

Essays from
E-xcellence
in Teaching
2003

Volume III

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Introduction to Volumes I Through III

The Society for the Teaching of Psychology (STP) launched its Internet electronic discussion list, PsychTeacher, in the fall of 1998. In the spring of 2000, a monthly column called *E-xcellence in Teaching*, was added to the listserv. The column features monthly essays devoted to high school, community college, and university teaching in general and on the teaching of psychology in particular. The essays take the form of lessons learned, advice and hints on particular aspects of teaching, lore regarding teaching, book reviews, and reflections on our roles as teachers of psychology. In general, though, the primary focus of the column is to provide a form for the discussion and promotion of effective teaching.

This compilation of essays forms Volume III of the *E-xcellence in Teaching* essays. The first volume was posted to STP's home page in 2002 and contains the first 20 *E-xcellence in Teaching* essays posted to the listserv in 2000-2001. Volume II contains the 13 essays posted to the listserv in 2002. Volume III contains the 12 essays posted in 2003. We thank the authors of each of these 45 essays for the insightful contributions they made to the literature on the teaching of psychology and the scholarship of teaching. We also thank the STP leadership for their continued support of the e-column.

We dedicated Volume I to Jane Halonen (University of West Florida) for the role she played in helping establish *E-xcellence in Teaching*. We dedicated Volume II to Randy Smith (Kennesaw State University), for his consistent and unwavering championing of the scholarship of teaching in his role as editor of STP's journal, *Teaching of Psychology*. As the outgoing editor of *E-xcellence in Teaching*, Bill Buskist wishes to dedicate Volume III to Bill Hill and Vinny Hevern, both of whom have played and continue to play pivotal roles in the creation, development, and continued success of *E-xcellence in Teaching*.

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***The Role of the Chair in Providing Administrative
Support and Development of Faculty Teaching***

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(This essay and the subsequent commentaries originally appeared as the monthly “E-xcellence in Teaching” e-column in the *PsychTeacher Electronic Discussion List* for January 2003.)

There is a national concern with the quality of teaching in higher education. Although most faculty graduate from research institutions where the priority is on research, the majority of positions that faculty assume are at teaching colleges and universities. Department chairs cannot rely on past strategies to prepare faculty for their faculty teaching roles. Typically, new faculty have not been provided with the formal or informal institutional structures to learn how to be good teachers. Chairs are increasingly realizing their role in developing faculty teaching and their need to be more intentional in developing “good” teachers.

Davis (1993) provided a working definition of effective teaching that is composed of four clusters of skills, strategies, and attitudes that promote students’ academic achievement. The first cluster is organizing and explaining material in ways appropriate to students’ abilities. The second cluster involves creating a classroom environment for learning. The third cluster involves helping students become autonomous, self-regulated learners. The fourth cluster involves faculty reflecting on and evaluating their teaching. As this definition makes clear, it takes time for faculty to develop into effective teachers.

Chairs can facilitate effective faculty teaching in various ways. In this article, I have identified two strategies that chairs can use, although these strategies are not independent and mutually exclusive; they reinforce each other. Also, these are not the only strategies that can be used by chairs to facilitate effective teaching in their Department.

Providing Opportunities to Develop Faculty Teaching

Many institutions have campus-wide centers that assist faculty in developing their teaching and that provide information on student learning. Many of these centers will provide workshops, resource materials, and conferences on topics related to teaching. Some of the topics covered may include, but are not limited to, course syllabus preparation, developing and refining a teaching philosophy, incorporating service learning into courses, incorporating technology into courses, incorporating diversity issues into courses, facilitating critical thinking in students, strategies for teaching large classes, developing instructional materials to facilitate student learning, and dealing with difficult students. Chairs should be aware of and play an active role in acquainting faculty with these campus-wide center activities.

If the institution does not have such a center, chairs can initiate and support teaching-related initiatives within the department. For example, workshops can be held over the course of a year as a series of brown bag lunches. Veteran teachers who are recognized for their teaching skills can be called on to cover many of the topics of interest noted earlier. Above all, these sessions have the benefit of stimulating discussion and the sharing of ideas about effective teaching and best practices.

Chairs should also take an active role in developing faculty to evaluate student learning and use this information to reflect continuously on and improve their teaching. On-campus teaching/learning centers and assessment centers may be available as a resource. However, chairs should compliment these resources by also implementing processes within the department for faculty. Chairs can set up a peer evaluation system in their departments in which faculty can sit in on each other's classes, review course syllabi, critique each other's notes, and review various forms of classroom evaluation methods related to gauging student understanding of the material (objective tests, essay tests, term papers, lab reports, oral presentations, student portfolios/journals, group project assignments, review of the day's lecture, etc.). The most benefit occurs when visits and reviews of faculty and their course and lecture material by peers are followed-up with written feedback to the professor reviewed. Not only can peers review faculty, chairs should set up processes that involve students providing feedback and reflection on the course and the instructor's teaching (midterm student evaluations, and final term student evaluations, etc). When methods of classroom assessment and evaluation are used, they are most beneficial when they are used for formative purposes. chairs should stress the formative nature of classroom assessment. Faculty should use this feedback in their self-evaluations of teaching.

Chairs can acquaint faculty and provide support and funding for faculty to attend and present at professional meetings designed to enhance effective teaching. There are national and regional Psychology teaching conferences that faculty can attend (National Institute for the Teaching of Psychology, Southeastern Conference on the Teaching of Psychology, Mid-Atlantic Conference on the Teaching of Psychology, etc.). Additionally, the American Psychological Association (APA) and the American Psychology Society (APS) have teaching-related sessions at their annual meetings. Many of the regional organizations of APA have paper and poster sessions related to teaching at their meetings. Some institutional teaching/learning centers sponsor teaching related conferences on their campuses. Additionally, the Society for the Teaching of Psychology's (STP) Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology (OTRP) (www.lemoyne.edu/OTRP/index.html) provides information on the APA national, APA regional, and psychology teaching conference meetings. All of these meetings provide opportunities for faculty to return to their campuses or their classroom with teaching ideas as well as a sense of renewal.

Finally, chairs can either have available in the department or ensure that faculty have easy access to teaching resources, so that they can acquire a library of teaching-related books and articles. Examples of the resources that may be part of this library are the *Change* magazine, the *Psychology Teacher Network* newsletter, STP's two e-books on

teaching (see <http://teachpsych.lemoyne.edu/>), the *Teaching of Psychology* journal (*ToP*), Bill McKeachie's *Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers* (2002), Ernest Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (1990), and Thomas Angelo and K. Patricia Cross's *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers* (1993).

Motivating Faculty to Develop Teaching Excellence

Chairs can create a culture of effective teachers by facilitating discussions about teaching, helping and providing opportunities to become effective teachers and supporting and rewarding effective teaching. Motivating excitement about teaching is an important component in creating a climate of effective teaching.

Some of the strategies that chairs can use to motivate faculty involve providing opportunities to engage in innovative and creative teaching experiences. Chairs can provide to faculty opportunities to teach new courses that are of special interest to them. Delving into a new course can be refreshing and invigorating. Chairs can provide opportunities to team teach a course with another faculty within the department or in another department at their institution. Elizabeth Hammer and Pete Giordano described a Human Sexuality course that they team taught (Hammer & Giordano, 2001). They noted that one advantage of team teaching this particular course was that it gave them and their students an opportunity to get a male and female instructor's perspective on sexuality. Chairs may arrange for interested faculty to teach at another institution or in another country for a semester. These experiences can allow faculty to think about their courses in different ways.

Chairs can motivate faculty by providing adequate teaching preparation time. Chairs can limit the number of course preparations that a faculty member has in one semester or over the course of a year. Another option is for a chair to provide release time to develop a new course or to make substantial revisions to an existing course.

Chairs can also motivate faculty by rewarding teaching excellence. Many institutions provide awards to faculty for teaching excellence. Chairs can additionally provide similar awards at the departmental level. Such awards may be based on the feedback of students and/or other faculty, and the winner of the award can be given visible recognition within the department.

Chairs can build a climate conducive to teaching excellence by assisting faculty in the department in making substantive connections with colleagues who are teaching in areas related to their expertise and/or interests. Chairs can provide sufficient professional and social activities inside and outside of the department to allow faculty to connect with one or several people to discuss problems, concerns, or ideas in the classroom. An example of this kind of activity is teaching circles (see Scharff, 2002). Teaching circles consist of a group of faculty who meet and talk about teaching and issues related to teaching. In addition to facilitating more effective teaching, teaching circles create a sense of

community among faculty interested in teaching issues. Chairs can coordinate a teaching circle within the department. Another example of a professional/social activity is assigning mentors. Although chairs may assign faculty mentors in the department, chairs should allow flexibility for relationships to develop naturally.

Chairs play a major role in communicating with faculty concerning the tenure and promotion process. Most institutions have teaching, service, and scholarship expectations for faculty, but vary in the relative weight given to these expectations. Chairs should communicate early on to faculty regarding the relative importance of teaching at the institution within the context of institutional and departmental missions. Specifically, Chairs should indicate what the teaching expectations are and how faculty may demonstrate their teaching abilities in the department. Chairs should meet regularly with individual faculty to set teaching goals. This plan keeps both parties clear on what should be accomplished and appraises both on the individual faculty member's progress. An annual teaching review plan is a way to overcome ambiguities that may occur related to faculty teaching performance. The following is a sample annual teaching review plan.

Academic Year _____

Teaching Goals for _____ (Faculty Member)

1. Teach expected load of three courses in the fall semester (Social Psychology, General Psychology, and Research Methods)
2. Teach expected load of three courses in the spring semester (Social Psychology, General Psychology, and Human Sexuality)
3. Conduct mid-semester and end of the semester student evaluation for all courses taught
4. Have at least one faculty member do an informal visit and evaluation of at least one lecture of one class
5. Update and refine one's teaching philosophy. This philosophy should address one's strengths and weaknesses in the classroom and propose strategies to address one's weaknesses.

Chairs should build into the tenure/promotion and annual review process ways to support and reward activities related to the scholarship of teaching. For example, a faculty member who annually coordinates the department's advisement efforts by providing advising training to new faculty, updating the department's advisement flyers, advising transfer and new students, reviewing the student academic and career advisement literature, and administering surveys to assess and refine the department's advisement efforts should be provided with release time for these efforts. These activities also should be recognized as a scholarship of teaching activity in the tenure/promotion and annual review process. Similarly, a faculty member who annually coordinates the department's assessment efforts by administering senior exit surveys and coordinating the administration of a national psychology test to graduating seniors, reviews the department assessment literature, and prepares reports analyzing the data from the administration of the assessment methods to students should be provided release time and recognized for these efforts.

Finally, none of the strategies mentioned in this article will be effective unless the chair practices what he/she preaches. In order for chairs to be successful in facilitating effective faculty teaching, faculty must see chairs actively engaged in the activities mentioned. Chairs can develop faculty teaching by setting an example themselves.

The Chair's Role in Hiring Good Teachers

Lewis Barker
Auburn University

In her article "The Role of the Chair in Providing Administrative Support and Development of Faculty Teaching," Valerie Whittlesey challenges department chairs to acknowledge their responsibility for "developing good teachers." In my brief comments on her excellent article I plan to address some strategies that I have used. I'll restrict my remarks to seven strategies aimed at first evaluating, then promoting an awareness of teaching among job applicants. Why the emphasis on job applicants? I think the chair's primary job is to attract and retain an excellent faculty who take pride in both their teaching and research; hence, the chair's primary responsibility is to hire "good teachers" in the first place. Seven strategies for doing so follow:

1. The chair's role in "hiring good faculty" is to balance the relative strengths of a job candidate's research, teaching, collegiality, and so forth. Seldom do faculty agree on which qualities should be given more weight in offering a position to a job candidate, but in my experience the nod goes towards "competence in research" over "competence in the classroom." In part this practice may be due to the limited teaching experience a new PhD typically brings to the interview, making the candidate's attitudes towards teaching, and teaching ability, more difficult to predict. In part it may be due to the overriding demands of hiring to fill a particular specialty area within a graduate program. Realistically, it also may be that university promotion and tenure committees emphasize research productivity at the expense of classroom competence.

However, the chair can work to bring balance to the hiring process, in part by asking faculty to discuss the teaching as well as research prowess of job candidates. For example, the chair can insist that the faculty search committee reviewing CVs of job applicants pay attention to teaching experience, including the number of courses taught as a TA, and the number of courses taught independently. Are teaching evaluations included as part of the candidate's CV? If not, can they be made available? Do the candidate's letters of recommendation include comments on performance as a TA, or other teaching experience?

2. Having survived an initial screening for teaching as well as for research credentials, the process should continue during both telephone and on-site interviews of the candidate. In early conversations, the chair should address the candidate's teaching as well as research expectations; e.g., "Do you consider yourself to be a better teacher or researcher?" as well as "To achieve tenure in this department you are expected to be both a productive

researcher and a good teacher. Not putting enough visible effort into either activity will make it difficult for faculty to recommend tenure."

3. Faculty should evaluate job candidates in one or more "job talks." Ideally, the candidate discusses his or her research program in one talk, and prepares a lecture for an Introduction to Psychology class in another. At both, faculty and graduate students can size up the applicant's classroom presence—her or his enthusiasm, speaking voice, eye contact, emotional tone, knowledge and organization of subject matter, knowledge of audience, and general ability to communicate. Notice that at least two of Davis's (1993) four clusters of "what makes a good teacher" can be sampled at a job talk: organizing and explaining material in ways appropriate to students' abilities and creating a classroom environment for learning. In addition, psychology students may fill out a teaching evaluation form for each candidate's job talk to be tallied and considered in faculty meetings at which candidates are compared and selected.

4. The chair (and other faculty) should ask candidates about the textbooks they have used in teaching. One may not be familiar with the text, but the candidate should be, even if it was assigned for the course (rather than individually selected). This question can open further discussion of the candidate's philosophy of teaching a particular course—or, alternatively, reveal that the candidate has no philosophy of teaching. Here we can pick up another of Davis's (1993) four clusters of "what makes a good teacher"—namely, faculty who reflect on and evaluate their teaching.

5. The chair (and other faculty) should ask candidates about the quality of the students being taught at their home institution, and their expectations of student quality at the university in which they might soon be teaching. This question may open for further discussion whether the candidate is aware that students have different abilities, and whether she or he is likely to adjust teaching accordingly. One way to do this is to ask if the level of textbook that was used (one that was likely selected by someone else) was appropriate for the students at the institution where the candidate taught. The question may elicit an understanding of levels of ability, or possibly an elitism that would adversely affect the willingness and ability to teach students in a large state school. Alternatively, the question may elicit a blank stare.

6. In answer to the inevitable applicant question "What does it take to get tenure in your department/university?" the chair should communicate expectations of professional development in both realms throughout an academic career—"good teaching" as well as research publications. In other words, in the same way that a CV grows with each publication, the CV should reflect growth as a teacher. This is a good time to direct applicants to guidelines in the faculty handbook (available on the Web at many institutions) for preparing a teaching portfolio.

7. What are the outcomes of such conversations between the applicant and the chair? First, the discussion sensitizes new faculty to the multidimensional nature of a professor's job; namely, that the applicant is expected to attend to and care about issues relating to students and to teaching as well as to research. In addition, such conversations provide

the opportunity for immediate feedback on the applicant's classroom performance during the job talk. The chair can reiterate student and faculty expectations; query the candidate's perception of his or her performance--that is, ask the applicant to comment on his or her perception of the strengths and weaknesses of their presentation. Does the candidate express interest in becoming a better teacher? In addition, this tactic allows the chair to comment on resources that would be made available to help a professor become a better teacher. If candidates do not display such metacognitive skills they should not be hired.

In conclusion, good teachers bring enthusiasm to the classroom, an inquisitive and discerning mind, a knowledge and organization of subject matter, and a willingness to learn new classroom skills. When hiring new faculty, existing faculty and chairs should demand a balance of research and teaching abilities and interests.

*The Role of the Chair: Enhancing College Teaching
Through Selection, Matching, and Replacement*
Stephen H. Hobbs
Augusta State University

Anyone who has served as a department chair is well aware of the many responsibilities that must be juggled. It is easy for the instructional mission to take a back seat to immediate crises and externally imposed deadlines. Yet, the most successful department chairs I have known somehow managed to carve out the time necessary to encourage excellence in teaching and to nurture their faculty members. Valerie Whittlesey's article serves as a useful and rather comprehensive guide for novice and seasoned department chairs alike.

Whittlesey points out that it takes time for faculty to develop into effective teachers. A key question becomes, how much time can we afford? Or, put another way, are there ways that we can speed up the process? In support of an affirmative response, let me offer several suggestions.

First, we must be careful in our hiring decisions. Even teaching-focused institutions may be mesmerized by a particular candidate's research specialty or publication record. Some holders of the terminal degree will never become effective teachers, regardless of the serious and heroic efforts made by them, their department chairs, their colleagues, and even their students. How can we avoid these blunders in the hiring process? Routinely noting any previous instructional experience, asking for teaching prognostications from the candidate's references, and even observing the obligatory on-campus presentation are insufficient. Department chairs must take the lead in more thoroughly exploring a candidate's potential as a teacher. For example, in addition to a research-based presentation, candidates can be asked to be the substitute teacher in an Introductory Psychology course.

I am convinced that personality traits and core values are key contributors to instructional excellence, and these can be better assessed by directly contacting listed and other

references, through longer campus visitations that include sufficient social interaction, and with probing, behavior-based questions. Here are a few examples of such questions:

- If someone objectively watched you throughout one of your courses, would your behaviors be seen as more supportive of the strongest students or the weakest students? Explain.
- Give an example of how you responded to a student who challenged you on a point you made during a lecture.
- Describe how you would handle a case where it appeared that a student was looking on someone else's paper during a test.
- Give an example of an effective intervention you initiated when a student made a very low test grade.
- What is the most innovative thing you have done as a teacher?

A second means by which chairs can speed the development of excellent teaching in their departments is to be purposeful in matching instructor attributes with course assignments, perhaps even with a new faculty member's very first term. This strategy is a natural extension of what began in the hiring process, and requires the chair to be knowledgeable about each faculty member's talents and inclinations. Some faculty members thrive before large sections where they can deliver eloquent lectures. Others are at their best drawing out each student in a smaller, more interactive environment. Some may be better at capturing the beginning student; others find little enjoyment in repeatedly visiting basic material. Effective chairs value the individual differences among their faculty and seek ways to maximize their contributions through flexible course assignments and scheduling practices.

Whittlesey's article enumerates a host of other things that chairs must do to encourage excellence in teaching, but these will be largely wasted on those few individuals who, in spite of careful hiring and encouragement, just do not work out. Formative evaluations, as discussed by Whittlesey, are the cornerstone of a faculty development program. Still, the summative evaluative process must not be overlooked. The chronically ineffective teacher minimizes student learning, drains departmental resources, and is a burden on colleagues. Hiring errors are usually evident within the first two years of appointment, and the likelihood of remediation and improvement should be clear prior to making the tenure decision. If the ineffectual teacher is a "nice guy" and there has not been open conflict within the department, senior faculty members are usually reluctant to make adverse recommendations. Thus, responsibility falls on the shoulders of the department chair. Most ineffectual teachers are cognizant of the situation and are unhappy about it. With the help of a supportive administrator they can have their careers redirected in a mutually satisfying way. When this strategy does not work, chairs will need to act appropriately to terminate the faculty member and begin the process of finding a replacement. The long-term negative impact on the department's educational efforts is too great to do otherwise.

It is well that Whittlesey concludes her article by noting that the best of strategies will lose their impact if chairs are not practicing what they preach. Effective mentoring requires that faculty members see their department chair meeting with students outside of

class, selecting up-to-date textbooks and revising their lecture materials, treating students with respect, expressing enthusiasm for their teaching, renewing their content expertise, expecting the best from students, seeking out colleagues to discuss teaching, staying technologically current, valuing student feedback, and so on. It makes sense to have effective teachers serve as department chairs. It is also a shame that, in doing so, we reduce their classroom contributions. Whittlesey makes it clear, though, that a chair can more than compensate for this loss through his or her leadership in creating a positive educational environment. Consider the following from J. W. 'Bill' Marriott, Chairman and CEO of Marriott International: "You start with good people, you train and motivate them, you give them an opportunity to advance, then the organization succeeds."

*A Reaction to "The Role of the Chair in Providing Administrative Support
and Development of Faculty Teaching"*

Marcia J. Rossi
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Whittlesey notes that effective teaching is comprised of a number of attitudes, skills, and strategies involved in encouraging student academic achievement. Similarly, serving as an effective chair requires certain skills and abilities. In addition to working with faculty to support their efforts, the chair has the responsibility of working with the dean, other departments, and other university administrators to facilitate the mission of the department and the university.

Whittlesey cites numerous ways that chairs may support and encourage faculty teaching; many of those suggestions must be viewed within the context of university policies and procedures that are sometimes difficult to change. For example, when arguing that chairs should build into the promotion and tenure process ways to reward activities related to teaching, the chair must first be able to negotiate with the administration to make such changes. Thus, the position of chair often involves one of compromise and negotiation in order to accomplish departmental objectives. This constraint requires a chair who is willing and able to take a stand in support of the department against an administration that may not be all that supportive. However, as resources are often scarce within institutions, chairs must learn under which circumstances to pursue change and when to work within confines of the existing structure and policies of the university.

Team Teaching

Whittlesey's suggestion to foster team teaching is an excellent one. Faculty are often stimulated by working with another faculty member and students receive the benefits of hearing different perspectives as well as observing models of cooperation in academic settings. In some institutions, it may even be feasible to have interdisciplinary team teaching. This strategy may be more feasible for smaller institutions that are more likely to have different disciplines represented in a single department. For example, in our department, we have the disciplines of Psychology, Sociology, and Philosophy represented. It is possible, therefore, for a social psychology course to be co-taught by a

psychologist and a sociologist, or an ethical issues course to be co-taught by a psychologist and a philosopher.

Using Technology in the Classroom

Chairs may choose to pursue advances in technology to facilitate effective teaching. For example, chairs who are active in pursuing distance education technologies are able to provide students with greater opportunities for diverse learning experiences. The concept of team teaching may be extended to include faculty at other institutions. Similarly, providing access to technological advances for faculty in the form of updated computers, software, and smart classrooms equipped with video/data projectors and Web access can greatly enhance teaching. The ability to use e-learning, such as WebCT or Blackboard, can make teaching more flexible and make different forms of additional instructional resources more readily available to the student. The use of such media often makes instructors more accessible as well as other resources.

Teaching Beyond the Classroom

Whittlesey correctly notes that not all teaching involves classroom teaching. In addition to rewarding excellence in academic advising, faculty who supervise research assistants at both the undergraduate and graduate level may be rewarded for their efforts. Having research assistants present papers at conferences or publish papers demonstrates a strong commitment to teaching on the part of the faculty member. Similarly, advisors to psychology clubs and Psi Chi also are serving as teacher/mentors and deserve credit towards tenure and promotion.

Faculty Selection

An important part of supporting effective teaching is in making the decision of whom to hire for a vacant faculty position. Chairs can stress to faculty the importance of hiring a faculty member who has a commitment to quality teaching. Chairs can help to evaluate a candidate's teaching effectiveness and commitment to teaching by having the potential candidate give a teaching presentation to evaluate his or her teaching skills. In addition, by asking potential faculty members what courses they would like to teach as well as determining those they are competent to teach helps to instill the idea that teaching is valued, and that enthusiasm in teaching is an important ingredient in effective instruction.

Standards of Excellence

Finally, an important way to facilitate excellent teaching is for the chair to encourage faculty to maintain high standards of academic achievement. However, chairs must accompany their insistence on high standards with a supportive atmosphere. One of the best ways to do this is through modeling such behavior in interactions with faculty. Chairs who expect high standards of faculty behavior, but remain open to communication and are flexible, are more likely to produce faculty who are committed to high standards

of academic excellence. Such faculty members then are more likely to interact with students in the same fashion.

Maintaining an Environment Supportive of Quality Teaching: The Chair's Role

Ken Weaver

Emporia State University

Val Whittlesey places the department chair in a central position for developing and promoting faculty teaching but does so recognizing the need for flexibility in accommodating the myriad of variables in a department. For example, at Emporia State University, Psychology, Special Education, and Art Therapy have formed a department for over 20 years. Additionally, 10 of the 17 faculty have been hired within the past three years; new faculty have much different needs in developing their instructional skills than senior faculty. Whittlesey's view of the chair's role for developing teaching is flexible enough to extend to faculty in disciplines other than psychology and to faculty regardless of their years of experience. For senior faculty, it is never too late to articulate a teaching philosophy, and doing so can stimulate innovativeness and renewed passion for teaching. On the other hand, engaging new faculty in this exercise immediately injects a reflectiveness about teaching and student learning that undergirds their professional development. Would Whittlesey's role for the chair be relevant in departments where chairs rotate every three years or where teaching may not be a strong part of the institution's reward system?

I am fortunate to work at a university that highly values teaching, weighting it 50% for salary, promotion, and tenure purposes. The university offers three annual awards and the college one annual award to recognize good teaching. Until experiencing the departure of the director and a subsequent budget crisis, the university had a teaching enhancement center offering programming and workshops to faculty throughout the year. A publication in *Teaching of Psychology* is regarded very favorably. Our college's dean expects quality teaching from every faculty member and publishes a monthly newsletter devoted solely to promoting teaching and student learning. However, most development efforts for advancing teaching occur at the department level, and the Chair in collaboration with the faculty is responsible for initiating them and expanding those efforts.

Two years ago, we stopped scheduling classes in the department during the 11:00 am to 12:20 pm slot on Tuesdays and Thursdays and now use that time for invited speakers, student organization meetings, colloquia, and faculty meetings. Last spring, I started offering a session once a semester solely for faculty professional development. This has been a wonderful opportunity to talk about teaching, the department's assessment plan, the merit system, and tenure and promotion.

New faculty must use the student input team (SIT) in their courses for the first couple of semesters. Two or three students in a class are randomly selected and asked to be members of the SIT. Twice during the semester, the SIT comes before the class while the professor is out of the room and asks students to answer three questions anonymously on

a piece of paper: What concerns do you have about the course? What do you like about the course? What suggestions do you have to improve the course? The SIT collects the responses and then aggregates them into themes. A day or two later the SIT meets with the faculty member to review the responses and discuss how the quality of the course can be improved. I have used this formative assessment for eight years in all of my classes because of the many positive results, and no longer teach a course without having a SIT.

As a department, we have struggled with developing peer review of teaching over the issue of whether any report should be a part of the faculty member's permanent record. The contention is that faculty are not trained to be formal evaluators of instructors. Whittlesey's emphasis on formative assessment will be central in our new round of deliberations as we discuss peer review to develop teaching rather than to assess it.

With so many new faculty, we have lost a considerable amount of history and communal understanding of how things are done, what our priorities are, and why we do what we do. A year ago, I put together a departmental handbook for the faculty to declare the importance of teaching and to elaborate on teaching-related topics like the importance and construction of a syllabus, the statement of teaching philosophy, and dealing with difficult students while also describing the department's policies and procedures. The handbook has serendipitously become an effective recruiting tool for faculty applicants, who appreciate having so much information about the department and its orientation to teaching, research, and service.

In closing, Whittlesey is correct in observing that the chair needs to model good teaching practice, but technology presents interesting, new challenges. Does the chair have to first teach an Internet course to lead the department effectively in distance education? Does the chair first have to incorporate PowerPoint presentations in the classroom to determine their effectiveness and relevance for good teaching practice?

Trying new ideas in the classroom and updating one's teaching philosophy are important, but so is the chair's taking advantage of professional development opportunities for teaching. Attending a teaching conference, belonging to a teaching organization like the Society for the Teaching of Psychology, and seeking out teaching sessions at conventions exposes the chair to different ideas and practices. Making the time to talk about teaching with other colleagues in the department or college also helps keep the chair's instructional skills honed. Inviting and encouraging faculty to do the same maintains an environment conducive to quality teaching.

A Reaction to: "The Role of the Chair in Providing Administrative Support and Development of Faculty Teaching"

David J. Pittenger

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Dr. Whittlesey offers many useful suggestions that I endorse. Her goal is clear—create a milieu of excellence in teaching. Although I support her useful suggestions, I would like

to offer a bit of a caveat lector—let the reader beware—that reflects my experiences as a department head attempting to set the pace for good teaching.

Teacher Training Graduate Students Receive

It is my impression that the quality of training graduate students receive for developing their teaching skills is much better now than it was 20 years ago and what Dr. Whittlesey suggests. Although my primary evidence is anecdotal, as it reflects my interactions with candidates I have interviewed and hired, it is my impression that new faculty are more likely than not to have had some meaningful and supervised teaching experiences while in graduate school. The range is still great, however. At one end are the candidates who have served as a teaching assistant and then allowed to teach a section or two of a course. At the other extreme are candidates who have taken a teaching of psychology course, given many guest lectures that were videotaped and critiqued, and then allowed to teach one or more courses under careful mentorship. Overall, I have been generally pleased with the quality of skills that many young faculty bring to the classroom. Indeed, some have been better instructors during their first year than those who had been in the department for many years.

College-Sponsored Teaching Workshops

I am a bit of a cynic regarding university sponsored teaching workshops and teaching centers. Perhaps I am jaded by my limited experience, but my experience does not allow me to speak in praise of such services. I find that these workshops suffer from focusing on the trivial, the latest fad that will soon be passé, or techniques with iatrogenic consequences. Attending even the best of these workshops is like attempting to learn how to paint by taking an art history course. One learns much about art and art appreciation but not how to paint. I have not found them useful for developing the fundamental teaching skills.

Of course, there are times when a workshop may be useful. Specifically, I find workshops useful when the department or the college is willing to invest the time and energy to support wholesale revision of its courses. For example, several years ago, the institution where I used to teach reinvented its general education curriculum. As a part of the change, the Dean developed a new euphemism for writing across the curriculum. She then hired faculty from the school's Department of English and an equal number of faculty from other campuses to offer workshops on creating and grading writing assignments. These workshops were a success because there was a clear and common goal for the participants—all of us were expected to incorporate significant writing assignments into our courses. In addition, the leaders of the workshops made clear that there is no one correct way to reach the goal. After attending the different writing workshops, it was apparent that there are many right ways to do the same thing. Thus, I came away with bits and pieces that best fit my teaching style and the goals for my courses.

Teaching Circles

These experiences lead me to recommend the teaching circles that Dr. Whittlesey describes as an alternative. Rather than recommend that faculty attend workshops, I encourage casual meetings, typically over lunch, where faculty can talk in an unstructured manner about their teaching. For example, I will invite the untenured faculty to lunch and guide the conversation to their teaching. My goal is not to act as the wise sage who can give them the benefit of “my years of experience.” Rather, I attempt to engage them in a dialog to help them feel comfortable talking about their frustration and excitement with teaching. Using this strategy, I find that faculty are more willing to seek each other for advice and recommendations.

One point that I’d like to emphasize is that during discussion of teaching, everyone in the discussion should be equal. I am not at heart a communist in assuming that we are all equal, only that I have found the discussions and exchanges of ideas to be livelier if there is not a “hierarchy” of expertise created in the discussion. Creating this context of equality sets the stage for a more open discussion of matters related to teaching. In addition, I find it useful to discuss the much broader goals of our teaching. I believe that what we do in the classroom makes better sense if we understand what we expect of our students. Thus, I find it useful to become lost in the discussion of first principles such as “what effect do we expect to have on our students?”

Finding One’s Pace

Another caveat I’d like to share is my concern that there is a quest for the right or the best way to teach. I have had the occasional bad experience with administrators and self-proclaimed experts on teaching that there is a limited range of acceptable teaching styles, theirs. My experience as a student, teacher, and administrator leads me to believe that the best teachers are those who do what comes naturally to them. Some faculty are masterful at lecturing and accomplish tremendous academic feats while speaking without interruption for 50 minutes. Others excel at the Socratic method, and teach without the appearance of teaching. Consequently, I encourage faculty to explore strategies that work best for them rather than encouraging them to copy others. At the same time, I try to avoid labeling any member of the faculty as “good instructor.” Again, experience leaves me a bit gun shy as pernicious comparisons and ill will typically follow the assignment of such labels.

A final caveat is that many administrators and proponents of the latest trend in teaching treat our courses as the ready dumping ground for new initiatives. I fear that junior faculty may become deluded that their course must do everything for the student in one course. If I had followed the edicts of one of my deans, I would have included in all my courses: (a) reviews of contemporary leadership and citizenship, (b) opportunities to enhance writing and oral communication skills, (c) exercises to improve interpersonal communication, (d) exercises to augment critical thinking and deep processing, (e) service learning projects, and (f) computer technology. Somewhere along the way I might have had the opportunity to teach a bit about psychology. The message that I emphasize

is that these additions are worthwhile, but that one must pick from among them judiciously and not allow them to dominate the focus of the course.

One tactic that can help faculty explore their teaching style is to visit the courses of other faculty. Too often we force junior faculty to be the focus of attention in the name of formative or performance evaluation. As an alternative, I recommend to faculty that they visit the courses taught by their colleagues in the department as well as faculty in other academic programs. I have learned a tremendous amount about teaching by observing biologists, computer scientists, mathematicians, and English literature faculty practice their trade.

Scheduling

Another of Dr. Whittlesey's observations that I would like to emphasize is the power of scheduling. A teaching schedule can make or break a faculty member—four separate preparations taught across the entire week is a recipe for disaster. By contrast, two sections of the same course, taught on Tuesdays and Thursdays, provides an invaluable resource to the faculty—time. Issues of time management become more critical not only for the faculty member who wants to prepare a new course, but the faculty member who has a program of research in which he or she involves students, and the faculty who has important family obligations (e.g., school-aged children).

One can also control the faculty schedule by controlling the enrollment caps in a course. Too often, administrators want the highest student-faculty ratios possible. Those of us who teach in state-subsidized schools know all too well the mantra of increasing FTEs. Department chairs need to fight this battle at every turn. This often means explaining to a dean that the papers assigned in a psychology course require as much time and energy to grade as the papers assigned in an English composition courses—thus capping a course to 18 students is not only reasonable, it is essential.

Conclusions

All these recommendations are pointless if applied in a vacuum. Tenure committees that give lip service to teaching while focusing on other attributes—I had to spend an hour with a tenure committee defending a colleague because the committee did not think that the person “fit the culture of the institution”—quickly undermine any chair's attempt to reward innovative and potentially provocative teaching techniques. Similarly, inconsistent expectations of faculty within a department can also undo the reasonable advice we offer. Consequently, I believe that departments benefit from having clearly defined criteria for the outcomes of good teaching. Each college and university has, to some extent, a unique academic mission and zeitgeist. The goals of a small liberal arts college with close church ties may be much different than the goals of a metropolitan state university with many pre-professional colleges and academic programs. Those departments that can clearly articulate their expectations of their students will do much to help all faculty find their pace at the institution.

Comments on "The Role of the Chair in Providing Administrative Support and Development of Faculty Teaching"

W. Harold Moon
Augusta State University

Whittlesey brings together several issues that demand attention by department chairs and by the faculty if the development of faculty teaching is to be a quality institutional and departmental enterprise. She is on the target in asserting that until recently preparation of teaching faculty has only rarely been an option in graduate programs in psychology. Although today there are some faculties in a small number of graduate programs who work to prepare tomorrow's teaching faculty, these continue to represent the exception rather than the rule.

The typical new member of a departmental faculty is likely to have been prepared for a career in research and/or professional application, not in teaching. Thus, for one to be better prepared to be an effective teaching faculty member, such development will take place in the course of one being a teaching faculty member. The implication is clear; development of most teaching faculty will take place on the job, either in a systematic or unsystematic manner.

As Whittlesey noted, an on-campus faculty development center can serve as a resource for members of a department; however, it cannot obviate the necessity of development of teaching faculty within the department. Because development as a teacher is so important, both the chair and the faculty member need to understand their respective responsibilities for the latter's development with these being made clear in descriptions of their positions.

Historically, faculty were assumed to be developing in an appropriate manner as they engaged in teaching and carried out their research. What is new is the recognition that quality development of faculty in institutions with pronounced instructional emphases requires more than one holding a terminal degree, meeting classes, registering students and engaging in scholarly activity. Today, it is generally accepted that a teacher needs to develop a philosophy that bears on the teaching and learning enterprise. This relationship includes the transmission and accumulation of information, and the development of conceptual schemes via which knowledge evolves. It also incorporates advisement and academic and vocational and professional counsel. Because it provides means whereby the effects of teaching and the outcomes of learning are measured, assessment is a vital component of the teaching and learning process, and a much too important matter not to be specifically included in the development of teaching faculty. It is not uncommon to encounter teaching faculty who appear to perceive no relationship between assessment and the learning process. Today's faculties also are expected to render services to the campus and to the community and often to participate in service learning activities. Thus preparation for these activities is fundamental to faculty development.

Very few teaching faculty arrive on campus fully prepared to appreciate or to implement these responsibilities successfully. They have to be informed and prepared. Productive teaching faculty are works in progress. Effective chairs recognize this fact and assist teaching faculty toward their maximal level of development.

Collaborative Research as Teaching

Stan Aeschleman

Appalachian State University

Whittlesey cites four clusters of effective teaching delineated by Davis (1993) and provides some excellent examples of how chairs can provide opportunities and rewards to facilitate the development of those clusters by their faculty. Her article focuses almost exclusively on teaching as an activity confined to the classroom. The traditional emphasis on the teaching as only a classroom endeavor creates a dichotomy between teaching and research. Sometimes the two activities are seen as competing (i.e., any time spent on research subtracts from time that could be spent on class preparation). Alternatively, research has been characterized as necessary for teaching (i.e., only those with active research programs are sufficiently current in the discipline to provide an informed classroom environment). A broader view that extends teaching beyond the classroom permits a third option—research as a form of teaching. In this essay, I focus on opportunities and rewards chairs can provide to faculty members to facilitate a special teaching opportunity, collaborating with students on research projects. Collaborative research activities are especially suited to address Davis' (1993) Cluster Three—helping students become autonomous, self-regulated learners.

Providing Opportunities to Develop Collaborative Research Activities

To create a pool of students from which the faculty can draw, chairs must ensure that students are informed of the career benefits of participating in research activities and that students have information about and easy access to research opportunities. The former can be accomplished by the saliency of the message during interactions with students (e.g., orientations for new students) and in departmental publications for students (e.g., an undergraduate handbook). Assigning a faculty member to serve as a “Student Research Broker” for collaborative research activities is an excellent method to facilitate the latter objectives. The broker can solicit and publicize (e.g., on the departmental Web page, a centrally located bulletin board) project information from faculty members (e.g., nature of the study, number of students needed, description of student tasks).

Most importantly, the chair can provide small stipends for research expenses and to support student travel to conferences to present papers or posters resulting from collaborative efforts. Chairs can work with advancement officers to establish an endowment to fund these activities.

Motivating Faculty to Develop Collaborative Research Activities

Another role of the Student Research Broker can be providing public recognition of faculty by citing presentations and publications co-authored with students. Chairs can ensure that faculty members have tangible rewards for engaging students in their research by including explicit benefits for such activities in merit-based raises. Faculty members can receive merit considerations for engaging students in informal (e.g., independent study) and formal (e.g., theses) research activities. Collaborative efforts that result in significant products should be allocated more substantial rewards. For example, relative to presentations and publications without students as authors, those with students could receive an additional 10 percent in merit. If the department's merit document differentially rewards publications and presentations based on authorship order, student authors can be disregarded for merit purposes (i.e., if a student is first author on a manuscript, the faculty member who is the second author would receive first authorship).

Finally, the chair can advocate, both directly on behalf of departmental faculty and indirectly to change institutional policy, for consideration of collaborative research efforts as a criterion for teaching awards. As an example of the former, during my first year as chair, the University of North Carolina General Administration allocated funds to reward excellence in teaching and mandated that no more than 33% of the faculty could receive this supplemental allocation. In making my recommendations, I included the extra classroom teaching activities discussed in this paper (e.g., chairing theses, publishing with a student). This list of "excellent teachers" differed significantly from one that included only student evaluations of classroom teaching. Whenever possible, Chairs should encourage university and college teaching award committees to expand the award criteria to include these activities.

Risking Failure for the Sake of Good Teaching: Comments on Whittlesey's "The Role of the Chair in Providing Administrative Support and Development of Faculty Teaching"

Robert W. Hendersen
Grand Valley State University

Dan Quayle once opined, "If we don't succeed, we run the risk of failure." This is, uh, hard to deny. It is slightly less tautological to note that lack of success often follows directly from reluctance to risk failure. This is particularly true when it comes to teaching, which demands dynamic, diverse, and creative responses to constantly shifting challenges. To encourage the continual development of excellent teaching, departments should provide environments in which faculty members can and do take substantive risks in their teaching.

Whittlesey has identified an impressive array of ways in which department chairs can provide teaching resources and support services to faculty members. New faculty members are no longer simply thrown into a classroom and told to teach. Good teachers have always sought evaluative feedback, informative criticism, and constructive suggestions, and many departments have institutionalized mechanisms (e.g., peer

evaluations, student evaluations, course assessments, teaching circles, workshops) that provide such invaluable feedback.

There are times and circumstances, however, that call for decreasing, rather than increasing, the amount of scrutiny and the evaluative feedback that an instructor receives. Consider the case of relatively junior faculty member who, having mastered such basics as finding a trail to the classroom, prodding the projector into life, wrestling the course material into coherence, inhaling the fumes of whiteboard markers, and appearing less terrified than the students, now wants to make some dramatic, creative changes in teaching. In too many departments, this instructor's first thoughts will be: "Will changing my teaching affect my student evaluations?" "What will my peers think?," and "Is it safe to do this?" To the extent that extensive scrutiny and feedback make an instructor averse to taking risks, they impede the development of excellent teaching.

Teaching is an inherently risky business. What works with one group of students may not work with another, and an approach that the instructor thinks is compelling may leave students searching for meaning in the cracks in the classroom ceiling. Effective teaching requires constant experimentation and constant stretching of limits. New strategies need to be attempted, modified, tuned, or discarded, depending on their effectiveness. Like any good experiment, creative teaching risks failure.

To be a creative, risk-taking teacher, an instructor must believe that she or he can take risks without sabotaging chances for promotion, raises, and the respect and admiration of colleagues. A department can encourage creative risk-taking by explicitly recognizing that risk-taking is a virtue. Academic types tend to be a conservative lot, if not in their politics, then in their acceptance of fresh and unfamiliar approaches to teaching. Such conservatism serves neither our students nor our discipline.

Encouraging risk-taking also requires sensitivity to the developmental changes that characterize academic careers. What is risky for an untenured, junior faculty member may be very different from what is risky for a tenured, senior faculty member, but faculty members at all stages of career development should be encouraged to take risks.

One effective strategy is to give an instructor a hiatus from the constant stream of student evaluations, peer evaluations, course assessments, and self evaluations. Such a hiatus should have sharply defined limits (e.g., a single, particular semester). My own university requires student evaluations in every course, so I cannot offer an instructor the opportunity to teach a course without any student evaluations, but I can offer to put those evaluations in a context that lessens their impact. For example, I have invited faculty members to inform me in advance before they embark on large-scale, risky experiments to improve their teaching. I then place a memorandum in the personnel file noting, in advance, that student evaluations may be atypical in the coming semester, because the faculty member is thoughtfully taking considered risks in order to freshen her or his teaching. A personnel committee reviewing student evaluations can discount a semester of odd evaluations when there has been advance notice that risks will be taken.

Another crucial aspect of encouraging risk-taking is to react appropriately to failures when they occur. If the risks are real, then there will certainly be failures. Once a failure has occurred, the department chair can help a faculty member pick up the pieces and move forward. A faculty member who fails after taking a calculated risk should be respected and honored for the attempt—the risk should be judged according to the thoughtful consideration that went into taking it, rather than by its outcome.

Whittlesey noted that one of the essential goals of effective teaching is to help students become autonomous, self-regulated learners. One way to support this goal is to give faculty members the freedom to be autonomous, self-regulated teachers. Sometimes that requires backing off and giving the faculty member an opportunity to take risks without the threat of long-term consequences if the attempt proves unsuccessful.

Challenges of Department Chairs

Tina Vazin

Alabama State University

The primary goal of department chairs should be to create an environment for faculty members that encourages and enables them to develop and hone their pedagogical skills so that they can offer every student valuable classroom experiences. Whittlesey's article pointed out many useful strategies for chairs to implement to achieve this goal. However, I would like to take a step back and broaden the picture in order to consider the environment in which chairs perform. This environment challenges their ability to maintain their focus on the primary goal of promoting excellent teaching.

The purpose of highlighting some of the obstacles chairs face in fulfilling this responsibility is to raise an awareness of the competing goals and challenges that chairs face each day. Being cognizant of these obstacles enables chairs to make a conscious effort to keep their role as a facilitator of excellent teaching a priority. Maintaining a focus when there are many competing demands requires daily resolve.

Many smaller colleges and universities whose mission originally was to educate are struggling to increase their presence in the research arena. There are many reasons for this transition including the prestige of having faculty members who are active researchers and who are well-published as well as the lure of grant and contract money. The extension of the mission of small colleges and universities to include research often puts a burden on faculty to establish a research program and to publish while maintaining heavy teaching loads.

Since securing tenure and promotion often depend on fulfilling both of these responsibilities, faculty are faced with the decision of prioritizing these obligations. This situation creates a problem for chairs who have made a conscious decision to have excellence in teaching the primary goal of their department. Chairs have a difficult challenge in this type of situation, because there is the risk that faculty members will come to view teaching as a necessary evil.

To avoid this atmosphere from developing within a department, it is important for chairs to take steps to build cohesion within the department based on the activity that all of the faculty have in common, teaching. Faculty members are likely to have disparate areas of research, but the common thread that ties them together is a shared student population. Approaches to promote a sense of shared purpose and a dedication to teaching well include frequent informal faculty meetings devoted solely to teaching-related topics in which faculty are encouraged to discuss effective and ineffective classroom activities, curriculum revisions, relevant Web sites, and new ideas. Successful “teaching meetings” can be useful in promoting a sense of camaraderie if the meetings are regarded as a top priority by the chair, and have an atmosphere of mutual respect and openness to new ideas and suggestions.

A second challenge faced by most chairs in promoting excellent teaching is budgetary constraints. Many colleges and universities across the country are struggling with reduced budgets coupled with growing operational costs. Budget cuts often result in reduced travel funds. Faculty derive many benefits from attending conferences, workshops, and seminars designed for faculty teaching. Faculty usually leave these meetings with many great ideas for integrating technology into classes, hands-on activities, informative Web sites, and tried-and-true demonstrations. But more importantly, they leave with a sense of purpose and renewed motivation.

However, due to restricted budgets, travel funds are often inadequate to allow faculty to attend workshops and conferences. Chairs have to be creative in arranging for their faculty to get the effects of networking with their colleagues from other institutions with limited funds. One approach is to arrange video conferences with other psychology departments to discuss issues related to teaching. This approach is awkward at first, but within a short period of time the atmosphere becomes more relaxed and valuable information is shared.

Chairs have a responsibility to insure that teaching is viewed as an important priority by faculty members. There are many challenges that chairs encounter that can easily discourage or distract them from fulfilling this responsibility, but faculty and students deserve to reap the rewards of valuable classroom experiences. Chairs often have to think “outside of the box” to create affordable methods to promote teaching as a priority in the department, but the extra effort is rewarded when students come to your office to tell you how much they love their classes.

The Role of the Chair in Providing Administrative Support and Development of Faculty Teaching: Leadership At Its Best
Valerie Whittlesey
Kennesaw State University

The comments to my article are on target and strengthen it. The authors of the comments, Lewis Barker, Steven Hobbs, Marcia Rossi, Ken Weaver, David Pittenger, Harold Moon,

Stan Aeschleman, Robert Hendersen, and Tina Vazin, are current or former department chairs. They clearly demonstrated their knowledge of the chair's role, and their comments nicely converged into three themes. In my target article, I articulated two major strategies that chairs can use to facilitate effective faculty teaching: (a) providing opportunities to develop faculty teaching, and (b) motivating faculty to develop teaching excellence. The three themes that were evident in the responses from the current and former chairs provide other important areas in which chairs can support faculty teaching in ways that demonstrate leadership at its best. Leadership at its best occurs when chairs take a comprehensive approach and start at the beginning with faculty selection and follow through to the end with challenging the institutional structure to support teaching and teaching innovation.

The Chair's Role in Faculty Selection

Several respondents focused on the critical importance of the chair in faculty selection as a component of faculty development of teaching. Barker, Hobbs, Pittenger, and Rossi suggested ways in which chairs may take a lead in faculty hiring. The chair and the departmental search committee can focus on teaching-related activities in the applicant's curriculum vita and other application materials. The chair and search committee can carefully construct questions during the telephone and on-campus interviews to get a sense of the applicant's teaching experience and interests. The type of presentation that the applicant gives during the interview can be a lecture presentation for a course. Once an applicant is hired, chairs should take care to match the new faculty with the courses that provide the best fit for him or her. However, Hobbs noted an important point. Despite the best hiring, support, and remediation efforts for new faculty, it is important to remember that not all faculty members will become good teachers. Chairs must, in the best interests of that faculty member, students, and department, redirect him or her to another career. The faculty member in question may be better suited at another type of institution, in a role other than a faculty member within the academy, or working outside of the academy. At the very least, the chair should encourage the faculty member to do some serious self-reflection to determine the best next step for him or her.

Some Proven Successful Faculty Teaching Development Activities

A second theme among respondents revolved around particular teaching-related faculty development activities that work well. Pittenger noted that teaching circles are effective because of their informality and unstructured nature. When all members of the circle are viewed as equals, lively ideas are generated. Weaver shared an activity in which student input teams (SIT) anonymously survey classes and provide feedback to new faculty members. Moon pointed out the important role that chairs have in encouraging faculty to reflect on their teaching. Teaching circles and SITs provide the atmosphere for such reflection. Aeschleman and Barker noted that teaching does not occur in a vacuum. They made an excellent point by stressing that faculty should attempt to balance teaching and scholarship. Aeschleman noted that since research may be construed as a form of teaching, these two faculty activities can be seen as complementary and not competitive. The chair, then, can reward faculty who collaborate with students on research projects

and advocate for more support of faculty-student research collaboration at the institutional level.

The Chair's Role in Encouraging and Supporting Faculty Risk-Taking

Finally, Henderson noted that good faculty are not afraid to take risks in their teaching. In order for such risk taking to occur, chairs must actually encourage risk taking among the faculty. As Vazin and Rossi pointed out, chairs must be willing to think “out of the box” themselves. They must be cognizant of when to work within existing institutional structures and when to challenge existing structures and to take action. Weaver posed two provocative questions that challenge chairs. First, when chairs rotate every three years or are in institutions where teaching is not a strong part of the institution's reward system, can chairs have a strong impact in developing faculty teaching? Second, do chairs have to take the lead in developing teaching innovations (e.g., teaching Internet based courses) to be good models for faculty? My answer to the first question is “yes,” and my answer to the second question is “no.” Rotating chairs can establish mentoring systems within the department in which outstanding teachers work with new faculty in developing their teaching skills. Such a system transcends changes in departmental leadership and guarantees that new teachers will have uninterrupted faculty support for their teaching. Chairs at institutions where teaching is not a central focus can advocate for the prominence of teaching at the institution. Likewise, they can also encourage rank and file faculty as well as faculty who occupy prominent roles at their institution (chairs of tenure and promotion committees, chairs of strategic planning committees, etc.) to advocate that more emphasis be placed on recognizing and rewarding effective teaching. In a similar vein, chairs can utilize the talents of faculty who are teaching innovatively as trainers in the department. By doing so, chairs encourage innovation and showcasing the teaching skills of their faculty.

In conclusion, the chair serves a critical role in developing faculty teaching. Chairs should keep in mind that their role can enhance or inhibit faculty as faculty foster students to think and learn.

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Looking Back: Perspectives on a Graduate Seminar in the Teaching of Psychology

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I suppose like many good things in life, I began my career as a teacher by mistake. It was only through a series of unforeseen events that I received the opportunity to teach my first course, introductory psychology, during the Summer 1995 semester, one year after I began my Ph.D. program. In that course, my primary, if not only, concern was not making any mistakes. I wanted so badly to teach the class “correctly.” After teaching this initial course, I took three graduate seminars in the teaching of psychology. Most of the students in the course were teaching introductory psychology for the first time. As I reflect back on these courses four years later, I am beginning to realize some invaluable lessons I wish to share with other teachers.

One Size Does Not Fit All

“We can take advice from others . . . we can read the philosophies of others . . . each of us, however, has our own vision . . . and although we should consider the thoughts of others, we should remember that it is our course . . .” (Griggs, 1997, p. 5). For instance, if I asked 100 introductory psychology teachers the “correct” way to teach this course might be, I would likely get 100 different answers, all of which could be equally correct. What works for one teacher may not work for other teachers, even though one teacher may be equally effective as the others. Likewise, specific methods of teaching particular material will vary in their effectiveness depending on the teacher (so much for my desired “black and white” view of how to teach). Teaching is indeed a personal endeavor and attempts to circumvent this truism are doomed to failure. I cannot imagine how difficult it must be for those teachers who teach a course without being able to choose their textbooks or determine the development of the syllabus and related concerns (such as course requirements and order of topical coverage).

Avoid Functional Fixedness

Perhaps this second lesson is simply an extension of the first. I am amazed, during only my fourth year as a college teacher, at how much “stuff” I have accumulated for many of my courses. Some of these resources came from colleagues who used them for a singular purpose. In tinkering with them, however, I have been able to take certain material intended for one purpose and use it for another purpose. For instance, I was not aware that the basic ingredients for chocolate chip cookies, used by a chemistry professor to demonstrate some principle unfamiliar to me, could also be used to demonstrate the concept of statistical interactions until I was baking such delights for the departmental picnic. To be sure, a colleague may have an idea that, although not directly applicable to

a course I teach, may help me develop another idea that I can use in my courses. Ideas for teaching come from everywhere. For example, although we should perhaps take our student evaluations with the proverbial grain of salt, one suggestion from a student may lead to a significant improvement in the teaching of our courses. As I read through my evaluations from my organizational psychology class two years ago, one student suggested that she or he wanted more activities that would help with professional development. After thinking this comment through, I was able to develop a semester-long project that not only benefited students in this regard, but that also allowed me to strengthen another major part of the course, psychometrics. Other means for gathering ideas include reading *Teaching of Psychology (ToP)* and attending teaching conferences such as the National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology (NITOP). I am finding that many *ToP* articles and NITOP presentations can be used to teach a variety of principles, not just the one(s) stressed in a particular article or presentation.

Research Matters (Even for “Teachers”)

There are probably few issues on which teachers all agree. If there is one such issue, however, that issue would be that it is crucial for students to develop critical thinking skills. Thus, it stands to reason that as teachers we should be actively striving to improve this ability in ourselves so that we might effectively model it for our students. One way to develop our own critical thinking activities is to remain active in scholarly activities. As Charles Brewer stated, “Research need not be detrimental to teaching. Research can improve teaching . . .” (2002, p. 1). I truly believe that teachers can improve their teaching through engaging in and presenting research at conferences and in peer-reviewed journals. Such activities certainly involve teaching, albeit a different form of teaching than formal classroom teaching. Submitting research for publication will provide evaluations from a different audience than classroom teaching. Such feedback has been invaluable in helping me learn how to communicate information, a skill at the heart of teaching.

Get Directions Before Beginning the Journey

“Be clear about your educational goals and ensure that your students are clear about them” (Brewer, 2002, p. 1). We can still be (and need to be) clear to students about what we are doing, and more importantly, why we are doing it in each individual class we teach. To a novice teacher, assigning three papers in a semester may seem more rigorous than assigning one paper. However, what matters is not the number of assignments, but rather the objectives that they are meant to accomplish, and those objectives need to be spelled out clearly for both the teacher’s and the students’ sake. I have yet to learn how to determine whether students mastered certain material or modes of thinking when I have not clearly articulated what it is they are expected to learn. How can I determine whether students have truly mastered the subject matter, when I have not been clear about what I wanted them to learn in the first place?

You'll Never Know It All

However, as Meginnis-Payne (2002) said, we can strive for “good enough teaching.” When I first taught introductory psychology, I did not think I knew much (and I was right). Now, having taught the course more than 15 times, I feel as though I know even less than I did when I first taught it. Although this feeling is probably not accurate, I think it is a healthy sign when a teacher feels this way about a course. Striving to improve one’s teaching, by engaging in the above four “lessons,” ought to lead a teacher to realize how complex teaching really is. When a student asks a question to which I have no intelligent response (not an uncommon occurrence), it is a chance for me to learn a little more, and of course, share it with my students.

Conclusion

These are five lessons that I have only begun to learn in earnest. These lessons, like those we teach our students, are most easily realized if they can be seen as challenges and not threats. Even if we never reach the destination of knowing it all, we might as well enjoy the journey.

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Universities, Psychology Departments, and the Treatment of Graduate Students

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We expect graduate students to maintain a healthy balance between the demands of graduate work and their lives outside of school, but for most graduate students such a balance remains at best difficult and too often unattainable. Graduate students lead unique and complex lives with intense workloads, little personal or political power within their departments, and high expectations for individual achievement. This combination can be detrimental for many students physically, mentally, and scholastically.

Graduate students face a complex web of duties. First, they are students, and, for at least the first few years of doctoral programs, they must succeed in demanding graduate classes. Second, they are learning to be researchers, and this process often includes time-consuming duties that are critical for successful research: data collection, data entry, data management and analysis, and so on. Third, many graduate students are learning to be teachers. Some learn through assistantships or apprenticeships, some attend classes or other training for university teaching, and others experience trial by fire as they learn in the challenging environment of the college or university classroom. Additionally, many graduate students participate in other modes of teaching, including advising and mentoring undergraduates or junior graduate students in class work, research, and teaching. Fourth, graduate students in applied areas of psychology fulfill practicum hours, complete internships, and otherwise work in their fields within or outside the university. Fifth, graduate students learn to be productive members of the academic community, and they partake in departmental, university, and regional or even national committee membership and other service activities. Education through all of the duties above prepares students to fill their own unique niches within the larger psychological community.

Regardless of their myriad responsibilities, graduate students face academic systems that are not always sufficiently tuned to their welfare. Despite the heavy load of duties, graduate students are often severely and knowingly overworked. Many institutional and cultural factors contribute to this systematic overloading and exploitation of graduate students. First, overworking graduate students is reinforcing to departmental and university administrators in several ways. Having a graduate student teach a course costs a fraction of a professor’s salary, and such savings are not overlooked by administrators. Teaching is an integral part of the learning experience for graduate students, and administrators can view graduate teaching assignments as experiential learning opportunities for graduate students. Many institutions count on graduate students to meet departmental teaching needs. Graduate students often fill the gaps, taking classes that professors do not want or courses that, for whatever reason, cannot be staffed by faculty.

Additionally, graduate students are often called on in the middle of the semester to assume classes from ill or otherwise unavailable professors. Thus, graduate students are often used to solve critical departmental problems, and department and university administrators are rewarded for approaching and using graduate students in these ways.

Second, although some of us were fortunate enough to have excellent advisors with genuine concerns for our lives and health, we should recognize that overworking graduate students is also adaptive for faculty advisors. Not only are graduate students usually literate in a research or professional area, they are often cheaper and easier to justify than hiring outside technicians. Fully funded graduate students work for a salary based on a 20-hour work week regardless of how many hours they actually work. Additionally, students' work may bring publications and other recognition to advisors. It is adaptive for professors to retain graduate students with successful research and publication records to assist in running a laboratory or a research program, even if doing so sometimes requires these students to postpone graduation.

Despite the financial, professional, and personal benefits of working with graduate students and despite departmental encouragement for faculty who do so, many departments continue to reward individual research by faculty more than collaborative work. Although some departments explicitly reinforce collaborative research with students, some departments may not. Single author publications that are adaptive for professors can be less financially, professionally, and personally rewarding for graduate students who are involved behind the scenes in such work.

Finally, graduate students willingly accept the intense and often unhealthy workloads offered by administrators and their faculty advisors. Why?

First, graduate students respond appropriately to the legitimate authority of advisors and administrators. Second, financial incentives cannot be ignored. In the 1999-2000 academic year, the median income for fully funded doctoral students in their intermediate years was \$10,000 for teaching assistants and \$10,174 for research assistants (Fennell & Kohout, 2002). In 1999, the national poverty threshold for a single individual under age 65 was \$8667 (US Census Bureau, 2000). The upper bounds of the lower quartiles of graduate stipends were \$8102 for teaching assistantships and \$8183 for research assistantships (Fennell & Kohout, 2002). Thus, at least one fourth of graduate students lived under or close to poverty threshold as defined by the federal government (even when student loans are taken into consideration). Graduate students cannot be expected to reject opportunities for supplementary income.

Third, political concerns cannot be ignored. If a student turns down a teaching, research, or similar professional opportunity, will a second chance be offered? This point is particularly relevant given that, in the 1999-2000 academic year, 68% of departments did not fund all of their doctoral students throughout their educations (Fennell & Kohout, 2002).

Fourth, we hope graduate students have chosen these paths in their lives because they truly enjoy the subject matters they study. Therefore, they are not likely to pass up opportunities that may further the development of their expertise in a given area.

Fifth, the short-term concerns regarding income or political issues pale compared to the long-term concerns for future employment. A graduate student attempts to build a vita that stands out for prospective employers. Standing out requires going the extra mile beyond one's peers in terms of class success, hours worked, and investment in teaching, research, and other professional activities. A healthy balance in life is rarely rewarded financially, with formal awards, or other types of recognition. Overwork, overachievement, and imbalance seem to be clearly adaptive for graduate students.

The above pressures interact with faculty and administrative attitudes and expectations. Expectations for graduate students have changed significantly in the last 50 years. For example, most academics would now frown on Harry Harlow for walking through his laboratory late at night and checking on his graduate students (Blum, 2002), and few professors conduct seminars until 2 a.m. though Mutzafer Sherif was known to do so on occasion (W. Viney, personal communication, February 28, 2003). Although many contemporary graduate students may be working at these hours, the institutional pressures toward these behaviors have lessened. The changes have occurred slowly, however, and the attitudes that drive such faculty behavior also change slowly. Many advisors were educated with such historical expectations, and many may still hold these attitudes.

Scholastic mistreatment may run in academic families. We learn and often use the mentoring styles we experienced as students, and few departments have training programs for faculty advisors. Faculty may pass the treatment they faced in graduate school on to their own students. All too often we hear colleagues refer to the oppressive conditions they faced in graduate school to justify overworking, exploiting, or even degrading their own or other graduate students.

We acknowledge that indecent treatment of students is not healthy, and we hope that overwork, exploitation, and excessive demands will be recognized and avoided by faculty mentors despite mentors' prior experiences. The analogy with domestic abuse is clear. Mistreatment should be an obviously poor choice in parenting, but it occurs all too often; the same remains true in academia. Advisor/advisee relationships in graduate school are highly individual and unregulated. This lack of regulation has a dark side—it combines with the large power differential between advisors and advisees in a situation with few checks or balances and little recourse for students in cases of mistreatment. Faculty attitudes integrate with a system that reinforces the systematic overworking of graduate students.

The factors that encourage a lack of balance between graduate school and life are overwhelming. Graduate students have huge temporal, financial, and personal investments at stake in their educations and in the future job market, treatment of graduate students is largely unregulated, and when graduate students are overworked or exploited numerous advantages come to advisors, supervisors, other faculty members,

department administrators, and the students themselves. What can we do as faculty members with concerns for the appropriate treatment of graduate students?

At the departmental level, one practical step is to change departmental policy where needed to reward faculty for collaborative work with students. More fundamentally, departments need specific policies to protect graduate students from overwork and excessive responsibility in teaching, research, and professional activities. Many options to protect students are available at the university level. Universities can train faculty regarding treatment of graduate students and the detrimental effects of overworking these students. Many programs now include health insurance as a benefit in graduate school; such benefits reduce the financial and personal stress that students face. Universities could aid graduate students in their attempts to unionize in order to acquire benefits and a more powerful voice within university communities. Additionally, a university ombudsman dedicated to graduate student issues and unfettered by college or departmental political ties could serve as an unbiased moderator of grievances. A more radical possibility, in place at some institutions, is to prohibit graduate students from independently teaching classes so that we protect them from the immense workloads involved in teaching a class for the first time. Although this program saves graduate students from one form of overwork, it deprives them of opportunities to include direct responsibility for a class on their vitae in preparation to enter the job market.

As psychologists, we know the correlations of poverty, lack of personal control, and overwhelming workloads with mental illness, relationship distress, life stress, and other negative outcomes associated with graduate school. To protect against the mistreatment of graduate students, a department must work against the financial, administrative, and cultural grains, and to do so is not as adaptive as overworking graduate students. The costs are high. The benefits for challenging the system include physically and mentally healthier graduate students, happier students, and future scientists and professionals with more positive recollections and recommendations about their graduate experiences. Beyond the more easily measured benefits, we collectively gain by valuing students holistically. The field prospers and grows as we provide students with the tools they need to live well and successfully complete graduate school. Their future is our future as a discipline; “progress occurs when our students move beyond us” (Woody & Thomas, 2002).

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Thinking About Positive Psychology

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Psychology has undergone meritorious changes through the years as the landscape of content in the discipline has evolved. The introductory psychology texts of the late 1970s did not include the cognitive perspective in the schools of thought section. Texts of the 1980s had little to say about cross-cultural issues. Behavior genetics and evolutionary psychology were rarely covered in textbooks until the mid to late 1990s. All of these areas have become or are fast becoming part of psychology’s canon.

The Teachers of Psychology in Secondary Schools (TOPSS) Executive Board has proactively addressed the needs of psychology teachers while dealing with the field’s evolution. Most teachers are aware of APA’s National Standards for the teaching of psychology in secondary schools (Maitland et al., 2000). Fewer are aware of the 30-page unit plan on cross-cultural psychology developed and distributed to TOPSS members (Ernst, Matsumoto, Freeman, & Weseley, 2000). The most recent unit plan published by TOPSS is on positive psychology (Fineburg, 2003).

The positive psychology movement got rolling with Martin E. P. Seligman’s 1998 American Psychological Association (APA) presidential address. Seligman spoke of how before 1940, psychology had three distinct missions: curing mental illness, making life more productive and fulfilling, and identifying and nurturing high talent.

According to Seligman, psychology has lost track of its second and third missions. Seligman and many others have called for a return to the other “distinct missions” of psychology. Some of the topics addressed by positive psychologists resemble the topics humanistic psychologists discussed years ago. A difference between the two is the growing research literature on positive psychology, which according to Seligman will serve as positive psychology’s “protector and shield,” guarding against the unscientific self-help techniques that grew out of humanistic psychology’s promise. Just as behavior genetics, evolutionary, and cross-cultural psychology have become important discussion topics, the teaching of positive psychology in an introductory psychology class is important for a number of reasons.

Why Teach Positive Psychology?

Teaching about positive psychology can give students a solid foundation of research-based knowledge that encourages goodness, optimism, and fulfillment. Although teaching from the illness model of psychology may inspire students to help others, teaching positive psychology can give students the tools they need not only to facilitate

the absence of illness but to encourage the presence of wellness in others as well as themselves. Seligman suggests moving away from a preoccupation with repairing the worst things in life to building on positive qualities. He writes:

The field of positive psychology . . . is about positive individual traits: the capacity for love and vocation, courage, interpersonal skill, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future mindedness, spirituality, high talent, and wisdom. At the group level, it is about civic virtues and the institutions that move individuals toward better citizenship: responsibility, nurturance, altruism, moderation, tolerance, and work ethic (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 6).

The goals of positive psychology mirror the goals of educators. Ask educators why they went into the field, and most will say something like “to make a difference in the lives of students.” Review the qualities Seligman mentions as the positive individual and group traits studied in positive psychology. Most effective teachers instill and inspire these strengths in students. Teaching students about the goals of positive psychology exposes them to the science of individual achievement and fulfillment, giving them insight into their own lives and making the lessons we teach in our courses more meaningful.

Positive psychology principles also give educators insight into the motivational problems inherent in the teaching process. It takes creativity, inspiration, and hard work to prepare lessons that will reach the attention, interest, and intellectual levels of each student. Positive psychology provides insight into some questions we should be asking about our lesson planning in addition to content and pedagogy:

- * How optimistic are our students about their abilities as learners?
- * What goals have our students set for this class? How realistic are their plans for achievement?
- * How do students’ comparisons of their achievement to others in the class affect their learning?
- * How can we make learning a flow experience for our students?

Addressing these questions may help maximize positive student experiences, and help students under our tutelage learn how to become better learners. As a by-product, we also address motivational issues that plague us, such as students’ apathy about learning, students’ preoccupation with getting certain grades, and students’ self-defeating beliefs about their own abilities as learners.

How to Teach Positive Psychology

Positive psychology can be taught from at least two pedagogical perspectives. For the time challenged, positive psychology concepts fit well into many different areas of psychology. Social psychology, neuroscience, development, health and wellness are just a sampling of the current content in introductory psychology into which positive

psychology principles fit seamlessly. Do you teach about altruism and prosocial behavior? Go further and include the work of David Myers on happiness and Ed Diener on well being and satisfaction (Myers, 1993, Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Do you teach achievement motivation? Expand on that concept by discussing Rick Snyder's (2000) work on hope. Do you teach attribution theory? Explain how a person's explanatory style reveals their tendency toward optimism or pessimism. At least two textbooks (Blair-Broeker & Ernst, 2003; Myers, 2002) weave positive psychology into relevant topic areas.

Many Advanced Placement (AP) high school teachers have year-long courses. What do you teach students after the AP exam in May? How do you fill time during standardized testing week when the school's schedule is hectic? Teaching a stand-alone unit on positive psychology exposes students to a dynamic movement within psychology at those times when the regular course content would get lost in the distractions of a typical school year.

All students come to class challenging us to give them information that is useful, grand, and important to their lives. The study of human behavior is inherently relevant, interesting, and important. Sharing only the illness model of human behavior misses the other half of life, the half whose secrets for which most people are searching. By incorporating positive psychology into instruction either as a stand-alone unit or by infusing it throughout the course, we share the secrets of the good life and achieve our goals as educators.

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Teaching Psychology at the Community College

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(This essay originally appeared as the monthly “E-xcellence in Teaching” e-column in the *PsychTeacher Electronic Discussion List* for May 2003.)

Over a year ago, a colleague who teaches at a university asked me, “What’s it like teaching psychology at a community college?” Although I can share my perspective based upon my experience working at my college, I cannot direct you to a body of literature on the subject. In their study of psychology curriculum offered at various post-secondary institutions, Perlman & McCann (1999) examined a sample of community college catalogs and described the types of courses offered. To my knowledge, no one has systematically studied the needs, concerns, and contributions of psychologists whose primary livelihood is teaching at the community college. Nor has there been an organization whose central purpose was to network and represent the interests and needs of community college psychologists. Fortunately, APA recently formed Psychology Teachers at the Community College (PT@CC). Gathering information on CC psychology is the top priority for the six community college psychology teachers who serve on PT@CC’s steering committee. More on PT@CC in a moment. For now please allow me to describe my perspective of teaching psychology at a community college in southern California over the last 25 years.

Public community colleges have non-selective admission policies and therefore provide open access to anyone who is 18 or older with or without a high school diploma. In fact, community colleges in many states even have limited admission procedures for children who are under 18 and still attending a high school or an elementary school. As a result, our students bring a wealth of diversity to the classroom. Students vary widely in many ways including ethnicity, nationality, age, commitment to learning, and readiness for academic work. Within one classroom, students may range from those still in high school, high school dropouts who run a successful business, returning housewives and other reentry students, students simultaneously enrolled at nearby universities, and others already having degrees. Some of our first-year freshmen could easily have gotten into a university, but for a variety of reasons chose the nearby “JC.” Other freshmen simply hadn’t the choice; their high school GPAs or SAT scores precluded them from beginning their college education at a university.

As far as academic readiness is concerned, in a given fall semester as many as 50% of the freshmen we serve don’t know about, or choose not to use, the most basic strategies necessary for learning: note-taking, reading and highlighting the text, managing their time, and attending class regularly. These latter students are in somewhat of a gray area—some of them, with our help, adjust and become very capable students, others fade away, at least for a while. Please understand, I am not bemoaning the type of students we

serve. I am not one of those who await the arrival of the "real" students so I can "really teach." These are the students we have been hired to serve.

Community college teachers have a unique challenge; this challenge is in large part why we choose to teach at this level. We strive to teach content while maintaining academic standards equivalent to the university. We must also instill in our students strategies for efficient learning and attitudes appropriate for academic success. In short, teaching new faces how to be students is a big part of our job. How well do we community college psychology teachers meet this challenge? Most of my evidence is anecdotal, but not all. Community college transfer students do quite well in California. The University of California's research unit recently reported that during their junior year, the GPA of transfer students usually exceeds the junior year GPAs of the university's native students. This fact is all the more impressive when one considers that many successful transfer students are not "university-qualified" when they start at the 2-year college. I recall several former Irvine Valley students, now with PhDs in psychology, who were among our unprepared freshmen taking one of my introductory psychology classes. The extent to which these "value added" success stories occur is not systematically monitored, but I'm confident they are true for every community college.

What are one's responsibilities and contractual obligations when teaching at a community college? I believe my college is fairly typical. We are on a semester system and have a basic teaching load of 15 hours per week, which translates to teaching five 3-unit classes each semester. Teachers earn supplemental pay for teaching overload and summer classes. Other duties include five office hours per week and service on at least one standing committee that meets monthly. Although some faculty do research and publish their work, it isn't expected, encouraged, or even recognized by most community colleges. Advising a student organization, such as Psi Beta, is completely optional and uncompensated, but self-satisfying and provides an opportunity to network with colleagues from other community colleges.

There are what some might consider some negative aspects to community college teaching. Depending on the size of the department and student body, for example, one may be teaching four or more different preparations in the same term. Teaching assistants don't exist. Many of us spend more time in meetings and serving on committees than one can imagine. One semester I served on over eight committees whose purposes ranged from hiring new instructors to being the Academic Senate representative for the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences. It is unrealistic to expect the college to help pay membership dues to professional organizations like APA, APS, or state and regional psychological associations. Nor can one expect much financial help in order to attend professional conferences. A PsycINFO subscription is far beyond the department's or college library's budget.

As for our "product," we are unsure how many of our students consider themselves to be psychology majors because transfer-bound students must declare themselves to be "general studies" majors while they prepare for their upper division psychology

coursework. Except for former students who stay in touch, we rarely receive student-level feedback as to how well former psychology students are performing at the university.

Although we feel we are making a considerable contribution to the education of future psychologists, we are only now beginning to collect transfer student outcome data through a series of data-sharing consortia under development throughout the state. These consortia arrangements soon will provide detailed information, such as courses taken and grades earned by community college transfer students in their upper division courses. Such information will greatly improve our program review processes.

Finally, although teaching and mentoring students at a community college is highly rewarding, I suspect many CC teachers experience isolation because they have no professional connection with their counterparts at other 2-year colleges or with psychology organizations. Understandably, this isolation and disconnectedness is greater for adjunct faculty and those teaching at smaller colleges where one teacher may constitute the “psychology department.” These concerns take us back to PT@CC's top priorities.

Recently APA's members voted to establish a membership opportunity, PT@CC, designed especially to serve community college psychology teachers. PT@CC hopes to facilitate professional networking and recognition of CC psychologists. Current APA membership data reveal that only about 320 members of APA list their primary employment as teaching at a 2-year college. PT@CC hopes to provide a new path for CC psychologists to become full voting members of APA. To this end, the PT@CC steering committee has initiated strategies on several fronts. One strategy will be to gather information on community college psychology. PT@CC's recent survey (Johnson & Rudmann, in press) studied the demographic make-up and educational preparation of community college psychology faculty. PT@CC's current study is gathering information about the needs and services desired by CC faculty. So far, the response to the survey is enthusiastic and positive.

In the near future, we plan to investigate the methods by which psychology programs at community colleges are focusing on student learning outcomes. The findings will be used to develop and share an archive of course and program learning objectives, assessment instruments, scoring rubrics, and reports describing how faculty are using learning outcome data to move from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction. Eager to provide help, APA recently assisted PT@CC by establishing an “Electronic Update” service for its members. PT@CC and the APA Education Directorate are using this service to send periodic announcements of important news and events to PT@CC members. (To subscribe the Electronic Update, please contact Martha Boenau in the Education Directorate at 202-336-6140 or e-mail Martha at Mboenau@apa.org.) The PT@CC steering committee, with the help of suggestions being collected through paper and online surveys, will continue to develop resources designed to meet the unique needs of those teaching psychology at the community college.

PT@CC is also exploring strategies to develop regional and local PT@CC facilitators. PT@CC's goal is to provide networking and professional growth opportunities to all community college psychology teachers, no matter how small their program, geographically remote their college, or their status as an adjunct for fulltime professor.

As I look back on my 25 years of teaching, there is very little I would change. Teaching has been both challenging and enormously rewarding. However, I certainly wish there had been an organization like PT@CC to provide professional development opportunities, and to recognize the important work being done by psychologists teaching at the community colleges. PT@CC has great potential to help CC teaching become even more effective, rewarding, and satisfying.

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The Never Ending Story: Renewing One's Teaching and Professional Life

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(This essay originally appeared as the monthly "E-xcellence in Teaching" e-column in the *PsychTeacher Electronic Discussion List* for June 2003.)

After almost 25 years of teaching, including a decade of off and on administrative positions mixed in, the major premise I have developed about teaching and our academic life in general is that change is inevitable and to survive and flourish as teachers we must learn to welcome it as an opportunity for renewal both in and out of the classroom. In fact, it seems to me that the degree and speed of change over the last 15 years has probably been faster and greater than any we have seen in higher education since the phenomenal growth of the 1960s. As Gardner (1981) noted, "In earlier generations value patterns were created and withheld the test of several generations. Today, we are like people in a land of recurring earthquakes and tornadoes, where each generation must keep its building skills fresh and in fact build almost continuously" (p. xiv).

I think there are several major sources of change that affect our academic lives. One source is external to the institution (e.g., regent or board mandated changes, legislative mandates, economic conditions, new directions and emphases in higher education). Another change agent is internal to the institution (e.g., enrollment growth or decline, new administration, changes in mission emphasis). For example, when I first came to Kennesaw State University, then Kennesaw College, in 1979 it had recently converted from a 2-year to 4-year institution, had an enrollment of 3,500 students, 130 faculty, and only 15 undergraduate degree programs (which did not include psychology) and no masters degrees. Today Kennesaw has almost 17,000 students, 420 faculty, and 45 undergraduate and 15 master's degree programs. It is not the same school!

Changes also occur at the departmental level. For example, a new department chair may institute changes in focus and expectations. In addition, our immediate colleagues change through retirements, resignations, or even occasionally through adding a new position. These changes can result in a sense of loss for old and valued colleagues, changes in the personal and group dynamics of the department, increased (or decreased) diversity of the faculty, and a potential gulf between tenured and non-tenured faculty. We might view these changes as either a threat to our status in the department or as an opportunity for renewal through the introduction of fresh ideas and perspectives.

We also experience many changes in our classrooms. Our students are becoming more diverse and increasingly more nontraditional (both in age and approach to education, with many working full- or part-time). For some of us, myself included, students are significantly younger, resulting in fewer and fewer shared experiences, and often making some of my favorite examples obsolete. I also have experienced changes in the content of the discipline with respect to sub-areas, current research, and methodologies. Many

topics, methodologies, and types of equipment that were central when I was a graduate student and were relevant in my teaching and research are no longer mentioned in current textbooks, with the possible exception of History and Systems. How many of you remember or actually worked with equipment such as a memory drum or the Lashley Jumping Stand? Let's not forget technology and its impact on teaching. When I started teaching the main technology I had in my classroom consisted of a 16mm film projector, filmstrip projector, overhead projector, and a blackboard. Today, I might walk into a classroom equipped with a PC with a CD/DVD ROM, a data projector, an Internet connection, and a whiteboard. I am beginning to wonder what might be obsolete in the not too distant future, such as textbooks, slide projectors, and VCRs.

Finally, we also change as faculty members. Hopefully, many of us will change status through promotion and tenure. However, we also change in our roles in the department. For example, many of us go from being a mentee to a mentor, we assume a variety of leadership roles in the department, and our professional identities and activities outside the college or university change.

Clearly, change is inevitable and can present opportunities for renewal during our careers. However, there are institutional and personal barriers to renewal in our teaching and professional lives against which we must guard. Institutions may lack support systems and incentives that encourage renewal such as rewards, both financial and recognition, money to support faculty enhancement (i.e., travel), time to incorporate effective classroom technology, and administrators that value the status quo.

Although these institutional barriers are important to address, more critical are the personal barriers. Some faculty lack the motivation to change, feeling that it involves too much effort, is unnecessary because everything is going well, or are unwilling to take risks that may lead to mistakes, which result in a perceived loss of status and the perception that they lack competence (McKeachie, 2002; Menges, 1999). Individual change may be inhibited by a vested interest in a particular approach or an inability to recognize that students have change. As Menges (1999) noted, for some teachers it is easier to continue teaching in the same way than to try something new.

Although I agree with McKeachie and Menges that most of the changes and adjustments we will make in our teaching must result from our own self-motivation to improve, we cannot let administrators totally off the hook. Administrative attitudes about, and support for, faculty enhancement are essential ingredients for the development of a climate of continuous renewal for faculty. Administrators are increasingly being asked to address issues such as retention and student success. My belief is that the best investment to achieve these outcomes is in the faculty. Administrators must be faculty-oriented, providing encouragement, resources, and flexible opportunities for faculty innovation and renewal.

What I want to share with you now is my 12-Step Program for maintaining or renewing that sense of novelty I think we all had when we first entered this profession. Although some of the suggestions reflect my own idiosyncratic journey, many are derived from

sources such as McKeachie's (2002) classic *Teaching Tips*, Bland and Bergquist's (1997) *The Vitality of Senior Faculty Members*, and some suggestions by colleagues at the 2002 Summer NITOP.

1) Get to know your students. Some strategies for becoming more familiar with your students include asking for their personal Web sites (this can be very revealing about their interests and personal experiences) and distributing a biographical questionnaire that they complete on the first day of class. Learning what your students' interests are can help you connect the course material to their lives.

2) Never stop listening to your students. Pay attention to evaluations and don't wait until the end of the course to get feedback. Use e-mail or class discussion lists to keep in contact. Also consider establishing a class advisory group by asking the students to select a subgroup that meets with you periodically during the semester to discuss the course and give you feedback on the class. I recommend establishing the group during the first class period by letting the class select representatives from among themselves. You can also consider allowing class time, with you absent, for the advisory group to solicit comments from the class as a whole to present when the group meets with you.

3) Always remember that what is old to you is new to your students.

4) Don't let yourself get in a rut, take risks. Make an effort to change your courses in either minor or major ways every semester. Changes may include adding new research content, using a different text, adding supplemental readings, modifying the sequence in which you present course material, using new assignments and activities, or team teaching—either with a disciplinary colleague or an interdisciplinary course. If you really want to be radical, throw away all your lecture notes and start fresh.

5) Interact with colleagues, both on and off your campus. Teaching should never be a solitary endeavor. In fact, Hitchcock, Bland, Hekelman, and Blumenthal (1995) noted that faculty who interact more with colleagues produce more research, are promoted quicker, receive more recognition, and report higher job satisfaction. On-campus interactions can often be the most difficult because the emphasis on teaching effectiveness for tenure and promotion purposes contributes to a hesitancy to share one's teaching experiences with a colleague who may later evaluate you. All too often when we ask a colleague "What are you doing these days?" the answer tends to be a description of his or her latest research project or a description (or maybe complaint) about committee work and campus politics. We miss the opportunity to share our teaching successes and failures with colleagues who are in the best position to provide informed feedback because they deal with the same students. For example, I have served on a number of promotion and tenure review committees over the years and often "discovered" several innovative activities and assignments that I never knew about until then. We need to spend more time discussing and exploring teaching through strategies like asking colleagues to sit in and observe a class or providing opportunities to share and discuss teaching (e.g., setting aside a department meeting, establishing a "teaching circle," see Scharff, 2002). Also, get to know colleagues outside your institution who share your

interest in teaching through attendance at teaching conferences, getting involved in organizations like STP, and attending workshops on teaching.

6) Keep a teaching journal. Journals can be individualized for particular courses or more general across courses. Keeping a daily or weekly journal encourages you to record your teaching experiences, including observations and reflections on what may have worked or failed in a particular class session, which may otherwise be forgotten over time. Entries in your journal can also be “data” for revising courses in the future, revising your philosophy of teaching, or added in a summary to your teaching portfolio.

7) Continually assess what you do in your courses. I know that assessment is a dirty word for some faculty. However, assessing students in your classes provides you with data as to whether students are achieving your intended course learning outcomes. These assessments can reveal where you are and are not successful in your goals and provide direction for improving your teaching.

8) Embrace and encourage your department to engage in periodic curriculum review and reform. This may be guided by current literature on the structure and outcomes associated with the undergraduate major or the desire to incorporate new theoretical or applied areas in the discipline. Such a review could be combined with an external review that can provide an outside perspective to stimulate renewal.

9) Take a break. For some of us, breaks can be accomplished through a sabbatical. Even if your institution does not have sabbaticals, explore the possibility of teaching an overload for several semesters that can be “banked” to earn a semester off. Believe it or not, taking an administrative assignment can sometimes help get a fresh perspective. Finally, consider taking time off from teaching a particular course.

10) Read about teaching and higher education through books and journals. Many of us already read *Teaching of Psychology* religiously, but additional ideas for innovation and renewal are available from teaching-focused journals published by other disciplines (e.g., I find *Teaching Sociology* a great resource for activity ideas that can be adapted for psychology) and more general teaching-related publications such as *The Teaching Professor*, *Change*, or *College Teaching*.

11) Use the Internet to get new ideas and resources as well as meet new colleagues. You can take advantage of online discussion groups such as this one both to meet new colleagues and get new ideas for your classes. I also occasionally take some time and search the Internet using Google for Web sites on a topic of interest. You can discover some great resources posted on the Web by colleagues, especially on their public course Web sites.

12) Be an advocate for faculty renewal both among your colleagues and across your institution. I think one way to do this is through participation in areas of faculty governance that impact curriculum development and teaching. For example, if your institution has a teaching center, get involved through both attending and volunteering to

assist in doing workshops. Staying active in governance can provide opportunities to advance and maybe advocate for resources to support faculty renewal. In addition to providing leadership and mentoring of new faculty through your participation, your participation helps you stay abreast of the latest trends in teaching and higher education across disciplines.

I believe all of us entered this profession because of our love for teaching and learning. I think all of us approached those first classes with a mixture of excitement and fear. Our challenge is always never to lose that almost childlike sense of anticipation and excitement as we approach each new semester or class. If we can hold on to this ideal, we don't really need to renew ourselves because renewal and change become a way of life rather than something we suddenly have to do to recapture what we may have lost.

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Author Note

1. Portions of this essay were originally presented as my STP Presidential Address at the 2002 APA Convention

Writing a Philosophy of Teaching

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(This essay originally appeared as the monthly “E-xcellence in Teaching” e-column in the *PsychTeacher Electronic Discussion List* for July 2003.)

A philosophy of teaching is a teacher’s conscience. In this essay, I will try to show how a written philosophy statement is helpful as a guide to what we do as teachers and how it can shape our teaching identity. For beginning teachers, writing this statement reveals the choices you must make in developing your teaching style. For those with more experience, the writing a philosophy can be a form of renewal.

First, I wonder how many readers already have written their philosophy. I wrote my first version only eight years ago, after I had been teaching for thirty years. If you have never written your philosophy of teaching, I suggest that before you read this essay you take time now to write it. To help you with that task, I have added an appendix with suggestions on how to proceed. If you want to try this, skip, hop, or scroll to the appendix; and follow the instructions. It is important that you not read the essay before you write your first draft.

“Philosophy” is a good label to apply to this statement. An acceptable definition for this term is that “philosophy is rationally critical thinking, of a more or less systematic kind about the general nature of the world . . . , the justification of belief . . . , and the conduct of life . . .” (Honderich, 1995, p. 666) That definition can be particularized to the world, beliefs, and conduct of teachers.

All teachers have an implicit philosophy that could be inferred from their behavior such as statements in a syllabus, the nature of assignments, and how they interact with students. I know award-winning teachers who never have written a philosophy statement, so I can not argue that you will not be successful if you do not make your philosophy of teaching explicit. However, I do think it can help all of us to put our teaching philosophy in writing. As Kurt Lewin said, “there is nothing as practical as a good theory.” The theory (your philosophy statement) can increase your understanding of what you plan to do in your teaching (design) and what you did (results).

Why did I make such a fuss about writing your philosophy before reading this essay? The main reason is that this should be your philosophy, influenced as little as possible by the ideas of others at the time you write it, especially if you are writing it for the first time. In the appendix I suggest some exercises that will stimulate your thoughts about your own experiences as a student and a teacher and help reveal your beliefs about teaching, but I do not tell you what the content of your essay should be. I don’t prescribe a form for the essay. It could be a standard essay with an introduction and conclusion or summary; or it

might be in the form of a numbered list of your principles; or you might write a story or poem. Whatever your philosophy of teaching is, it should be yours.

How long should it be? The answer to this question depends on your audience. People who may want to hire you probably don't want to read more than two pages. However, a much longer version might be written when you are trying to clarify your ideas for yourself or as a written conversation with peers. A few great teachers have presented their philosophies in books: William James in *Talks to Teachers*, Parker Palmer (1998) in *The Courage to Teach*, and Bill McKeachie in *Teaching Tips*. The 11th edition of *Tips* is a good example of how philosophy informs practice. In several places McKeachie reveals his philosophy of teaching. He is student-centered and promotes active learning techniques to involve students. His teaching is informed by research and also by his values, including his religious values. The last page of the book shows his commitment to the life of a teacher.

Once you have written the first version of your own philosophy, you are ready to put it to work. There are two general uses of a philosophy statement: guidance and reflection.

Guidance

Your philosophy influences your decisions about course planning. Consider how different teachers might state course objectives and measure student achievement of those objectives. There could be an emphasis on definitions, facts, and findings or on major ideas and applications, and one teacher may want to cover all topics in the textbook, while another teacher may prefer greater depth in selected topics. I can imagine one philosophy stating that knowledge in psychology is built on facts and that an educated student should learn about all topics. Another teacher believes that facts will be forgotten, so students should learn the big ideas in psychology and how to use them. A third teacher's philosophy may say nothing about content, but show concern for stimulating appreciation of psychology as a science and excitement for learning.

Our beliefs about how to relate to students are seen even in our policies concerning attendance and making up missed examinations. For example, I have seen statements that teachers "respect students as adults and independent learners" along with a syllabus that has strict rules about deducting grade points for so many unexcused absences. Comparisons like this help teachers think through what they do, and to revise either their practice or theory or both.

Reflection

In addition to believing in the practical value of a good theory, Kurt Lewin also thought that practical experience was the best way to develop theories. At the end of a semester we sit with our grade distributions and student evaluations, and think about what happened in our courses, what pleased us and what needs improvement. Comparing that experience with our philosophy helps to put the semester in perspective. The things that please us should be related to what is considered to be most important in our philosophy,

and we will want to work to improve those same things if our experience reveals that improvement is needed. Sometimes, however, experience leads us to reconsider our beliefs about teaching. For example, we may decide that the freshmen in our introductory courses really are not adults and we need to use a more authoritarian approach.

Discovery is a major benefit of reflection. You can discover inconsistencies between your theory and practice of teaching, but beyond that,

A clearly articulated philosophy gives substance and coherence to the brainstorming and fantasies of reflection. Sometimes reflection should be detached from the data of the classroom and allowed to spring from the imagination. Challenge all the conventional wisdom about teaching and create an ideal learning world. Go where no academic mind has gone before. Then return and translate your most creative thoughts to ideas and ideals that you want to have an influence on your teaching and include these in your philosophy (Korn, 2002, p. 207).

If you write or have written a statement of your teaching philosophy I urge you to put to work because it is the process of thinking, writing, doing, and reflection that produces the benefits for understanding your teaching. These benefits will continue, if you regularly review and revise your philosophy during the course of your teaching career as you have experiences and insights that cause you to reflect on teaching as a way of life.

On the other hand, after reading this essay, you may conclude that writing a philosophy of teaching is a waste, and your time is better spent revising a lecture or designing a new learning activity. If so, I hope you recognize that this action-orientation is your philosophy.

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APPENDIX

Instructions for Writing a Teaching Philosophy

Write your philosophy of teaching.

The primary reason for asking you to do this without preparation and suggestions is that this **YOUR PHILOSOPHY** should be your philosophy, not that of some expert. It should be yours in form as well as content. You are not starting from a blank slate, but from years of experience as a student and perhaps with some teaching experience. So just do it; let the force be with you. The only requirements are that you write in the first person (this is your philosophy) and use non-technical language.

If you already have written something like this, do not go and pull it out of a file or even out of your memory. Take a fresh approach to the task, as if doing it for the first time.

Find a quiet place where you won't be disturbed. Think for a while about teaching and whatever that brings to mind, perhaps occasionally jotting a note. Then do some free writing, where you write continuously without stopping to criticize your ideas. Next reflect on what you have written, and then re-write it giving it some organization.

Please do this now before reading further.

Try these exercises to stimulate your thinking about teaching.

1. Think of the best teacher you ever had, or a composite of several good teachers. What characteristics made them good? Do the same for the worst teacher(s) you have had.
2. Mind-mapping. Take a large sheet of paper. Write the word teaching in the middle. Around that word write other words, phrases, or pictures that relate to teaching. Then, for each of those words, etc., write words, phrases, or pictures that come to mind. The result may be a complex picture (map) of your ideas about teaching. Use colors or lines to link these ideas.
3. Think of a metaphor that you want to use to describe your teaching. For example, one teacher described himself as a border collie herding sheep; another said she was a wilderness guide. Explain why the metaphor applies to you, but also think of ways in which it does not apply.

Now revise your essay **AND CONTINUE TO REVISE IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN DURING THE COURSE OF YOUR TEACHING CAREER AS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCES AND INSIGHTS THAT CAUSE YOU TO REFLECT ON TEACHING AS A CAREER AND AS A WAY OF LIFE.**

The Case for Requiring a “Careers” Course for Psychology Majors

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(This essay originally appeared as the monthly “E-xcellence in Teaching” e-column in the *PsychTeacher Electronic Discussion List* for August 2003.)

Courses variously called “Careers in Psychology” or “Introduction to the Psychology Major” are recent introductions to the undergraduate curriculum. A recent survey reported that 34% of departments offer such a course (Landrum, Shoemaker, & Davis, 2003). In some departments, these courses are required of majors; in others, they are electives. Departments typically designate as requirements those courses that cover key content areas and research methods in the discipline. I believe that the content covered in a “careers” course is not so much essential to understanding the discipline as it is essential to today’s students, a point I will elaborate on below. To be sure, one might argue that such courses are helpful to departments and advance the profession of psychology.

In my view, a careers course is one of many vehicles available to departments for delivering advising information to students. A partial list of other such delivery systems would include: (a) faculty-student contacts, (b) peer advising, (c) psychology clubs, (d) majors’ meetings and/or graduate school/career days, (e) majors’ handbooks, (f) display racks of advising materials, (g) departmental Web pages, (h) departmental library, and (i) departmental bulletin boards. Of course, an effective advising program will employ a variety of such vehicles by which to deliver information to students, not just one.

An effective advisement program should also provide students with academic, career, and graduate school information. As a key component of a department’s academic advising program, a careers course should address these issues as well.

Departmental Advising Today

In today’s climate, departments need to be assertive and thorough in their delivery of academic, career, and graduate school information to their majors. This need can be traced to the nature of the students, the major, the marketplace, and graduate schools. Many undergraduates are uncertain about why they are in college. Regardless of whether they are clear about why they are in school, many of them assume that a college degree will guarantee them an interesting and well-paying job. The psychology major—like other liberal arts and sciences majors—is general in scope and not intended to develop skills directly and obviously tied to specific jobs. Thus, majors typically need assistance to understand the relevance of what they learn in (and out of) the classroom to their future jobs. Today’s workplace is a rapidly changing one, and students need special strategies to succeed in it. Finally, the graduate school application process is a complicated one, and students need critical information (Graduate Record Exams, strategies for selecting

schools to which to apply, application deadlines, etc.) to maximize their chances of gaining admission to programs.

Key Objectives of Careers Courses

Although departments need to design courses to meet the particular needs of their majors, I believe that there are two crucial things any careers course should teach students. First, careers courses should help students bridge the gap between the major and the marketplace (or graduate school). Thus, faculty need to inform students about the knowledge and skills that employers and graduate schools seek and identify courses in the core curriculum, psychology major, and minor and elective courses that will help students develop such knowledge and skills. Second, students need to learn the importance of becoming "free agents" (i.e., assuming an active role in their post-baccalaureate success; Carney & Wells, 1999). This course of action involves elective courses and taking part in activities and volunteer work to ensure they will have the knowledge and skills required to gain entry to the workforce or graduate school and skillfully "marketing" themselves to prospective employers or admissions committees (Carney & Wells, 1999).

Course Outcomes

Thus, a case can be made for offering careers courses. Is there any evidence that they produce useful outcomes in students? Several well-controlled evaluations of career development courses have been reported. In a for-credit, elective course, Ware (1988) found increases in students' information about themselves, the world of work, and job search skills, as well as decreases in career-related anxiety, fear, and guilt. Dodson, Chastain, and Landrum (1996) described and evaluated a three-credit, upper-division, pass-fail elective course that emphasized opportunities in and preparation for graduate school. Based on a survey of 42 students at the first and last class meetings, Dodson et al. (1996) reported lowered expectations about graduate plans (from doctoral to master's degree) and very favorable ratings of the course. Kennedy and Lloyd (1998) reported that a "Careers in Psychology" course for sophomores helped students clarify their career plans.

More recently, Dillinger and Landrum (2002) reported a pre-test-post-test study of student outcomes in a 1-hour, freshman-level, pass-fail "Introduction to the Psychology Major" course. Students reported increased knowledge about a number of course objectives, including knowing what is required to apply to graduate school and being familiar with bachelor's level jobs for psychology majors. Dillinger and Landrum also reported that some students seemed to question their choice of major. Still, it should be noted that although there was a significant drop between pre- and post-test scores on "commitment to the major" items, all of the post-test scores were still 4.0 and higher (on a 5-point scale).

In addition, although it is not a well-controlled survey, I can report some relevant information from the students at the end of my Fall 2002 Careers in Psychology course

(1-credit, pass-fail). Of the 17 students in the class, 71% felt that the course should be required, 29% felt that it should be an elective, and none felt that it should no longer be offered. Students could also provide open-ended comments to this question. I found one response to be particularly insightful: “The course covers information that students don’t know they don’t know.” (A copy of a recent course syllabus is available at OTRP-Online via the Web portal for the Society for the Teaching of Psychology: <<http://www.teachpsych.org>>.)

Why Require a Careers Course?

As the above studies demonstrate, careers courses can be an effective vehicle for transmitting useful information to students. But should they be required? In my view, there are two key reasons for requiring a careers course. The first is that departments can have control over the content of such courses, thereby ensuring that majors will receive vital information and strategies that will help them succeed upon graduation. Of course, other delivery systems (hand-outs, Web site, majors’ handbooks, etc.) can also provide this information. In fact, one might argue that these other vehicles may be more efficient ways to deliver information than courses because they require fewer faculty and departmental resources. Of course, another effective, but less efficient, option would be to offer a careers course on an elective basis. However, all of these options have a major drawback: There is no guarantee that students will utilize these advising resources. In fact, I would speculate that the students who most need this information are probably the least likely to avail themselves of it.

Thus, the primary reason for requiring a careers course is that departments can ensure that all of their majors have access to important information. I also believe that students are most likely to assimilate this information when they actively engage the material, and I would argue that active engagement is most likely to occur in the classroom setting.

Some Problems with Requiring a Careers Course

Faculty can have legitimate disagreements about the extent to which a careers course is an “academic” offering. The crux of this issue hinges on the course content. One way to provide careers courses that may not contain sufficient academic content is to offer them on a pass-fail basis and to set the number of credit hours lower than for a full-credit course.

Another problem with requiring a careers course is having enough qualified faculty to teach the course. Thus, faculty without much knowledge in the areas to be taught may need to attend tutorials offered by knowledgeable faculty members and may need to do reading on their own. Alternatively, the course could be taught only by the few faculty who are knowledgeable about course material. In any case, faculty need to receive credit for teaching such courses if they are not 3- or 4-credit courses. At Georgia Southern (and I suspect at some other institutions), faculty typically receive no credit for teaching 1-credit courses; they are just tacked on to one’s regular teaching load. Obviously, this is a dis-incentive for teaching such courses. On the other hand, 3- or 4-credit courses count

toward one's teaching load. So, for example, if the careers course were a 3-credit course, one could teach it and 2 other courses for a 3-course teaching load versus if careers were a 1-credit course, one would teach 3 3-credit courses and the careers course on top of that. To deal with this problem at Georgia Southern, we are experimenting with offering a large section of the careers course and having it count as a 3-credit course.

As noted above, some studies have reported that some students who take a careers course may decide not to major in psychology. Personally, I don't see this as a problem. For one thing, I am more concerned with students finding the "right" major than I am about a department having enough majors. Happily, psychology is currently one of the most popular majors in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002), so most departments need not be concerned about losing a few majors. Dillinger and Landrum (2002) make the point that students who remain in the major after having completed a careers course are likely to be more committed to it because their commitment is grounded in realistic knowledge of both opportunities and limitations.

In conclusion, I believe that a good case can be made for requiring a "careers" course for psychology majors. As with any course, departments need to develop expected outcomes for such courses, assess them on a regular basis, and make adjustments as necessary. This practice will ensure that such courses are accomplishing the objectives of the department.

The Rationale for "Truth in Advertising" for Psychology Majors

R. Eric Landrum
Boise State University

My colleague and friend Marky Lloyd has done a wonderful job in outlining the strong case for requiring a Careers in Psychology course, and I concur. In reading her article, I have no mistakes to correct, no arguments to make, and no bones to pick. (You would think at this point I would just shut up, right?) I would like to add, however, my \$0.02 worth as someone who developed such a course five years ago and has taught it continuously since that time. I am highly interested in topics related to student success, and this area constitutes much of my research program.

Why Such a Course?

Marky has presented a strong case for offering the course, with numerous benefits for both faculty and students. However, while we at Boise State hoped for those benefits, that perspective does not tell the whole story as to why we implemented the course.

It was about the mid-1990s that our faculty noticed a disturbing trend in our majors—dissatisfaction with the choice in majoring in psychology. It seemed many students did not understand the discipline until their junior or senior year; but for some, once they understood, they felt trapped in the major because now they knew about it, didn't like it, but didn't want to switch majors and delay graduation. It was also then that students began to understand that to "be" a psychologist would involve going to graduate

school, and then they became even more disgruntled. So we were left with a number of disgruntled juniors and seniors, far enough into the major to understand it, but so far in that it made it difficult to change if they discovered they didn't want to continue their undergraduate studies in psychology.

Truth in Advertising

To address this situation, I designed a 1-credit, freshman-level pass-fail course titled "Introduction to the Psychology Major." It is a required class for anyone wishing a bachelor's degree in psychology—including transfer students. The basic premise was that in requiring a 100-level course of every single student, there would be a common base of information for everyone. Thus, from the beginning of a student's career in psychology at Boise State, there is truth in advertising about careers in psychology. The course addresses options for employment (all degree levels), advising and planning, building credentials (e.g., research assistant, teaching assistant, internships), and strategies for success in the classroom (e.g. study skills, library skills, APA format). Faculty praise the course because they know that students have been exposed to basic topics prior to arriving in their courses—a strong benefit for a required class. Students generally like the course because (a) the assignments all focus on their future and their success, (b) it is a 1-credit course, and relatively low-key, and (c) it is pass-fail.

I highly recommend developing such a course to anyone, whether it is required or an elective. For a copy of my syllabus and other materials that might be helpful, please feel free to contact me at elandru@boisestate.edu.

Determining Career-Course Level and Why the Course Should be Required

Lauren F. V. Scharff

Stephen F. Austin State University

Marky Lloyd's essay on career courses is very timely for our department and our university. This past year, the faculty in our department agreed to add a Careers in Psychology course to our curriculum. This coming year we will determine the course description and have it added to our curriculum for the following year. Although our discussion is nowhere near complete, we did grapple with the level at which the course should be offered (freshman) and whether it should be required (in time, yes, for majors as a prerequisite for sophomore and higher classes).

As Marky mentioned, career courses should inform students both about the skills and knowledge that career employers would desire, and the same for graduate programs. In the past, our department has occasionally offered a "How to Get into Graduate School" seminar. Although some forward-thinking students took the course as sophomores or even freshmen, most students were juniors and seniors. Especially for the seniors, the information was too late to be as effective as we would like. Further, this course did not help students who were not planning on going to graduate school.

So, when do we most effectively get career and graduate school information to students? Offering the course as a lower-level course has the benefits of informing students when they still have time to adjust their academic and extracurricular goals to maximize their later success. It also may help students choose the most appropriate direction (graduate school or not, or even a different major) before they commit to a particular track of courses.

A final benefit is that it might help undecided majors (a benefit to the university in addition to the department). Advising brochures and general career information on the Internet can certainly help undecided majors. Introductory courses in a major may also give a taste of what a career in psychology might involve. However, these approaches often are generally haphazard or fairly superficial. A career course can give students the bulk of the information (which would be difficult to disseminate efficiently through individualized advising in larger departments), and then advising can take the next step of personalizing the information as a student's academic career advances.

Another major issue is whether a career course should be required. I agree with Marky that such a course would more actively engage students (e.g., compared to a brochure), and that if it is not required. Many students (possibly those most in need) may not take it. However, as she also pointed out, requiring such a course will impact faculty course loads and departmental resources in budget-crunch times. An additional point is that it may affect the departmental curriculum. A major requires a certain number of hours, and at least on our campus, departments may not be able to tack on another 1-3 hour requirement. Thus, some other content course may need to be sacrificed for the career course, especially if the career course is a 3-hour credit.

There are additional issues, such as how big should such courses be and still be effective, and training of instructors (as Marky mentions). Obviously, there will be many discussions (some heated, I'm sure) among the faculty. However, I do believe that the benefit of such courses is worth the effort it will take to integrate them into the curriculum.

The Timing of a Careers Course in Psychology

Erin B. Rasmussen
College of Charleston

Marky Lloyd makes some compelling points for the inclusion of a careers course in the psychology curricula. I have participated in departments where a careers course is, and is not required, and observed differences in student behavior. In the department with a required careers course, I noticed that students of all academic abilities spoke informatively, intelligently, and frequently about their post-graduate options and they seemed generally confident about their plans. When they graduated, they had products in hand like curriculum vitae, resumes, and letters of intent for prospective employers or graduate schools, all of which were required assignments in the careers course. By comparison, students in the department without the careers course serendipitously

discovered career-related information too late in their college careers to be competitive for jobs or graduate school. They were shocked to learn of the preparation required for applying to graduate school, how competitive it is to gain acceptance into graduate programs, and the importance of extra-curricular experience (e.g., research). Incidentally, some of these students were industrious, so their seemingly late approach does not speak to their ability or motivation, but more to their naïveté. These students also seemed discouraged to hear of the few career options available to psychology graduates with only a bachelor's degree. The question of "Why didn't anyone tell me this earlier?" occurs predictably, despite an active psychology club and advising system.

These experiences are anecdotal, but they overlap remarkably with Marky's position. Students need career information to be competitive, but they also need it delivered in a timely fashion—early enough to be useful to decision-making, but late enough that graduation and career preparation are within their time horizons.

A careers course offered early in students' college careers allows them to structure their academic activities to those best suited for their chosen occupations. For example, a student wishing to go to graduate school may join a faculty member's research team early, and develop unique skills and experience that will increase his or her chances of getting into graduate school. Offering the careers course too early, however, may not be beneficial, since most students are not even sure what "doing psychology" means until they have taken several psychology courses. Indeed, the view of what psychologists do broadens with every psychology course taken. Hence, it makes sense to require the course later in the curriculum. Offering a careers course during the senior year, however, has disadvantages that place students in a non-competitive position in that they learn the information too late.

Offering the course during the first semester of the junior year might be a compromising strategy. Not only will students have a reasonable understanding of what psychology is about (since they have presumably taken a number of psychology courses), but they will receive information in enough time that they can tailor the remainder of their curricular and extra-curricular activities to match their post-graduate goals. Graduation is likely in the time horizon of the junior, so the information obtained in a careers class is more likely to be meaningful and less likely to be forgotten.

A Reply to Landrum, Scharff, and Rasmussen

Margaret A. Lloyd
Georgia State University

I want to thank my colleagues, Eric Landrum, Lauren Scharff, and Erin Rasmussen for their thoughtful responses to my essay. Because none of them offered points of disagreement, my reply will take the form of pulling our key points together.

All four of us agree that the careers course is a useful vehicle for delivering useful information to students and that it should be required of psychology majors. (Of course,

some departments may not have the resources to do this, especially given today's tight budgets.)

We also agree that the course needs to be offered early enough to give students ample time for academic and career/graduate school decision making and planning. Although we differ on the optimal timing for taking the course (freshman, sophomore, first term of the junior year), all of us believe that the course should be taken relatively early in the academic sequence. Taking such a course in the freshman year gives students the most time to make use of the knowledge they have gained. On the other hand, sophomores and juniors are more mature than freshmen, they have had more exposure to the discipline, and they realize that they will be graduating relatively soon.

Landrum makes an excellent point—namely, that careers courses can serve as vehicles for “truth in advertising” about career options in psychology. Students armed with realistic and useful information about the major and career options are likely to be happier, higher performing, and better able to position themselves for desired careers or graduate school upon graduation than students lacking such information. Scharff helpfully observes that a careers course can be a relatively efficient and effective vehicle for disseminating key information to all majors; then individual advisors can personalize the information for students as they advance in the program. Rasmussen aptly reminds us about the important question of the optimal timing of the course (see above).

Other important considerations in designing such a course include: objectives, credit and grading, optimal class size, course scheduling, readings, and exercises. For more information on these topics, you can read an earlier E-xcellence in Teaching essay of mine that was posted in September 2000. This essay may be accessed¹ by pointing your browser to <http://list.kennesaw.edu/cgi-bin/web-admin?A2=ind0009&L=psychteacher&F=&S=&X=7439D04A3A6B0721B7&Y=buskiwf@auburn.edu&P=4292>

To conclude, today's students need departmental assistance to become competitive candidates for jobs or graduate school. One effective and efficient way departments can provide this support is to develop a required careers course for their majors.

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¹ [Editors' Note: This essay is available at the Kennesaw Listserv site for PsychTeacher subscribers at the address given. Alternatively, it may be accessed online at <http://teachpsych.lemoyne.edu/teachpsych/eit/eit2000/eit00-06.html>]

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A Parting Shot: Who was Richter H. Moore, Jr.?

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(This essay originally appeared as the monthly “E-xcellence in Teaching” e-column in the *PsychTeacher Electronic Discussion List* for September 2003.)

For the past two years, I’ve been one of those lucky guys who has had his cake and eaten it, too. During the regular academic year, I teach at Auburn University, my “home school”—a large Research I institution located in east central Alabama. During the past two summers, I have taught at Appalachian State University, my “home school away from home,”—a Regional Comprehensive institution located in the high country of western North Carolina. Although in my 21 years at Auburn I have accumulated a number of interesting teaching-related stories, my purpose in this column is to share with you one such recent story from App State.

The Monument

When I walked across the App State campus on my way to my first day of summer teaching last year, I spotted a small monument nestled in a beautiful garden full of hosta (h. caerulea, to you plant aficionados) not too far from Smith-Wright Hall, which houses the Psychology Department. The concrete monument is perhaps 15 inches high and a foot wide. In the center of the monument is a brass plate that reads:

Dr. Richter H. Moore, Jr.
8/19/28 to 3/12/96
He loved to teach

Although I’ve walked across many college campuses dotted with monuments to founders, college presidents, and wealthy benefactors, this is the first monument that I had seen dedicated to a teacher. Professor Moore must have been one heck of a teacher for somebody to take the time and trouble to erect a monument, even a small one, to honor him. (And, likewise, App State must be a unique institution to have such a monument on its campus.) I was curious to learn more about Professor Moore and his love for teaching.

Unfortunately, I became sidetracked and made little progress in uncovering anything about him during that first summer. However, on my walk to campus on the first day of class this summer, I came across the monument again and was immediately reminded of my earlier ambition. I resolved then and there to learn something about Professor Moore this time around.

A Little Gumshoeing

The first person I consulted about Professor Moore was Nadine White, the Psychology Department's Administrative Assistant. When I asked her if she had heard of Richter Moore, her only reply was, "Oh Lord, yes, he was a man who would run to a fire!" Being unfamiliar with this expression, I was left wondering whether this was a good thing or a bad thing. Perhaps Professor Moore enjoyed watching fires—sort of a pyro-voyeur—and was in a hurry to see them full ablaze or perhaps he ran to fires because he sought the opportunity to perform a daring rescue and thereby become a hero. As I learned, and if you don't know already, the expression has quite a different meaning—it means to have boundless energy and enthusiasm.

A short while later, during a conversation with Paul Fox, the Interim Chair of the Psychology Department, I learned that Professor Moore was indeed quite an outstanding teacher. I also learned that he was not a psychology professor—he was a former chair of the Political Science/Criminal Justice Department.

I next queried Stan Aeschleman, Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences regarding Professor Moore, and he kindly put me in touch with Dennis Grady, the Chair of the Political Science Department at the time the monument was put in place. Stan thought if anyone could fill me in on the escapades of Professor Moore that it would be Dennis. He was right. Based on what Dennis told me, supplemented with a couple of folders full of written materials from the App State Archives, I was able to put together the following composite of what made Richter Moore so deserving of his garden memorial.

Richter Moore, The Legend

To say that Richter Moore was a broadly educated individual is an understatement. He received his BS in 1949 from the University of South Carolina, where he studied both English and Psychology. In 1951, he earned his law degree from the same institution and then served two years active duty in the US Air Force (and another 32 years in the Air Force reserves where he worked as an investigator and Judge Advocate and from which he retired at the rank of Colonel). Five years later he received his Master's degree in Political Science from the University of Kentucky, followed by his PhD in the same discipline and the same institution in 1964. He began teaching part-time at East Tennessee State University in 1955 and in 1964 became the Chair of the Political Science Department there. In 1970, he moved to Boone, NC to chair the Political Science Department at App State. He served in that capacity until 1983. During these 13 years, he played the pivotal role in establishing the Criminal Justice undergraduate program at App State, did all of the undergraduate advising, and played the primary role in establishing the following organizations: the North Carolina Association of Criminal Justice Educators, the North Carolina Political Science Association, the Southern Association of Criminal Justice Educators, and the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences.

Professor Moore's motivation to pursue college teaching as a career stemmed from his work as a Judge Advocate. In that work, he witnessed first hand the sorts of trouble in which young people find themselves as a result of poor decision making and planning. He believed that through teaching he might have a positive effect on students' lives and thus encourage them to make beneficial rather than harmful life decisions (Simon, 1996). His specialty areas in teaching included Supreme Court jurisprudence, privacy, courtroom publicity, organized crime, gang activities, and the behavior of specific Supreme Court justices. (Interestingly, Professor Moore had the uncanny ability to anticipate the significance of social phenomena before those phenomena became well known—for example, Professor Moore discussed privacy problems and the World Wide Web before the Internet even existed [Dennis Grady, personal communication, July 22, 2003]).

Professor Moore was highly involved—perhaps the better word is connected—with his students. For example, during each summer in the late 1970s and early 1980s, he traveled to England with his students to study the origins of the British and American legal systems. He involved his students in a unique Study Abroad Program before studying abroad was a common idea in American higher education. In addition, he regularly took groups of students to Washington, DC to observe the Supreme Court in action.

Professor Moore also established an extended internship program for Criminal Justice students so that they could gain valuable service experience as part of their undergraduate career at App State. This program highlights another instance of Professor Moore anticipating trends in American higher education—he was doing service learning long before service learning became a popular pedagogical platform in higher education.

Another example of Professor Moore's connectedness to his students is evident in some of the exercises he used in his constitutional law classes. For instance, near the end of each semester, one of his students adopted the role of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; other students assumed the roles of the justices of the Supreme Court and still other students pretended to be lawyers who "argued" cases before the mock tribunal. He succeeded remarkably in challenging his students to become involved actively in their coursework.

Clearly, Professor Moore was a creative, challenging, and passionate classroom teacher. His passion for teaching was not confined to the inside of the classroom, though. He established programs curricula and state, regional, and national associations to promote undergraduate learning and teaching. He was quite humble about his achievements and willing to share the limelight with others. When he received the Founder's Award, the highest award given by the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, Professor Moore noted (Appalachian State University Office of Public Information, 1983):

:

This is the proudest moment of my career. However, this award is not just for me, but for all those who have worked with me over the years to develop, improve, support, and nurture criminal justice

education, and for those who have supported me in my efforts to assure criminal justice a place in the academic community.

The Take Home Message

I guessed correctly when I first came across that monument in the hosta garden—Professor Moore was one heck of an outstanding teacher. However, he was not a teacher in the way most of us think about teaching these days. What he contributed to his students' education transcended what he taught in the classroom—he promoted their education at every turn. In addition to riveting classroom exercises, he involved his students in service learning projects and foreign travel. He worked tirelessly behind the scenes to promote the teaching of his discipline through his involvement in associations created specifically to enhance and extend his and other students' education.

Excellence in teaching knows no boundaries. It is not specific to discipline or academic level. It is not limited by classroom walls or institutional property lines. It demands only that we be passionate about our subject matter, our students, and teaching itself. Without such passion, we are blind to teaching opportunities as they arise around us, whether we are on-campus or off. Professor Moore was both passionate about his teaching and visionary in his life as a teacher. His excellence in teaching certainly knew no boundaries.

Let me bring this essay to a close by issuing a challenge to all of us. As we think about our teaching at the outset of this new academic year, let us resolve to make our own classroom teaching as creative, challenging, and stimulating as Professor Moore's teaching. Let's not stop there, though. Let our passion for teaching permeate our professional lives to the extent that we, too, work tirelessly to enhance undergraduate education in whatever shape or form it may take. Indeed, let us all learn to run to the fire.

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Author Note

1. I would like to thank Stan Aeschleman, Paul Fox, and Nadine White for providing me leads for finding information about Professor Moore. I am indebted to Dennis Grady for providing valuable background information on Professor Moore. Thanks, too, to Kathy Simon for providing additional facts regarding Professor Moore's life. Finally, I also wish to thank Pam Mitchem of the Appalachian State University Archives for assisting me in locating files and other resources regarding Professor's Moore's career at App State.

***Involving Undergraduates in Individual Research Activities:
A Classroom Without Walls***

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(This essay originally appeared as the monthly "E-xcellence in Teaching" e-column in the *PsychTeacher Electronic Discussion List* for October 2003.)

This article is designed to encourage departments and, in particular, faculty members to incorporate an inquiry-based training component into their undergraduate curriculum. By inquiry-based training, we mean assisting students in developing independent research projects. We, like other educators, have always looked for ways to be effective in and out of the classroom, and we have actively sought opportunities that enriched the learning experiences of our students. Although we try to create alternatives to the traditional pedagogy, many of us still use a traditional format that combines lecture and laboratory. For example, most psychology departments require their majors to take a research methods and/or statistics course (Perlman & McCann, 1999). Many of these courses require that each student attend three hours of lecture and two hours of laboratory per week. Typically, lectures delineate the basic principles and theories of research methods and designs, as well as the appropriate statistics needed to analyze the data. During laboratory classes, computerized and workbook activities offer students practical opportunities to study important terminology and other aspects of research design and data analysis. Although this represents a common approach to enhancing undergraduate education in psychology (McGovern & Hawks, 1988; McGovern & Reich, 1996), there are other mechanisms for exposing students to inquiry-based research training.

Individual research experience is a great opportunity for students to apply what they have learned in the classroom to understanding how research really works. We call this the "classroom without walls." Below we discuss the importance of individual research activity, describe ways to encourage student and faculty involvement in the process, and provide advice for supervising student research projects. Involving students in direct research experience offers a complement to their theoretical training, which may serve to deepen their knowledge.

The Importance of Individual Research Activity

The most popular images of psychology tend to be those of applied areas such as counseling and clinical psychology. Students, as well as others, often think of psychology as a profession that mainly deals with counseling and advising individuals who are troubled or "crazy." Many students claim that their desire to study psychology is so "they can help people." Thus, most students probably do not enter the study of psychology with the expectation of becoming researchers or academic psychologists. Beginning students are often surprised to find that research is not only an important part of psychology, but is also a part of their own training that may greatly impact their careers. A crucial first step

in establishing the importance of research experience is to convey to students its relevance to intellectual, academic, and personal career success.

Ultimately, the goal of psychological research is to contribute to the knowledge base in psychology. Therefore, any research has the potential to provide researchers, as well as practitioners, with important information regarding human behavior. A perusal of any psychological journal is likely to uncover relevant information that may inform professionals, as well as laypersons, about depression, teen suicide, attention deficit disorders, and so on. Undergraduate students can be a part of this intellectual process and contribute valuable information to our field.

Furthermore, doctoral training is usually necessary for a career as a psychologist, and research skills are vital for entry into and success in doctoral programs. Many graduate programs—PhD programs in particular—seek individuals who have research experience. Thus, students who participate in research have a competitive advantage in the graduate school admissions process. This is particularly important for students whose Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores or grades may be low.

Finally, research can be intrinsically exciting. Only those who actually have the experience of framing questions, generating hypotheses, and implementing plans to test these hypotheses can discover this aspect of research. The enjoyment of the process is enhanced when the question is original and the researcher is the first to see the answers. It is particularly exciting when students have the opportunity to present their research at local, regional, or national conferences.

Encouraging Student Involvement

Students may be hesitant to participate in research for several reasons. They may feel unqualified to conduct research, think that it will be uninteresting, or worry that they will not have enough guidance through the process. Communicating the following ideas to students may encourage them to become involved in research.

First, many of the methods used in psychological research are relatively easy to implement. In many areas of science, original investigation is often reserved for those who have extensive background knowledge and are highly skilled in the use of sophisticated laboratory techniques. For example, undergraduate training in biology, chemistry, and physics typically focuses on acquiring basic knowledge and learning simple observation techniques, with little opportunity for testing new research questions. This is partly because success in these areas is often driven by new technologies that are dependent on both sophisticated equipment and advanced training. In contrast, although undergraduate psychology students also must spend considerable time and effort learning basic concepts and skills, psychology provides many tools of investigation that are relatively easy to use. Tools such as simple questionnaires allow undergraduates, either individually or as part of a research group, the opportunity to ask personally relevant, original questions.

Another piece of information likely to encourage students is that computerized databases make vast amounts of literature easily available, permitting searches that give a relatively complete picture of the existing work in any well-defined area. Such reviews not only provide an idea of what is already known about a particular set of variables, but they also show the limits of that knowledge, invite new research questions, and instruct the new researcher in the types of methods that have been applied successfully, or unsuccessfully, in the past. Students may feel overwhelmed by the vast amount of information until they become aware that these databases help simplify the process.

Students can be further encouraged by the prospect of receiving individual attention from a faculty research advisor throughout the course of the project. Ideally, students interact with a research advisor in the type of one-to-one relationship that is typical of graduate thesis work. This one-to-one interaction often leads to other positive outcomes—stronger letters of recommendation, more information regarding graduate school, and advice on careers in psychology, to name but a few.

Encouraging Faculty Involvement

Focusing faculty attention on the benefits of advising undergraduate research may help foster their involvement in the process. For example, undergraduate research may lead to publications and conference presentations, further the faculty member's program of research, and provide evidence of departmental productivity. A less immediately recognizable, but possibly more important, consequence of participating in student research is that through inquiry-based training, we have the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of another. Because research experience is crucial for the future advancement of undergraduate psychology students, training in the conduct of original research is arguably one of the most important experiences in a psychology student's entire undergraduate career.

Directing undergraduate research thus provides an opportunity to offer some of the most important instruction that a student will ever receive. Moreover, it also allows for the possibility of seeing very dramatic and positive changes in student perceptions of their own abilities and in their expectations for their own professional futures. Part of the appeal of conducting original research may also be in its ability to serve as a model for personal growth. The research process is constantly modifying our knowledge. Those who understand that process may more fully participate in the personal adventure that exists in the continual reappraisal of our ability to understand and appreciate our own lives.

Advice for Supervising Student Research Projects

There are many different ways of structuring undergraduate research projects. However, one consistent recommendation is that undergraduates should have considerably more structure than is usually necessary at the graduate level. This structure may be particularly beneficial when it breaks the project into small steps, has specific due dates associated with each step, and makes course grades contingent upon meeting those due

dates. Building a research project in a step-by-step manner creates a teaching/learning situation that differs in some important ways from the typical classroom experience. In particular, work at each step should meet relatively high standards in order for the project to progress to the next level. Because the faculty supervisor can decide when a particular assignment is finished, success at any level can be virtually guaranteed. Student recognition of their own success and their understanding of the process that created that success promotes confidence in their academic abilities. Success also has the potential for producing very positive changes in self-image and self-efficacy.

Faculty supervisors should be ambitious with their undergraduate students, but it is important to keep in mind that these students are not graduate students. Give students doable projects that take into account their needs, expectations, and abilities. Have students work at several levels of a project, including literature searches and reviews, and data collection, entry, and analysis. In addition, advisors can set conference attendance and presentations as goals for their students.

By the time students become involved in their own research project, they will have knowledge of research theories and techniques that they acquired in the classroom. Through inquiry-based training, students have the opportunity to contextualize and use that knowledge. Also, faculty supervisors have the opportunity to facilitate students' knowledge of the research process, something that is difficult to convey until students become directly involved.

Finally, faculty members must help students identify the rewards they receive from the process by giving voice to the intangibles gained from their participation: integrity and trust; appreciation for research ethic; critical thinking skills; a chance to know the professor on a less formal, more personal basis; and finally, the experience needed for success in graduate school or the labor force.

Summary and Conclusion

Throughout this essay, we have encouraged faculty members to engage undergraduates in inquiry-based training. There are many advantages for the students. In addition, the process can also be rewarding for faculty members. Involving students in direct research experience offers a way to bolster their classroom experiences and solidify their theoretical training, while providing them with tangible skills for graduate school or the workforce. Admittedly, there are times when working with students is tedious. However, as coal in its "pre"-diamond state, we have come to discover that the diamond is indeed in the outcome.

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Enhanced Feedback Using Computer-Aided Personalized System of Instruction

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(This essay originally appeared as the monthly “E-xcellence in Teaching” e-column in the *PsychTeacher Electronic Discussion List* for November 2003.)

Many university classes are too large to teach in an ideal manner. This greatly limits the amount of verbal (both oral and written) engagement students can have with the subject matter and the amount of quality feedback they receive. The result is that students may complete courses without being able to express coherently the course material, let alone incorporate it into higher-order thought processes.

There appears to be general agreement on a number of instructional features that help to promote the development of higher-order thinking, including frequent testing requiring expository writing, peer interaction, and student-generated questions (Graesser, Person, & Hu, 2002). Conner-Greene (2000) reported that students given short, frequent tests rather than longer, infrequent exams not only demonstrated increased higher-order thinking, but also obtained higher average scores in the course. Jackson (2000) noted that collaboration and group work increased thinking levels in students from every age group, ranging from elementary school children to graduate students. Finally, encouraging students to ask and even develop questions for testing can help promote higher-order thinking (Carroll, 2001). Students both asking questions of, and providing feedback to, their peers should thus be highly effective in fostering the development of higher-order thinking.

Empirical research has not yet established the delivery system most suited to provide the necessary features for developing and maximizing higher-order thinking. However, with increasing student numbers and diversity, traditional teaching methods may not always be the most feasible or efficient systems. This holds especially true in institutions of higher education, where the development of higher-order thinking is crucial. Online methods offer a promising way to deliver courses to larger populations of diverse students. One of the benefits of using computer technology is that it can be programmed to keep track of students' work and level of accomplishment. In addition, the program can be systematically changed to compare methods for enhancing learning and higher-order thinking.

In recent decades, several approaches to computer-mediated education have appeared in which assignments are completed through the Internet or a campus computer network (e.g., Hiltz, 1986). Although only a few forms of computer-assisted and computer-mediated instruction have been studied experimentally, research indicates that these courses can be as effective as, or more effective than, traditional methods (Kulik & Kulik, 1991). Apparent in all of these approaches is the fact that as computer and communication network technology changes, so does the role of the instructor (Kook,

1997). Instructors' roles will take on the features of information consultants, team collaborators, facilitators of critical and creative thinking, course developers, and academic advisors.

At least that is the promise of education on the Internet. Unfortunately, that promise has so far remained largely unfulfilled. Probably the most dramatic change computer technology has brought to higher education is the use of e-mail for communication of students with the instructor and with other students. On the whole, computers have served in this regard simply as a messaging system—an extremely convenient one both for instructors and students—but not a primary instructional tool. Other common uses of computer technology in higher education include providing an online catalogue of library material, conducting literature searches, and obtaining articles and other information posted on websites.

Direct applications of computer technology in higher education have largely been devoted to attempts at adapting standard classroom activities to a Web environment. A popular commercial program for facilitating instruction on the Web, for example, is called WebCT, which is short for “web course tools.” As its name implies, this program provides instructors with “tools” that permit them to recreate an online version of standard course practices. Instructors using this program, or other course delivery programs, have posted lectures, conducted online discussions, and arranged for students to engage in group-work on the Internet. These activities often highlight problems that exist in many standard classroom activities. For example, in a standard classroom discussion, the fact that only a few students are participating may not be readily apparent to the instructor. Because the class discussion is auditory, the instructor knows that students are hearing the discussion, but may overlook the fact that they may not be listening. The problem of non-participation by large numbers of students is much more evident in an online course because the program logs every contribution that each student makes to the discussion. However, when contingencies are placed on contributing to an online discussion, it is almost impossible for an instructor to evaluate and provide effective feedback to the huge amount of verbal material thus generated.

It would appear that recreating standard course procedures on the Internet is probably not an efficient use of computer technology in higher education. Systematic educational procedures proven to be effective and that make maximal use of the potential of computers are required. Methods must therefore be implemented for monitoring the activities of students and providing them with feedback.

The method my colleagues and I use in some of our undergraduate courses is called computer-aided personalized system of instruction (CAPSI). In this method, which is based on Keller's (1968) personalized system of instruction, students proceed through the course material by completing unit assignments on study questions designed to initiate student inquiry. Students who are further advanced act as peer reviewers. To ensure high-quality student involvement, the program requires that the instructor, teaching assistant, or two peer reviewers evaluate or review a student's unit assignment and provide feedback to the student. Students must demonstrate mastery on a unit in order to proceed

to the next one. In addition, all assignments and the feedback provided are recorded automatically for the instructor to sample. Students receive as many attempts as they need to demonstrate mastery of a unit, but at least one hour for restudy must elapse between successive attempts. There is also a built-in appeal process for arguing the validity of a given answer. The program is applicable to any course topic and any set of questions or problems. It has been used successfully over several decades in a number of psychology courses at the University of Manitoba (Kinsner & Pear, 1988; Pear & Crone-Todd, 1999; Pear & Kinsner, 1988; Pear & Novak, 1996).

In a course using CAPSI, students demonstrate mastery through unit assignments, midterms, and a supervised final exam. Students study the text independently and complete study questions selected by the program from a bank of essay-type questions on the material they have just learned. Students proceed at their own pace through the study units; and, as soon as a student has demonstrated mastery of a unit (defined as correctly answering all questions on the unit assignment), he or she may serve as a peer reviewer on that unit. The program selects peer reviewers for each completed assignment according to an algorithm that takes a number of factors into account, such as the student's current level in the course, the number of times the student has served as a peer reviewer, and the availability of the student to peer review a unit assignment in a timely fashion (i.e., 24 hours from the submission of the assignment). Peer reviewers receive a small amount of course credit each time they review an assignment.

Data on CAPSI show that the instructor and teaching assistant provide the majority of feedback on unit assignments during the first few weeks of the course (Pear & Crone-Todd, 2002). As the course continues, the instructor and teaching assistant continue to provide feedback to the first few students who complete each unit. However, peer reviewers then provide increasingly more of the feedback. Feedback is considered to be minimal if it consists only of a short statement such as "good answer." It is substantive if it includes a specific reference to the actual content of the answer. It is particularly noteworthy that with CAPSI the amount of substantive feedback that students give and receive appears to be much greater than could occur in a typical university course with comparable enrollment (Pear & Crone-Todd, 2002).

CAPSI is equally important as a tool for researching the education process. Although CAPSI differs significantly from traditional course procedures, CAPSI variables are traditional educational variables. Traditional courses contain textual material on which students are tested, and through discussions and other activities, students, as well as instructors, provide information and feedback to other students. Some of the dependent variables that my students, my colleagues, and I are currently researching through CAPSI are methods for increasing higher-order thinking (Crone-Todd, 2002; Crone-Todd, Pear, & Read, 2000; Pear, Crone-Todd, Wirth, & Simister, 2002), improving the accuracy of peer reviewers (Martin, Pear, & Martin, 2002a), increasing the amount of substantive feedback peers provide (Pear & Crone-Todd, 2002), and using feedback to increase the compliance of students (Martin, Pear, & Martin, 2002b).

In conclusion, CAPSI is an effective solution for instructing and providing feedback to large numbers of students. Moreover, because the instructor deals with each student individually rather than as a group, CAPSI can be used to teach multiple courses at the same time. With a proven track record, CAPSI has shown promise for developing higher levels of student exposition and comprehension of course materials. Because of its success at the University of Manitoba, the Faculty of Arts and the Department of Psychology have recently budgeted funds to develop and upgrade further the CAPSI program. Further information about CAPSI may be obtained by visiting www.capsi.org.

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Walking the Fine Line: The Opposing Forces of Professional and Personal Relationships

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(This essay originally appeared as the monthly “E-xcellence in Teaching” e-column in the *PsychTeacher Electronic Discussion List* for December 2003.)

In psychology, we spend a considerable amount of time teaching our students about opposing forces. We teach of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems, of depolarization and polarization, and of tolerance and withdrawal, to name a few. We teach our students how the body and mind use these mechanisms to survive and adapt to changing conditions. For many instructors, these “opposition” lectures become favorites that provide a link across the many subfields of our science. In the paragraphs that follow, I would like to consider an analogy between these oppositional forces and good teaching practices.

As a former high school guidance counselor, I believe students enter the classroom with the same fears, hopes, and expectations they have prior to meeting with a counselor. In both cases, students are seeking a relationship with a professional who can help them grow in a desired area. From my experiences, I have reached the following conclusion: Teachers can benefit greatly from monitoring the progress of their students just as counselors monitor the progress of their clients, sometimes aware of professional responsibilities and sometimes aware of personal considerations.

In the counseling of high school students, there is a “line” of which we often speak. On one side are those who become too close to the students, creating overdependence and enabling the student never to confront the issue at hand. On the other side are those who create distance and separation, and who students view as unapproachable. Somewhere in the middle are the counselors whom their peers regard as excellent. These are faculty held in high standing because they recognize the importance of professionalism as well as the importance of meaningful student relationships. They are able to walk the fine line that students come to enjoy and respect. As we strive to become better teachers, we might want to remind ourselves of the following five lines, and a few practical tips for staying “online.”

The Fine Line Between Teacher and Learner

As teachers, we must remind ourselves that students are human beings first, learners second. We can gain much respect by identifying with our students and informing them that we too are human. I have found it effective on the first day of class to tell students that I am a learner first, a teacher second. I talk to my students about the great pleasure my work brings and how I consider it both a privilege and an honor to teach and learn

with them throughout the semester. Certainly we need to establish ourselves as “experts” in the classroom—after all, students expect us to provide insight they might not have on their own. However, they appreciate knowing that we are students as well and also wish to be challenged.

The Fine Line Between Challenge and Novelty

Certainly students often enjoy being challenged. In addition, they enjoy novel demonstrations that help clarify a challenging concept. Thus, a second fine line we must walk involves the balance between challenge and novelty. Too much challenge could leave our students feeling frustrated; too much novelty could leave students with a misunderstanding of the science that lies behind the fun. Ask yourself, “Are the novel activities I use in my class meaningful to the concepts of psychology, or are they just being used for a cheap laugh and good times?” Those who can walk this line have the ability to take the most challenging concepts in psychology and make them seem simple through the use of novel demonstrations.

The Fine Line Between “Professional” Presence and “Personal” Presence

Informal conversations with students have led me to believe that they often select career paths, choose favorite subjects, or become interested in a content area primarily because of the instructor. More specifically, the instructors’ excitement about psychology and genuine concern for their students serve as a spark that ignites a lifelong interest in psychology. It seems apparent that students will often follow good leaders before they follow good subjects or contents. Therefore, we must ask ourselves, “What do students see when they enter our classrooms?” Are we dressed in a way that tells our students psychology and teaching are important to us? Do we use language that is respectful and reflects our professional approach to the discipline?

Creating a professional atmosphere is perhaps “old hat” for many readers of this essay. However, a question that might be of interest is “How can I temper this professionalism with pieces of personalization?” First, start by learning the names of each student in your classroom. Whether you have a class of 25 or 100, learning names is always possible with some effort. Second, take the opportunity to speak with students outside of the classroom. Ask them about their hobbies or other activities in which they might be involved. Let the students know you are available to them and will make every effort to help them become successful learners. If they sense you have a genuine interest in them, they will make every effort to perform better in class, not only because they want to learn, but also because they appreciate you as a person and teacher. Finally, be yourself. As we all know, students are tremendously perceptive and will spot a fake a mile away. Be up front with them. Allow them to laugh every now and then at your expense. If the students see that you are not above self-deprecation, they will gain a sense of trust and respect for you. As a result, they will feel safe taking risks in the classroom. In sum, use your actions to build rapport, not power.

The Fine Line Between Structure and Flexibility

Teachers who walk the line have not only designed a clear sequence of lectures and projects for the class as a whole, they have also mastered individualizing these items when necessary. At many points during the semester, students will come to us with special needs or circumstances. These are critical moments that may be “make or break” points. For example, imagine a course where attendance is mandatory. What do you tell a student who approaches you before the semester begins and tells you she will have to miss two class periods? Do you deliver a stern “no,” or do you “flex”? What do you tell a student who asks if she can modify the classical conditioning project slightly to fit in with her job at the local zoo? Do you stick with your structure, or do you flex for the student? Teachers who walk the line seem to have an ability to use flex situations to capture the student and gain their respect.

The Fine Line Between Course Tradition and Class Identity

Is it possible to form professionally meaningful relationships with our students before we ever meet them? As strange as it may sound, this question can be answered with a resounding “Yes!” Whether we work at the college or high school level, most teachers of psychology are likely to agree that specific instructors and their courses are a regular topic of discussion on campus. Certainly, each instructor and course seems to earn some sort of reputation, or tradition, if you will. Assuming your tradition is one of relative favor and positive energy, the question of how to use this tradition to establish better relationships still remains.

As a starting point, give students something about which to talk. Consider it your major responsibility to “turn students on” to the science of psychology. Present the complexities of human behavior in a way that is relevant to everyday life. Students will talk about those things that seem most applicable to their lives.

Allow students to promote your course. Tell your students there are probably other students who would also enjoy the course. Because you are always interested in working with people who have a sincere interest in learning, you would appreciate if they would tell others about the course. Here, you pay a compliment to your students (showing you trust them) and promote your course in one fell swoop. If you’ve done your job as a teacher, you need not worry—your students will more than sell the course.

Make students aware of the success of the program. If you are at the high school level, tell stories of alumni who are pursuing post-secondary degrees in the field or of the percentage of students who easily passed the Advanced Placement exam. If you are at the post-secondary level, tell stories of those who have found meaningful work or gone on to graduate school. Make it obvious to your current students that past students have excelled and that you take extreme pride in the success of your students. Soon, your current students will want to be a part of this cycle of success.

It is important, however, to balance tradition with some specialized class identity. Although you can establish tradition with your students before they ever step foot in the classroom, a specialized class identity is necessary each and every class period. This task can be done with minimal effort. It might be as simple as a quirky phrase or saying that you use with one group. It might be a joke or personal story that you share with another group. It might mean a special outdoor lecture for one class, or a special field trip for another. As instructors, we tend to think that every course must receive the same educational experience. However, if we do not take steps to personalize every class, we have done our students a greater disservice than inequality could ever produce.

Summary

Students who come from a classroom where a teacher has “walked the line” will always hold a special place in their heart for psychology. As a result, they will feel a special connection to the science of psychology as well as loyalty to the group of which they were a part. And who knows, perhaps one by-product of our willingness to walk the line might be that students will become more excited about the educational process.

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Bill Buskist lives, works, and plays in Auburn, Alabama and takes occasional extended side-trips to work and play in western North Carolina. He is an active member of the Society for the Teaching of Psychology and truly enjoys his affiliation with his STP colleagues and friends. Like Professor Moore, he loves to teach, and throughout his two decade (and change) career, he's enjoyed nearly every moment of being a teacher.

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Randy Ernst will teach psychology next fall at Lincoln North Star High School. He is co-author with Charlie Blair-Broeker of Thinking About Psychology (a textbook for high school psychology), a co-author of the National Standards for the Teaching of High School Psychology, a co-editor of the fourth volume of the APA Activities Handbook for the Teaching of Psychology, and author of the 1994 edition of College Board's Guide for Teaching Advanced Placement Psychology. Randy has served as Chair of TOPSS Executive Board, as an external panelist of APA's Board of Educational Affairs, and is a Question Leader at the annual AP Psychology Reading. He is an author or editor of several TOPSS unit plans, and is a co-chair of the Positive Psychology Teaching Task Force. Randy is a recipient of the APA's Division 2 Teaching Excellence Award, the University of Nebraska's Distinguished Educator Award, and Time-Warner's "Crystal Apple" National Teacher Award. He lives in Nebraska, with his wife Sherri and their three intelligent daughters.

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Bill Hill received his Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Georgia in 1979 and has been on the faculty at Kennesaw State University (KSU) since then. During his tenure at KSU he has been a full-time teaching faculty member, Psychology Department Chair (1988-1994), Associate Vice-president for Academic Affairs (1998-2002), and Acting Vice-president for Academic Affairs (April-July, 2002). In the fall of 2002, he assumed the position of Director of the KSU Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning, which coordinates faculty development programs at KSU. In addition to directing CETL, he also teaches some courses in the Psychology curriculum. In 1989 he

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Steve Hobbs is a Professor at Augusta State University, where he served as chair of the Department of Psychology for twelve years. He began the process of reinventing himself as a full-time faculty member in 2001. Steve is a mental health advocate and conducts research on the biological aspects of learning and addictions. He has received his university’s top teaching and service awards, has served as national chair of the Council of Undergraduate Psychology Programs (CUPP), and is president-elect of the Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA).

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Harold Moon is professor emeritus at Augusta State University where for 25 years he was professor of psychology with stints in various administrative positions. Earlier, he was assistant/associate professor at Auburn University for eight years. His scholarly interests include teaching, history of psychology, ethics, and learning. Harold received his B.S. from Auburn University in 1956 and his Ph.D. from Florida State University in 1962. He served one year as a clinical intern at the University of Tennessee Medical School and two years as a clinical psychologist in a community mental health center in Alabama. Harold has been a member of numerous professional organizations, serving as president of several at the local level and also of the Alabama Psychological Association, the Southeastern Psychological Association, and Psi Chi. He is a fellow APA and charter member of APS.

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Jerry Rudmann holds a PhD in Educational Psychology from University of Southern California. He was an industrial psychologist for Rockwell International, then left in 1977 to begin teaching psychology at Irvine Valley College in Irvine, California. While continuing to teach at Irvine Valley, Jerry is also supervisor of institutional research at nearby Coastline College. Dr. Rudmann has served as the National President of Psi Beta, was STP's community college teacher of the year in 1997, and currently serves on PT@CC's executive committee.

Lauren F. V. Scharff is a professor in the Department of Psychology at Stephen F. Austin State University, where she has been teaching since January, 1993. She completed her Ph.D. in Human Experimental Psychology in December, 1992 from the University of Texas at Austin. At SFA, she has coordinated initiatives to reorganize new faculty orientation, create teaching circles, and write a faculty "survival guide." In her department, she established a graduate teaching seminar for students who desire to instruct courses while in graduate school. She regularly teaches introductory psychology, research methods, physiological psychology, and perception courses. She has received several college and university level awards for her university initiatives and her teaching. Her major research interests include text readability, visual search and depth perception, although her students continually shift her research efforts to new directions. For the past five years she has collaborated with researchers at NASA-Ames to create a metric to predict text readability. In her community, she has been a coordinator and/or presenter since 1994 at the Annual Expanding Your Horizons Career Day for Girls. She has a wonderful husband, a four-year-old son, two dogs and two horses who all help her stay well-balanced.

Tina Vazin is an Assistant Professor and has served as the Interim Chairperson in the Department of Foundations and Psychology at Alabama State University for the past 5 years. She teaches courses in Inferential Statistics, Research Methods, Sensation and Perception, and Developmental Psychology. Her research interests include health disparities including HIV prevention and drug abuse. She is the principal investigator for a research project funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services evaluating the effectiveness of abstinence education in the prevention of adolescent pregnancy and HIV infection. She is co-principal investigator of a campus-based evening child study center and Project Director of a pilot research project funded by the National Institute of Health evaluating methods to reduce reproductive health disparities. She serves as a board member on the Alabama Association for Behavior Analysis.

Earl D. Walker, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Morgan State University in Baltimore, MD. He has been a member of the department for over 30 years and has guided the development of hundreds of research projects. He and his students have presented papers at meetings of the American Psychological Association, Eastern Psychological Association and American Psychosomatic Society.

This past April, the Carolinas Psychology Conference Committee recognized him for his outstanding mentoring and service.

Ken Weaver is beginning his ninth year as chair of the Department of Psychology and Special Education at Emporia State University. He is the university's Roe R. Cross Distinguished Professor, the recipient of the 2002 Robert S. Daniel Award for Teaching Excellence from the Society for the Teaching of Psychology, and the 2001 Regional Faculty Advisor Award from Psi Chi. He also is President-elect of the Southwestern Psychological Association.

Valerie Whittlesey is a Professor of Psychology and Former Chair of the Psychology Department at Kennesaw State University. Dr. Whittlesey served as Chair of the department for four years and has served on the faculty at KSU for ten years. She teaches courses in Developmental Psychology, Social Issues in Psychology, Careers in Psychology, and Senior Seminar in Psychology. She has published articles in the areas of Developmental Psychology, Department Assessment, and Diversity in Psychology and has published a book, *Diversity Activities for Psychology*. Dr. Whittlesey is currently Associate Program Chair for the Society for the Teaching of Psychology of the American Psychological Association and is on the Executive Committee for the Southeastern Psychological Association.

William Douglas Woody completed his doctoral work with Wayne Viney at Colorado State University. He recently moved from the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire and is now Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Northern Colorado. He teaches and conducts research in the areas of psychology and the law, social psychology, and history and systems of psychology. He is the recipient of university-level and national teaching awards.