



# getSET GAZETTE

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Office of Support for  
Effective Teaching  
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## Let's Talk Publicly About Scholarly Teaching

Janice M Denton, University of Cincinnati

Based on the Keynote Address, *4<sup>th</sup> Annual Success in the Classroom: Sharing Practices that Work*, UNM, February 18, 2009

Links to You Tube video and audio Pod cast of Dr. Denton's presentation: <http://oset.unm.edu/SuccessintheClassroom.html>

I recently read an essay that said despite our perceived lack of opportunities to exchange ideas, we actually do talk a fair amount about teaching and learning, but we tend to do it in isolation. Over the years, higher education has organized its efforts to improve student learning around specific communities of practice. For example those faculty interested in student learning communities are probably aware of Evergreen State College in Olympia. This institution and its faculty are a significant resource for this area of research. At my own institution, and at many others, there is a very active faculty group working on Problem-Based Learning. Each year, they travel to conferences, national and international, to share their work with other researchers. Recently, I have seen a significant push from organizations like the Association of American of Colleges and Universities to engage faculty in research about service learning and its impact on student outcomes. So why, if all this wonderful research is going on, do many of us still feel as though we have no one to talk to? Pat Hutchings (the author of the essay) speculates that each initiative goes off in its own direction and then becomes unintentionally isolated. In other words, they forget to come together under the general banner of teaching and learning and exchange their findings.

In her essay, Hutchings<sup>1</sup> recalls a comment made to her by an administrator at a large research university. "The problem on my campus is not that there's nothing going on around teaching agendas. It's that there are so many different things it's impossible to connect them all – or even to be aware of them." This suggests that it is essential to foster the type of teaching and learning conference you have here at the University of New Mexico. A venue to hear about projects that have a common underlying principle—scholarly teaching that leads to finding ways to promote better student learning—but uses a wide range of strategies to achieve the goal. (Go to **Scholarly Teaching** on pg. 2)

## Community Based Scholarship Grand Rounds

How can you incorporate community activity in your teaching? What would your students gain that cannot be learned in the classroom? How could engagement with the community enrich and empower your scholarship? To find out, attend one or all three of the *University Grand Rounds: Gathering Lessons on Academic/Community Work*, organized by OSET Faculty Associate, Mark Childs, Associate Professor of Architecture and Planning. Modeled after the case-based approach of medical education where doctor and patient are present, each part of this series features a community member and UNM scholar in a discussion of their collaboration. Each event is on a Wednesday, 12:00-1:30 pm in Room P104 George Pearl Hall (at the east end on the lower level).

*April 8: Increasing Community Involvement in Los Duranes.* Dan Young and Adam Bubb from UNM's Research Service Learning Program (RSLP) and Ray Wright, Director of the Los Duranes Community Center will discuss the purpose of the RSLP in the context of work by students from multiple departments who engaged the Los Duranes community in educational efforts in nutrition and child development.

*April 15: HEROS: The Hidalgo Medical Services Model.* Charlie Alfaro, CEO of Hidalgo Medical Services, and Art Kaufman, VP for Community Health at UNM-HSC will show how UNM's Health Extension Rural Offices (HEROs) interweave UNM resources and community health priorities to improve access to care and increased health status.

*April 22: Martineztown Ongoing Redevelopment.* Frank Martinez, Citizens Information Committee, and Richard Nordhous, Professor Emeritus in Architecture, will illustrate how multiple UNM departments linked their educational missions with physical planning, public health, community history, and superfund remediation in this historic neighborhood close to UNM.

See "OSET Events" list on the back page for more information.

## Use Writing to Assess Student Learning

Assessment of student learning is perhaps the most important process tool for quality improvement of learning at UNM, but developing effective qualitative assessment methods using student writing is challenging. To help faculty, graduate students, and academic staff overcome this challenge, the Writing Across Communities (WAC) Alliance is holding a Writing Assessment Colloquium, April 24 – 27 with Professor Linda Adler-Kassner, a renowned American scholar in the field of writing studies and assessment of writing program effectiveness. Professor Adler-Kassner has consulted on assessment for the American Association of Colleges & Universities, is active in the National Council of Teachers of English, and is the incoming President of the Council of Writing Program Administrators. The colloquium consists of two workshops that are designed to bring instructors together to talk about assessment and writing, and to enhance their capacity for implementing using writing to assess student learning.

The colloquium program will help attendees implement writing-assessment programs for student learning and gain expertise in assessing portfolios, developing authentic student learning outcomes, and assessing student writing across the curriculum. A workshop on Friday, April 24 (1:00 to 3:00 pm) will cover the use of writing for assessment and its practices, challenges, and benefits. A second workshop on Monday, April 27 (1:00 to 3:00pm) will consider "dynamic criteria mapping," a strategy for developing common values and common ground among stakeholders in a writing program. All faculty, staff, and graduate students are welcome to attend the two workshops. Refreshments will be served. OSET is pleased to be a co-sponsor of this event. More information can be found at [www.unm.edu/~wac](http://www.unm.edu/~wac).

**Please Don't Throw me Away!!! Give to a TA, Adjunct, or other instructor**

## Scholarly Teaching *(continued from page 1)*

Let's think of teaching on a continuum. At one end is teacher reflection; at the other end is controlled traditional educational research. Before we head to the middle, the place I will develop the most, let me define the ends. Reflection is a loosely used term. When I polled a small, unscientific number of my colleagues, they defined it as a process to analyze data to see if it answered a question they were interested in. I'm sure depending upon the context, there are other definitions. However, what everyone agreed on was that a structure is needed to facilitate reflection; otherwise the results can be of little value. Most people find it very difficult to sit down and reflect without prompts. I also came across an interesting observation in an article by Hatton and Smith<sup>2</sup>. They said that reflection is not often associated with teaching. Their research suggested that many who teach see teaching as being focused on the present, rather than thinking about what has happened and why. This leaves me thinking, what is reflection, and what value does it have to someone interested in teaching and learning. At the other end of the continuum is the controlled, traditional educational research. Much of it comes out of educational or cognitive psychology. It generates educational theory. Many of us find articles like this interesting and sometimes useful; however, what we generally want to do with them is take the broad concept and make it operational in our own history, math, or physics classrooms.

This leads us back to the middle of the teaching continuum. This is the area of teaching known as classroom action research (CAR), where you and I systematically inquire into some aspect of student learning. In this inquiry, we use data to answer practical questions about teaching and learning in our courses. CAR is more data-based and systematic than reflection but less formal and controlled than traditional education research. CAR integrates the two roles of faculty—teaching and scholarship. For the purposes of our conversation, I am going to label it Scholarly Teaching and use the definition by Lee Shulman, the former president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. He defines scholarly teaching as “Teaching practice that is well grounded in the sources and resources appropriate to the field<sup>3</sup>.” In other words, when we investigate the learning of our students we use a research methodology and then we adapt strategies found in the teaching and learning literature to help our students learn more effectively.

In an article published in the first volume of the *Journal of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* Shulman states scholarly teaching “reflects a thoughtful selection and integration of ideas and examples, and well-designed strategies of course design, development, transmission, interaction and assessment. Scholarly teaching should also model the methods and values of a field, avoiding dogma and the mystification of evidence, argument and warrant... We develop a scholarship of teaching when our work as teachers becomes public, peer-reviewed and critiqued, and exchanged with other members of our professional communities so they, in turn, can build on our work. These are the qualities of all scholarship.<sup>3a</sup>”

So, today's conference is a meeting of professionals where classroom action research (CAR) is shared. Some of you will have met this term before, but I suspect that there others for whom this is a new term. It is, however, one that I would like you to become familiar with and start using when talking about your work. In the sciences, when we talk about our work in the lab or in the field, we “present our research.” I'm sure you use similar language in your discipline. So when we talk about our work with student learning, let's call it what it is: *classroom action research*.

You are busy professionals who wear more than one hat on a daily basis, and your primary focus has to be on the activity that will result

in tenure or promotion. However, to fail to recognize all the great teaching and learning that goes on within classrooms does a disservice to faculty as scholars and ignores the teaching mission of the university. Many disciplines have long and distinguished histories of being engaged in publishing teaching and learning research. You may come from one of them. I'd like to share two examples with you.

A 2007 article in *Perspectives on History*, a journal published by the American Historical Association, traces how the teaching of history became a scholarly activity in its own right. In the article, written by Keith Erikson<sup>4</sup>, he explains that the 1960s and '70s saw the birth of periodicals such as the *History Teacher*, *Teaching History* and *Teaching History: A Journal of Method*. By the turn of the century he notes, “That there existed seven parallel networks of historians seeking to understand and improve history instruction.” He wrote about a series of published essays with titles like, “Teaching History at University: Enhancing Learning and Understanding.” I found myself connecting to the university's library catalogue and downloading the articles as I was reading Erikson's piece on the other half of the screen. Erikson further states that, “Gradually historians around the world began to accept two fundamental principles of history education—the idealization of discipline-based knowledge and the imperative for evidence-supported conclusions.”

My own discipline, chemistry, has depended on the *Journal of Chemical Education* for 85 years as a resource for enhancing teaching and learning. John Moore, the current editor, believes “Applying to the problem of improving undergraduate education the same kind of thought and creativity that go into research projects is something we should all do more often.” As a chemist, I find it inspiring that there are colleagues nationally and globally who share my passion for improving student learning and that we have such a significant body of work to draw upon for ideas and inspiration.

In 2003, a colleague and I began looking for a way to help our faculty present their scholarly teaching in a manner similar to the way they document their disciplinary research. The impetus for our project was the perceived lack of evidence to support our claim of being an institution that actively supported high quality, scholarly teaching. We realized, however, that invoking the idea of ‘scholarly teaching’ and taking the steps to document, ensure authenticity, and demonstrate usefulness was something quite different.

We modeled our effort on the “Stanford Project” sponsored by the American Association of Higher Education in 1994, and led by Pat Hutchings and Lee Shulman. This initiative sought to examine how teaching, a major component of faculty work, could be more effectively documented, evaluated, and improved. We modified their approach to address the needs of our colleagues. Faculty used a series of prompts to write short articles focusing on three areas of teaching: course conception and planning; teaching strategies; and a classroom action research project that measured student learning. The articles were then sent to a colleague to read and review. Then the participants met for three days (as a research learning community) to discuss the

### **Designing Courses for Effective Student Learning Faculty and Instructors Institute May 21-22, 2009**

Sign up and obtain more information at:

<http://www.unm.edu/~oset/DesigningCoursesPage.html>

Graduate teaching assistants, adjunct and part time faculty, and visiting faculty are welcome. Instructors of large-enrollment classes are especially encouraged to participate.

feedback and work on improving the study and practice of their own teaching and student learning. This has proved to be a model that works well because it considers teaching to be a serious intellectual process associated with scholarly work rather than a technique or presentational method.

The first activity assumes that the course you teach and the syllabus you author represent profound acts of scholarship. We contend that the syllabus and the article should provide a peer with an understanding of the choices and rationale that underlie your syllabus. You end up writing an article that is a *scholarly argument*. The peer who receives the article is asked to consider it as a piece of evidence to interpret their colleague's work and thinking. They are asked to think about the standards by which the work should be reviewed: Things like coherence of "argument;" distinctiveness of approach; quality of reflection and inventiveness of the course. They are also asked to what extent the standards they used are similar to those they would use in judging the quality of a colleague's discipline research.

The second activity has at its core the scholarly expertise that goes into helping students learn. What is it that scholarly teachers in the different disciplines know and can do in the classroom to help students learn and how do we judge classroom practice: by what standards and criteria? It also emphasizes Lee Schulman's point that scholarly teaching should be grounded in teaching and learning literature. The peer who reviews this body of work is asked to consider a number of issues. Things like: What did you learn about the teacher through this method? What are the appropriate and best criteria on which to judge classroom practice? Might the standards and criteria differ if the teacher were teaching the course for the first time versus having several years of experience with it?

The third activity asks faculty members to present a classroom action research project that measures student learning as reflected by the outcomes of an assignment. The CAR project is then peer reviewed.

Now, let's extend CAR into familiar but yet commonly unrecognized territory. Despite the fact that we, the faculty, have always in some fashion assessed student learning, I have a number of colleagues who still wonder what it is! I believe much of the confusion and consternation stems from the fact that assessment is presented as some new concept instead of what it is—Classroom Action Research—an investigation of student learning. When it is presented in this light, we can all relate to it because we are all deeply committed to helping our students learn. Assessment means that we identify student learning outcomes that are important in our courses, programs and institutions; we design ways to measure the learning; we establish clear criteria and standards and use them to judge the learning. Then we analyze the results. For example can the students write argumentative essays and at what level? Can the students teach patients how to take their medication correctly? If yes, then we are confirming learning; if not, then this is our opportunity to explore the teaching and learning literature and engage in scholarly discourse about teaching and learning.

Assessing student learning is a scholarly activity. Therefore, it needs a framework and a methodology. It requires us to view what we do to help our students learn, both in and out of the classroom, as a scholarly activity. As Lee Schulman said, "It is teaching that is grounded in the resources and sources appropriate to the field."

So back to the scholarly teaching project my colleague and I have been working on. It revolutionized how my colleagues view student learning and assessment. It is a project that was long overdue and, indeed with hindsight, perhaps it should have been in place before we tackled formalizing assessment of student learning in our degree and general education programs. One does, however, live and learn!

You know, because many of you are involved in CAR projects, that like any other research activity, CAR requires a methodology, knowledge of the literature and commitment to the field: in this case student learning. By all definitions, our work results in scholarship when the results are shared. The way the sharing takes place (presentation or publication) probably dictates how the scholarship will be rated, nevertheless CAR is vital to helping institutions of higher education meet their teaching mission, and it is important to give this type of research the honor and reward it deserves.

<sup>1</sup>Hutchings, P., 2009, Building a Better Conversation about Learning, *Carnegie Perspectives* <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/perspectives/sub.asp?key=245&subkey=582>

<sup>2</sup>Hatton, N., and Smith, D., 1995, *Reflection in Teacher Education: Towards Definition and Implementation* <http://alex.edfac.usyd.edu.au/localresource/study1/hattonart.html>

<sup>3</sup>Shulman, Lee S., 2000, From Minsk to Pinsk: Why A Scholarship of Teaching and Learning? *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, v. 1, no. 1, pp. 48-53 [http://www.iupui.edu/~josotl/VOL\\_1/NO\\_1/shulman\\_vol\\_1\\_no\\_1.htm](http://www.iupui.edu/~josotl/VOL_1/NO_1/shulman_vol_1_no_1.htm)

<sup>4</sup>Erekson K., 2007, Organizing and Globalizing the Scholarly Teaching of History Perspectives on History, *Perspectives in History*, v. 45, no. 6, <http://www.historians.org/Perspectives/issues/2007/0709/0709not2.cfm>

## Using Wikis for Teaching

Join OSET on Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup> from 2-4pm for a hands-on workshop on *Teaching with Wikis to Build and Share Knowledge*. A wiki is an easy-to-use web-based tool that allows faculty to create forums for student writing and collaboration. Wikis engage students in active explorations and interactions, allowing them to construct knowledge with others in the class.

Wikis allow the instructor to move away from being the transmitter of information to a facilitator of information.

Wikis allow students to virtually collaborate on project planning and document creation at their convenience.

Facilitators Phil Tietjen and Valerie Thomas use wikis in courses they teach for the English Department, including professional writing, and pedagogical courses. They also use wikis outside the classroom to share teaching research and practices with other instructors and participate in collaborative writing projects. New Media and Extended Learning (NMEL) is a co-sponsor of this event.

The workshop will begin by answering some common questions: Why would I want to Wiki? What ways can I Wiki? What are examples of educational Wikis?

Following this short presentation, each participant will use a laptop computer (provided by NMEL) to set up their own wiki, using PBWiki, a free Wiki tool available on the Internet. As we move through the steps of setting up your wiki, we will consider how to match your wiki to the learning outcomes for your course. We will also discuss best practices.

Participants will learn how to do the following:

- ★ Request a wiki
- ★ Invite students to join the wiki
- ★ Set up the home page
- ★ Add additional pages
- ★ Add and edit content
- ★ Upload files
- ★ Create links to other pages inside and outside the wiki
- ★ Track changes and revert to earlier versions
- ★ Insert plug-ins for calendars, videos, slides, and chat areas

In addition, each participant will receive a workbook with instructions on these activities so you can practice them in your office after the workshop.

# OSET Events

Go to [www.unm.edu/~oset](http://www.unm.edu/~oset) for more information, or email [oset@unm.edu](mailto:oset@unm.edu) or call 277-2229

Teaching with Clickers Workshop, Tuesday, March 24, 2009, 2:00-4:00 pm.

Teaching with Wikis to Build and Share Knowledge, Monday, April 6, 2009 2:00-4:00 pm.

Gathering Lessons on Academic/Community Work (all at P104 George Pearl Hall, east end, lower level):

All members of the community are welcome at these three events. Please direct questions to Mark Childs, [mchilds@unm.edu](mailto:mchilds@unm.edu) or 277-5059

I. *Increasing Community Involvement in Los Duranes*, Wednesday, April 8, 2009 12:00-1:30 pm.

II. *Health Extension Rural Offices (HEROs): The Hidalgo Medical Services Model*, Wednesday, April 15, 2009 12:00-1:30pm

III. *Martineztown Ongoing Redevelopment*, Wednesday April 22, 2009 12:00-1:30 pm

Using Assessment to Improve Courses and Curricula: *Closing the Assessment Loop*, Wednesday April 15, 2009 2:00-4:00 pm.

Using Writing for Assessment: *Practices, Challenges, Benefits*, Friday, April 24, 2009 1:00-3:00 pm, Lobo A&B.

Mapping What We Value in Student Writing, Monday, April 27, 2009 1:00-3:00 pm, Lobo A&B.

UNM Teaching Awards Ceremony, Wednesday, May 6, 2009, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Designing Courses for Effective Student Learning: *Faculty and Instructors Institute*, Thursday & Friday, May 21-22, 2009 8:30-3:30 pm

**getSET Brown Bags:** Informal facilitated discussions over lunch. See OSET website for more information. No reservation required (bring your own lunch please!).

ePortfolios: *Engaging and Assessing UNM Students*, Thursday, April 9, 12:30-1:30 pm, SUB Spirit Room.

## Plan to Attend the University Teaching Awards Ceremony and Reception

Mark your calendars now to attend the highlight celebration of teaching at UNM. The Annual Teaching Awards Ceremony and Reception will take place on Wednesday, May 6, beginning at 2:00 pm in Ballroom C of the Student Union Building. More than 75 tenured and tenure-stream faculty, adjunct faculty, clinician educators, lecturers, and graduate teaching assistants have been nominated for various University-level awards. The Faculty Senate Teaching Enhancement Committee is reviewing materials submitted by the nominees in order to select the very best of these excellent educators for special recognition. At the ceremony, Provost Suzanne Ortega will present the Outstanding Teachers of the Year and Outstanding Adjunct Teachers and Lecturers of the Year awards. Acting Dean of Graduate Studies Charles Fleddermann will present the Susan Deese-Roberts Outstanding Teaching Assistant Awards. The program will culminate with the naming of the 2009-2011 Presidential Teaching Fellow by President David Schmidly. A reception will follow the awards ceremony and is hosted by the Office of Support for Effective Teaching.

## How Can OSET Help YOU?

Have you ever wondered how OSET chooses its workshop and brown bag topics? The ideas come from instructors and administrators. We generate programs to meet the needs of teachers. Is there a topic that you would like to learn more about in a workshop or informal brown bag discussion? If so — please let us know! Is there some aspect of your teaching and learning experience that you would like to share with the UNM teaching community through a workshop or brown bag? If so — please let us know! Would you like an independent peer review of your teaching? If so — please let us know! Would you like to have an informal conversation about teaching triumphs and challenges? If so — please let us know! You can call at 277-2229 or email us at [oset@unm.edu](mailto:oset@unm.edu).

## How to use IDEA to Improve Your Teaching

If you used IDEA to receive feedback from students on your teaching during Fall 2008, then you should now have a summary report. Like the old ICES report, this document summarizes student ratings of "teaching excellence" and "course excellence." It also summarizes students' perceived progress on learning objectives selected by the instructor.

As an added bonus, those instructors who elected to have students fill out the Long Form now have a report on how to improve their teaching relative to the learning objectives selected on the IDEA Faculty Information Form. The report suggests up to twenty teaching methods that instructors can use to improve student accomplishment of the learning objectives. Moreover, each suggested teaching method is linked to a short report on the IDEA Center website (<http://www.theideacenter.org/node/64>), written by an educational researcher, that describes best practices for that method. There are also short essays about each of the 12 learning objectives that instructors choose from (<http://www.theideacenter.org/PODNotesLearning>).

You can find more information on how to use IDEA to improve teaching, visit the UNM IDEA web site ([idea.unm.edu](http://idea.unm.edu)). OSET is also pleased to provide individual, confidential consultation on the interpretation of the IDEA reports or any aspect of teaching, including a classroom visit.

 ❖ Workshops  
❖ Conferences  
❖ Institutes  
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