

ACE IT!

Quality Enhancement Plan: The ACES Project

ACE IT! NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter for Lamar's Quality Enhancement Plan:
Active & Collaborative Engagement for Students

March 2013

Volume 1, Issue 4

"How Am I Doing?": The Benefits of Mid-Semester Evaluations

As the midpoint of the semester approaches, you may begin to hear this question from your students: "What's my grade so far?" Typically, their reason for asking this question is to determine how well they need to perform on the midterm exam or project to better their chances for a successful end to the course. Once you provide them with this midterm assessment, a follow-up question is usually posed: "So what can I do to bring up my grade?" A simple extra-credit assignment is usually what they're hoping to receive. However, you know the solution isn't that simple. Likely, a complete shift in learning behaviors and attitude is in order. Such a mid-semester adjustment can greatly benefit these students.

But what about turning this evaluative question on yourself? Have you ever asked your students how *you're* doing? Let's venture into this uncertain territory. . .

In the same way that we may pause a lecture or discussion to gauge students' understanding of the material, we should "pause" our courses to gauge the effectiveness of our teaching and evaluation methods. A very simple yet very effective tool for this is the **Start-Stop-Keep Doing survey**. This survey will allow you to see what students are responding to (or not) and what they would like for you to do (or stop doing) to enhance their experience and learning in your courses. Not only does this survey help you see what adjustments you may need to make, but it also serves as encouragement in the form of "Keep Doing" praise. Another benefit of this survey is that it communicates to your students that you care about what they think and about the learning experiences you provide to them. Moreover, when you take a little class time to discuss the common responses and suggestions and to brainstorm solutions, you show your students that you sincerely value their input. When students recognize this, they will, overall, become more engaged in your courses and respond more positively to your teaching and expectations.

I'd love to hear your experiences with this survey, especially what you plan to change in response to your students' feedback. Please share your experiences with me at melissa.hudler@lamar.edu or on twitter @MelissaHudler (please use #startstopkeep).

Happy teaching!

Start-Stop-Keep Doing

Please assist me in providing the most engaging, effective, and relevant learning experience for you by responding honestly and thoughtfully to the items below. I will consider all responses and suggestions that are sincerely offered and that allow me to *maintain the integrity of this course and its goals*. Hence, responses such as “stop giving tests” and “start letting us sleep in class” will not be taken seriously.

This is an anonymous survey, so please do not put your name on this form.

Course _____ Section _____

1. What should I START doing to enhance your experience and learning in this course?

2. What should I STOP doing to enhance your experience and learning in this course?

3. What should I KEEP doing to enhance your experience and learning in this course?

Approximately how many class meetings have you attended?

____ All ____ All except ____

Developing Teaching Statements

What Purpose does the Teaching Statement Serve?

The Teaching Statement can be used for personal, professional, or pedagogical purposes. While Teaching Statements are becoming an increasingly important part of the hiring and tenure processes, they are also effective exercises in helping one clearly and coherently conceptualize his or her approaches to and experiences of teaching and learning.

General Guidelines

- Make your Teaching Statement brief and well written.
- Use narrative, first-person approach.
- Be sincere and unique.
- Make it specific rather than abstract.
- Be discipline specific.
- Avoid jargon and technical terms, as they can be off-putting to some readers.
- Be humble.
- Revise.
- What, for *you*, constitutes evidence of student learning
- The ways in which *you* create an inclusive learning environment
- *Your* interests in new techniques, activities, and types of learning

Reflection Questions To Help You Get Started:

What does a Teaching Statement Include?

A Teaching Statement can address any or all of the following:

- *Your* conception of how learning occurs
- A description of how *your* teaching facilitates student learning
- A reflection of why *you* teach the way you do
- The goals *you* have for yourself and for your students
- How *your* teaching enacts your beliefs and goals
- Why do you teach the way you do?
- What should students expect of you as a teacher?
- What is a method of teaching you rely on frequently? Why don't you use a different method?
- What do you want students to learn? How do you know your goals for students are being met?
- What should your students be able to know or do as a result of taking your class?
- How can your teaching facilitate student learning?
- How do you as a teacher create an engaging or enriching learning environment?
- What specific activities or exercises do you use to engage your students? What do you want your students to learn from these activities?
- How has your thinking about teaching changed over time? Why?

Material above is taken from "[Teaching Statements](#)" provided by Vanderbilt University: Center for Teaching.

Additional resources for Teaching Statements are listed below:

["Statements of Teaching Philosophy"](#) by Gail E. Goodyear and Douglas Allchin

["Developing a Philosophy of Teaching Statement"](#) by Nancy Van Note Chism



Tool Box for Building a Winning Hand

Dropbox is a free online storage service that lets you bring all your photos, docs, and videos anywhere. This means that any file you save to your *Dropbox* will automatically save to all your computers, phones, and even the *Dropbox* website.

EVERNOTE—Put everything in one place—your notes, images, documents, web clips and audio notes. Find what you're looking for using EVERNOTE's powerful search. Sync makes your notes accessible across your devices.

Dropbox works hard to make sure that all your files are the same no matter where you're working from. Start working on a computer at the office and finish from your home computer.

Create a New Note—Save your ideas, to-do lists, research, meeting notes, and more.

Dropbox makes sharing so easy, you can send people links to specific files in your *Dropbox* or invite friends, family and coworkers to view any folder.

Record Audio Notes—Record notes and embed audio notes directly into text notes, including saved articles.

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Sync Notes and Find Them Anywhere—Search for anything, even text within images, on any computer, phone or tablet you use.

www.dropbox.com

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“Six Steps to Making Positive Changes in Your Teaching”

(continued from ACE IT! February 2013 Issue)

In the article *Six Steps to Making Positive Changes in Your Teaching*, Dr. Weimer shares helpful hints for incorporating effective change in your classroom. We will feature the remaining two steps in the next ACE IT! Newsletter.

1) **Incorporate change systematically**—Beyond adapting the change, teachers need to prepare for its implementation. This means considering when (or if) it fits with the content, what skills it requires and whether students have those skills. If they don't, how could those skills be developed? It also means valuing the change process by giving it your full and focused attention so as to ensure the new approach has the best possible chance of succeeding.

2) **Change a little before changing a lot**—Too often faculty have “conversion experiences” about themselves as teachers. They go to a conference or read a book, get convinced that they could be doing so much better and decide to change all sorts of things at once. They envision a whole new course taught by an entirely different teacher. Unfortunately, that much change is often hard on students and equally difficult for teachers.

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Weimer, Maryellen. (2013, January). [Six steps to making positive changes in your teaching](#). *Faculty Focus*.

The Center for Teaching and Learning Enhancement



MARK YOUR CALENDERS:

*****DATE CHANGE*****

April 5th

12:00—2:00 P.M.

John Gray Center, Mason Room

“Building a Practical, Positive, Powerful, and Purposeful Classroom Experience”

with **Rosemary Degner, Ph.D., DBA**

Rosemary Degner holds the following degrees: Doctorate of Business Administration (emphasis on organizational and leadership communication), Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Science, a Master of Science in Management Communication, and a Bachelor of Business Administration. Dr. Degner is a faculty member in the Fine Arts Division at Blinn College where she teaches PublicSpeaking.

For over two decades, Dr. Degner has worked as a communication expert. She provides communication training in the areas of organizational communication, teamwork, small group communication, effective organizational meetings, leadership, and public speaking. Dr. Degner is also the creator of International Graduate Students Connection.

Jane Jarrow, Ph.D. is the President of Disability Compliance in Career and Online Learning (DCCOL) and of Disability Access Information and Support (DAIS). Dr. Jarrow received her BS and MS degrees from Purdue University and her Ph.D. from Wichita State University. Her academic preparation was in the area of Speech/Language Pathology.

She was a full-time faculty member at The Ohio State University in Speech/Language Pathology for seven years before assuming the position as the Executive Director of the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD). AHEAD is an international professional membership organization providing technical assistance, information, and support to individuals involved in issues of disability access in higher education.

April 15th

9:00 A.M.—12:00 P.M.

1:00—4:00 P.M.

MJGL 6th Floor Commons

“Developing Technical Standards and Eligibility Criteria that are Appropriate and Legally Defensible”

presented by **Dr. Jane Jarrow**

On February 21st, CTLE held the first in a series of Faculty Research “Brown Bag Lunch” events targeted specifically toward faculty having conversations about their research and creative projects.

Wednesday, March 27th 12:00—1:00 P.M.

Library, 6th Floor

“Where’s the Kaboom?”

There was supposed to be an earth-shattering kaboom!”

Faculty members Dr. O’Brien Stanley and Dr. Nicki Michalski will discuss their book project on Mars Film, and the problems and successes with working with other faculty members and finding publishers.

