

Volume 1, Issue 9: September 22, 2004

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Faculty Focus

Volume 1, Issue 9
September 2004

Hopefully your school year has started out great. Concentrate on continuing your success. Enjoy this month's *Faculty Focus* and please forward it to your colleagues.

Ginny Haight, editor

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Online Guest Lectures Add to the Learning Experience

One of the advantages of the online classroom is the ability to bring together people regardless of time and location, which can often provide for more diverse learning experiences than would otherwise be possible.

In addition to attracting students from anywhere in the world, it is also possible to bring in content experts to provide guest lectures, an approach that June Julian, associate professor of art education at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, uses in her online and hybrid courses.

"I think of [the online lecture] as a creative medium, almost like a digital performance space or digital exhibition space," Julian says.

Thus far, Julian has relied on friends, colleagues, contacts made at conferences, and her own graduate students for online lectures. The lectures can be in a

variety of formats, but with accessibility in mind, she prefers that they are in the simplest formats such as PowerPoint, HTML, or Adobe Acrobat.

"As a teacher it's nice to share the responsibility of providing content to these pre-service educators. The variety of voices, the different perspectives, the various geographies, the diverse populations, and the diverse emphases that various people give material, I think, can benefit any teacher or any learner," Julian says.

While it certainly helps if the guest lecturer has experience creating material for web delivery, it's not a requirement. Julian was able to use a guest lecture from a colleague who had never created web content who created a lecture with Word and hyperlinks.

The lecture was for an undergraduate art survey class for non-majors on the topic of geometric abstraction, a concept few non-art students know much about. He explained the concept and used links to provide examples.

The lecture explained that to an untrained eye many abstract paintings don't make much sense. But these artists, among them Piet Mondrian and Van Doesburg, were aware of what they were doing. In Mondrian's case, he began by painting trees -- black branches against the sky and began to depict them more abstractly, and eventually came up with a grid that represented them. "It wasn't that the artist did something frivolous or could not observe or represent nature in a virtuoso way," Julian explains, "but they chose this path to keep distilling geometric shapes from nature."

To make the lecture interactive, it asked students to use whatever graphic software application they had on their computers to draw a naturalistic scene, and then try to make it a geometrically abstract scene and post both of them to the message board.

Julian used the same online guest lecture in another course, but she used a different assignment with it. She had students select a work from any of several museum websites; capture it off the website and credit it; create their own version of the work using geometric abstraction; and post the original, their version, and commentary to the course's message board.

In addition to giving students the chance to share their work and thoughts about the pieces selected, the assignment also was a good opportunity to teach students about the rules for using copyrighted materials from the web.

She also had her students create online lectures, which, in addition to bringing a diversity of material and presentation methods into the course, it gave students the opportunity to create course materials that they will be able to use as they begin their teaching careers.

For this project, students worked in pairs. Each student created an online lecture and assignment, and each critiqued his or her partner's.

"I thought it was a very rich and successful experience. The students did too. They enjoyed it, and when the class was over, they left with a compendium of online lectures that they could use," Julian says. (With each student's permission Julian saved these lectures to a CD.)

The message board has become an important element in all her courses. She has students submit their assignments on the message board and also uses it as a space for student teachers to post their reflective journals. "Out in the field, students often come up against situations that they don't know how to deal with. So if they write in these reflective journals daily as part of their requirements, I am able to see what's going on. I found that especially with classroom management problems I can mentor from afar, but the thing that really works nicely is when peers suggest to each other how to deal with a certain situation," Julian says.

Contact June Julian at jjulian@uarts.edu.

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Realizing Faculty Leadership Potential: An Interview With William Julian

To meet the challenges of the increasingly complex and demanding role of a liberal arts college administrator, William Julian, provost and dean of the faculty at Lindsey Wilson College in Kentucky, looks for and cultivates leadership in the faculty he hires. *Academic Leader* spoke with Julian about how he does this.

How do you find, identify, and develop faculty leadership?

I assume I am working with professional smart people. If I'm searching for, let's say, a sociology position, I let the sociologists decide if the person is a capable sociologist. When I talk to the person, I may chat about that a little bit. But I am far more preoccupied with the qualities of the person and how he or she seems to resonate with the mission of my institution. I'm looking for a person who has

energy, a person who behaves in such a way as to suggest that they like people because liking books and liking people are two different things.

I'll make my hire, and then over next two years I'll watch the way the person operates; get a handle on what their interests are, what they seem to like to do, how well they're plugging into the campus; and begin to try the individual on committees and taskforces. We just see how the person works or leads a team of other people. That kind of tells me what I'm going to do from there.

I try to be alert to the faculty member who comes to my office to talk about leadership. Typically, they have been with us for a length of time and are good at what they do. They are comfortable with their faculty role and in effect they're saying, "Gee, is this all there is?"

That gives me an opportunity to talk to them about future career paths, suggest a variety of networking workshop opportunities, and give them some things to read about making the transition into administrative work, which in faculty culture is not the thing you're supposed to publicly admit.

Is it necessary that every faculty member has some leadership qualities?

No. One of the things that isn't talked about enough is good followership. Faculty can be terrible followers. They can make leadership extraordinarily difficult because they don't know how to follow. Not all faculty have to be leaders, but if I find they have leadership qualities, I consider it a plus.

I like to leadership roles so people get into the mode of serving for fixed terms because if people have to both lead and follow, they are a bit wiser when they lead.

Rotating those positions also gives people a creative outlet, which you really have to think about on a small campus, and it can reenergize an office or a program when you do that.

What about informal leadership roles?

Informal leadership is going to emerge on a campus without the dean doing anything. It's a social dynamic. But the kind of leadership it is depends on the larger context in which it emerges. If faculty are feeling safe in their positions, are excited about their college, and feel respected by peers and by the administration, you're going to get one kind of informal pattern. If they feel themselves under attack, if they're insecure, or if they're worried about their future, you're going to get another kind of leadership. And there isn't a lot that a person in my position can do to manipulate that in the short term. That's where the accumulated culture and collective experience of faculty makes an enormous

difference. What you do is go to the lunch room and ask yourself, who are people having lunch with? And who are the story tellers? Those are the informal leaders.

Contact William Julian at julianw@lindsey.edu.

The above article is an excerpt from *Academic Leader*, a newsletter for deans, chairs, and other academic decision-makers. To receive a monthly subscription to *Academic Leader* visit http://www.magnapubs.com/subscribe/magnapubs_al.html or call 1-800-433-0499.

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Motivating Students: 8 Simple Rules for Teachers

By Lana Becker and Kent N. Schneider, East Tennessee State University,
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The first four rules appeared in the August issue of *Faculty Focus*.

Rule 5: Help students create a "link" when teaching something new. If the student can "link" the new material to something already learned, the odds of learning the new material are greatly increased. Examples of possible "links" include: prior material learned in this course (e.g., the critical concepts described in Rule 1), material learned in prerequisite courses, and "real-life" experiences of the students outside the classroom.

Rule 6: Recognize the importance of vocabulary in a course. Students often struggle with new vocabulary in many courses, especially introductory ones. To succeed in these courses, students must become comfortable with new terminology. As subjects are presented, new and/or confusing terms should be identified and introduced to the students. Present "real-world" definitions and alternative terminology, in addition to textbook definitions. One way to help students assimilate the course vocabulary is to create a "living" glossary on the instructor's website where new terminology is added, explained, and illustrated throughout the course.

Rule 7: Treat students with respect. Patronizing behavior may be expected of primary school teachers, and "drill sergeant" strategies may be effective in military boot camps. However, most college students will not respond well to these techniques. Give students their dignity, and they will give you their best efforts.

Rule 8: Hold students to a high standard. If students are not required to maintain a specified level of learning and performance, only the most highly motivated students will devote the time and effort necessary to learn. In contrast, maintaining high standards not only will motivate student learning, it also will be the source of student feelings of accomplishment when those standards are met.

Each of these rules can help motivate even the most lethargic student, but Rules 7 and 8 are the most important. If students are not treated with respect and held to a high standard, scrupulously following the first six rules will have much less impact and might end up being an exercise in futility.

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