

Campus Discussions about Teaching and Learning

Learning Communities and Conferences

Chris Meyer/IU



FUTURE FACULTY TEACHING FELLOWSHIP

Through the system-wide FFT Fellowships, advanced doctoral students and advanced MFA students experience faculty life at non-residential Indiana University campuses or independent colleges in Indiana. FFT Fellows are mentored by a faculty member at the host institution as they teach two courses per semester for one or two semesters and participate in faculty orientation, faculty meetings, and other service activities. In 2006–2007, 12 FFT fellows taught on IU campuses (<http://www.indiana.edu/~grdschl/fftf.php>).

FOREIGN LANGUAGE SHARE FAIR

Sponsored by the Departments of French & Italian, Germanic Studies, Slavic Languages and Literatures, and Spanish & Portuguese along with TESOL, Language Education, and Campus Instructional Consulting, the Share Fair is an opportunity to share ideas for teaching and learning in an informal, supportive, and stimulating environment. Graduate students give short, interactive “teaching tips” presentations to an audience of graduate students and faculty. The Share Fair has been presented every semester since 1996. About 50 graduate students from foreign language departments attended the 11 presentations given at the 2007 Fall Share Fair which are available online (<http://www.indiana.edu/~shfair/shfair.html>).

TEACHING PORTFOLIO WORKSHOP AND SHARE FAIR

Since spring 2007, the twice-annual campus workshop on developing a teaching portfolio has included a Share Fair. Selected graduate students present to their peers their completed teaching portfolios, which they developed through consultations with Campus Instructional Consulting. Participants talk informally with presenters one-on-one or in small groups, glancing through portfolios and asking questions about organization and contents as well as about the academic job search process. The variety of portfolio formats and discipline representation is useful for participants in identifying appropriate content, style, and format. After the Share Fair, the teaching portfolios become available in the Campus Instructional Consulting library in Franklin Hall 004. Between

spring and fall 2007, 13 graduate students have presented their teaching portfolios to over 100 participants. Questions about the Teaching Portfolio Workshop and Share Fair may be directed to Campus Instructional Consulting (<http://www.indiana.edu/~teaching>, teaching@indiana.edu).

SUMMER COURSE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

This four-day workshop on course design, held in late July of each year, is facilitated by Campus Instructional Consulting in collaboration with Instructional Consulting at the Kelley School of Business. The institute provides Associate Instructors and faculty with a supportive, collegial, and focused setting to design or redesign a class of their choice using backward course design and forward-looking assessment methods. The institute models numerous active learning strategies and classroom assessment techniques that instructors can later use in their classrooms. Between the hands-on working sessions, participants read selections from an assortment of course development materials and complete homework assignments. Participants leave the institute with a course outline, complete with articulated learning outcomes, planned assessments, a basic calendar, and innovative grading strategies to motivate student learning.

The Course Development Institute is free of charge and typically enrolls about 40 participants each summer. Associate Instructors and faculty from all disciplines on the Bloomington campus are welcome to participate in the full eight-day experience. The institute has been received with great enthusiasm over the years. Some of the comments from 2007 include:

- “This is really a revolutionary way of thinking about courses because it avoids plodding through the ‘required content.’”
- “I feel more empowered and motivated to develop courses and engage in learning right along with my students!”

Questions about the Course Development Institute may be directed to Eric Metzler, emetzler@indiana.edu or George Rehrey, grehrey@indiana.edu.

PREPARING FUTURE FACULTY GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE

Sponsored by the Graduate School, the School of Journalism, and the Departments of Biology, Communication and Culture, History, and Sociology, this one-day, on-campus conference for graduate students offers advice from faculty on developing the teaching and research record, understanding differences in academic environments, and preparing for the academic job market. About 200 graduate students from 45 departments attended the 13th annual conference entitled “Becoming an Academic: Challenges and Opportunities,” February 8, 2008 at the Indiana Memorial Union (<http://www.indiana.edu/~pffc>).

PREPARING FUTURE PROFESSORS FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITY

This learning community, begun in 2004, is composed of 15 faculty who teach pedagogy courses in their disciplines. Currently, the participants represent the diverse Departments of Anthropology, Art History, Biology, Central Eurasian Studies, Chemistry, French and Italian, Germanic Studies, History, Informatics, Medical Science, Music Theory, Philosophy, Psychology, Slavic Languages and Literatures, and Telecommunications. These individuals also are exceptionally active and knowledgeable in graduate instructor preparation both on campus and nationally. Facilitated by a faculty mentor and a member of Campus Instructional Consulting, the learning community is a forum for sharing and disseminating resources to enhance departmental pedagogy courses and an advocacy group for improving AI preparation across campus. The collaboration between Campus Instructional Consulting and the Preparing Future Professors Faculty Learning Community is helping to make the work of individual departments public.

BREAKFAST AND DISCUSSION ABOUT AI PREPARATION FOR TEACHING

Sponsored by the Office of the Dean of the Faculties and Campus Instructional Consulting, this annual event was initiated in spring 2007. It is an opportunity

for individuals involved in graduate instructor preparation as department chairs, directors of graduate study, and departmental AI coordinators to share valuable ideas and resources for the ongoing development of graduate education practices. Over 50 faculty members representing more than 30 departments attended in April 2007. At this event, a panel of representatives from the Departments of Communication and Culture, French and Italian, Germanic Studies, and Sociology discussed successful activities to prepare and support graduate students for their diverse teaching responsibilities. The subsequent discussion among all of the participants addressed best practices for the development of future professors and mechanisms for sharing departmental activities in support of graduate students who teach. Feedback about the event was positive:

- “All of the presented information was applicable and useful.”
- “This will be an increasingly popular venue for sharing ideas across departments and disciplines, and surely will further add to IU’s reputation as a special place with regards to both undergraduate education and graduate student professionalization.”

Questions about the breakfast can be directed to Campus Instructional Consulting (<http://www.indiana.edu/~teaching>, teaching@indiana.edu).

SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

IU is an acknowledged leader in the scholarship of teaching and learning by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The two major IU SOTL grant programs—\$2500 seed grants and the \$35,000 leadership grant—invite proposals that include collaboration between graduate students and faculty members. In addition the annual registration grants for presentations at the conferences of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL) are open to graduate students. Graduate students also are welcome to apply for participation in the spring poster session and the two-day writing retreat (<http://www.indiana.edu/~soti>).

THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING AND GRADUATE STUDENTS

Early in our graduate teaching careers, we were offered the opportunity to develop and teach service-learning courses. The courses were challenging and time consuming, but we were amazed by how much our students learned through their service experiences. At the same time, we were less confident about the effects of our courses on our community partners. The limited literature on service-learning suggested that there can be substantial costs for the community.

With support from an Indiana University Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) grant, we conducted interviews with representatives of 20 local community organizations who work with service-learners. Our participants reported that service-learning partnerships are beneficial overall, but there are common costs. Organizations sometimes encounter problems such as “poor fit” projects, insufficient student preparation, and inadequate communication with instructors, that burden their staff, pose substantial risks to organizations and their clients, and may at times inhibit their ability to meet their missions. These findings helped us develop practical guidelines for instructors in any discipline seeking to make service learning more valuable for the community and their students alike. In March of 2007, we presented our findings to an audience of approximately 40 fellow educators at Indiana University’s Scholarship of Teaching and Learning lecture series. At the time of this writing, we are in the process of revising and resubmitting a paper about this work to *Teaching Sociology*.

These teaching and research experiences have profoundly affected how we approach teaching as well as how we view our role as future faculty members. We now regularly draw upon the wealth of sound, practical research to help us address issues we encounter in our classrooms and improve our teaching skills. Second, we have found a home in the scholarship of teaching and learning community, a diverse group of committed scholar-teachers who share a desire

to increase student learning. We now see ourselves as both consumers and producers of this wealth of data on best teaching practices. Third, this experience has broadened our understanding of our responsibilities as future faculty members to include not only research, teaching, and university service, but also community service. This is also one of the most valuable lessons we can pass on to our students. Engaged learning methods, such as service learning, are excellent tools for teaching students about events outside their immediate experiences as well as how they fit in and can contribute. Finally, we have learned that becoming an effective faculty member requires a profound dedication to research, teaching, and service.

– *David D. Blouin, Graduate Student, and Evelyn M. Perry, Graduate Student, Department of Sociology*

LANGUAGE DEPARTMENTS AND AI PREPARATION

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS FOR PREPARING GRADUATE STUDENTS TO TEACH

Indiana University is famous for its foreign languages—over 70 are taught on a regular basis (every letter of the alphabet except for V!). Teaching these courses necessitates not only an understanding of the overarching philosophy of the communicative approach but also a facility with an extensive and varied collection of techniques, strategies, and activities needed to meet the demands of the gamut of learning styles, personalities, reservations, phobias, and abilities. Here we summarize our interdepartmental activities to support ongoing AI teaching preparation the language departments.

To read a complete description of our programs for preparing graduate students to teach, see Supplemental Materials at <http://www.aiprep.indiana.edu>.

ONGOING SUPPORT FOR AI PREPARATION FOR TEACHING

In addition to methodology courses, pre-semester orientation workshops, class observations, and weekly AI meetings organized by departmental language coordinators, a wide array of pedagogy activities initiated at the departmental, college, and national level is open to all language AIs and language coordinators. Almost every year there is a major foreign language pedagogy event held on campus, such as the hosting of the national “Workshop on the Teaching of Pragmatics in a Second/Foreign Language Context” in 2005 and the workshop “ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) Familiarization and Implications for Instruction” in 2007. The Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Centre provides an annual pedagogy workshop targeting less commonly taught languages which also attracts professionals from outside IU, and the bi-annual McGraw-Hill Satellite Teleconference and Webcast on Topics in Second Language Acquisition is broadcast every autumn around mid-October of even-numbered years. Perhaps the crown jewel of events is the Foreign Language Share Fair, which provides an excellent opportunity for instructors to share interesting and innovative teaching ideas, feed off the energy of colleagues, and experience a common sense of purpose and camaraderie. The event, held each semester, is taped, and presentations are accessible online (<http://www.indiana.edu/~shfair/shfair.html>).

THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE COORDINATORS

Language coordinators, representing professionals from numerous language departments across campus, provide instructional and logistical support to AIs. Language coordinators and peer instructors perform regular class observations and provide regular feedback and performance appraisal to AIs. Language coordinators also encourage AIs to attend or present research at local, regional, and national conferences which have significant pedagogy content. For example, the annual IU Association of Central Eurasian Students (ACES) conference provides a forum for presentation on “Central Asian Language Pedagogy” and “Finno-Ugric Languages and Their Acquisition.”

The language coordinators seek out common venues of cooperation and professional development, including attending workshops and presenting at conferences. The Center for Language Technology and Instructional Enrichment (CeLTIE) at IU organizes monthly meetings for language coordinators to address specific issues of language instruction. Furthermore, the Language Coordinators from four departments (CEUS, FRIT, GER, SLAV) contribute to the campus conversation about the preparation of AIs for teaching through their participation in the Preparing Future Professors Faculty Learning Community facilitated by Campus Instructional Consulting.

- *Beatrix Burghardt, Language Coordinator, Department of Central Eurasian Studies; Jeff Holdeman, Language Coordinator, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures; Kelly Sax, Senior Lecturer and Coordinator of French Language Instruction, Department of French and Italian*