October 01, 2015 Travel & Materials
- November 02, 2015 Travel & Materials
- December 01, 2015: Travel & Materials
- January 04, 2016: Travel & Materials
- February 01, 2016: Travel & Materials
- March 01, 2016: Travel & Materials
- March 01, 2016: Summer Proposals Due
- April 01, 2016: Travel & Materials
- April 01, 2016: Mini Project Proposals Due
- May 02, 2016: Travel & Materials
UPCOMING DEADLINES

Sept 16  Registration notifications due for the ND ACE Women's Network Conference
Sept 21  Registration due for Sept 23 On Teaching Seminar
Oct  1  Proposals due for FIDC Travel and Materials funding
Oct  9  Nominations due for Outstanding Faculty Awards
Oct 12  Registration due for Oct. 14 On Teaching Seminar
Nov 10  Presentation by Peter Brown, co-author of *Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*

*ON TEACHING* is published six times a year as a service to UND faculty.

OID Director: Jeff Carmichael.
WAC Coordinator and newsletter editor: Shane Winterhalter.
OID/WAC Staff: Jeanne Boppre & Jana Diemert.