



# ACE IT! Quality Enhancement Plan: The ACES Project

ACE IT! NEWSLETTER  
The Newsletter for Lamar's Quality Enhancement Plan:  
Active & Collaborative Engagement for Students

October 2012

## QEP/ACES: An Overview

Volume 1, Issue 1

"Your teaching is only as good as your learning." This statement made by Ben Stern in his article "Beginning of the Year Advice from Edsurge" is at the heart of Lamar University's QEP/ACES program, which supports faculty in their efforts to enhance student engagement by incorporating active and collaborative teaching methods into their courses. ACES supports faculty in this endeavor by providing monetary support, training, and professional development opportunities to faculty accepted into the program.

ACES is in its fourth year, and this year brings with

it a change in leadership. Melissa Hudler was recently named the new director of the QEP/ACES program. Melissa has been at Lamar University for thirteen years and comes to this position with three years of ACES experience as a member of the pilot cohort (2009-2010), an active ACES alum, and, most recently, the Associate Director of the QEP program. Melissa is also the former director of the University Writing Center and remains an instructor in the Department of English and Modern Languages.

A partner of the QEP/ACES program is La-

mar's Center for Teaching and Learning Enhancement, which was formed to provide professional development support to all faculty and to complement the ACES program. CTLE has also undergone a change in leadership. Dr. Steven Zani is the new director for CTLE. (article continued on page 4)



Melissa Hudler  
Director,  
Quality Enhancement Plan/  
ACES

**Melissa Hudler** graduated from Lamar University with an MA in English. Melissa will complete her PhD in Renaissance Literature in August 2013 from Angila Ruskin University.

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## Save the Date

<b>QEP Forum</b>	<b>Lacy M. Johnson, PhD</b>
<b>Quality Enhancement Plan</b>	<b>Mentoring Better Graduate Writers</b>
Wednesday, October 31 @ 3 PM	Wednesday, November 7 @ 12PM
Mary & John Gray Library 702A	Montagne Center: Cardinal Club Room
<b>Lunch will be provided.</b>	

## A New Set of ACES among the Cards: Welcome Cohort 4



**Lynn P. Carter** earned a BS in Education from Lamar University and an M.Ed. from LSU. Lynn is an Instructor of Mathematics in the Developmental Studies department. "My passion for teaching has always been focused on making math understandable for all and engaging students in the learning process." "The ACES Program meshed perfectly with my teaching style and purpose."

**Kurt Dyrhaug** earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in printmaking from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and his Masters of Fine Arts in sculpture from the University of Minnesota. Mr. Dyrhaug is a Professor in the Art Department. "Being selected as an ACES Fellow will allow me the opportunity to focus on more effective teaching methods to actively engage students for success alongside committed colleagues at Lamar University."

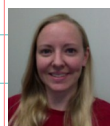


**Dr. Cynthia Parish** recently received her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from Lamar University. Dr. Parish is an Adjunct Instructor of Geology and she also teaches at West Brook High School. "I wanted to be a part of the ACES program so that I can help my students that I am teaching online. Online seems to be a very hard audience due to having very little interaction with the students. I want to find a way to make that happen for the students I teach at Lamar."

**Dr. Terry Price** (photo unavailable) is an instructor in the Physics department. Dr. Price received her B.S. in Physics and M.S. in Mathematics with a minor in Physics from Lamar University. She earned her PhD in Mathematics Education from Washington State University. Dr. Price's dissertation was entitled "Second-Generation Constructions: Facilitating Student Understanding in the Middle School Mathematics Classroom."

**Nancy M. Staub** (photo unavailable) is an instructor in the English department and she works specifically with Lamar's online classroom, Blackboard. "It's this online space that made me want to be a member of ACES Cohort 4. I think the online classroom easily lends itself to learning in isolation. Yet simply requiring massive blogging, in theory a collaborative experience, only encourages 'ditto' responses. So it is to ACES I have turned to explore and experiment with online learning tools that are both active and collaborative."

**Gretchen Johnson** is an instructor in the English & Modern Languages department. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing from Southwest Minnesota State University and her MFA in Creative Writing from Texas State University. Ms. Johnson is interested in the ACES project because she wants to make learning about literature a more exciting and interactive experience for her students.



**Dr. Heidi Bardenhagen** is an Assistant Professor in the English and Modern Languages department. Her main areas of study are children's and adolescent literature and medieval literature. She is also interested in literary theory, gender studies, and eco-criticism. Dr. Bardenhagen believes that creating student-centered classrooms and engaging students actively in their learning is vital to a successful university experience. Through ACES, she hopes to learn new methods for active student involvement in the classroom.

**Dr. Jim Sanderson** was recently appointed the Department Chair of English and Modern Languages. Dr. Sanderson is the 2002 Distinguished Faculty Lecturer and 2006 University Scholar Award recipient at Lamar University. He has published over sixty stories, essays, or academic articles. *FADED LOVE*, another collection of stories, was a finalist for the Texas Institute of Letter's 2010 Jesse Jones Award for best book of fiction by a Texas author or about Texas.



## Spotlight on Michelle Ozmun

L. Michelle "MO" Ozmun is an Assistant Professor of Dance in Lamar's Theatre and Dance department. Ms. Ozmun participated in the ACES Program, Fall 2011 and Spring 2012, as a member of Cohort 3.

Michelle gives this advice to new ACES Fellows: "Be open minded to the students not learning all the material YOU think they should. Depth rather than breadth of learning seems to be of more value to the student since they feel they can 'look up' any factual knowledge on the internet."

MO continues to use the following active and collaborative techniques in her classroom: Think-Pair-Share, Group Projects, Structured Practice, Presentations, Wikis, Discussions, Competition of Learned Skill, Critique of Dance/Art Works.

This month's Tool Box for Building a Winning Hand comes from Michelle. (Page 3)



# Tool Box for Building a Winning Hand

**SOCRATIVE** is a free app/software that students can download to their smart phones, tablets or laptops. Michelle says the following about Socrative: "I am loving this software, especially since it provides a pre-written 'exit ticket' that takes the 'pulse' of the students at the end of the class and then I can get an Excel report about how they felt and what they learned."

She also runs a competition "space race" where teams of students answer questions and see who finishes first.

For more information about the Socrative smart student response system, visit their website at:

<http://www.socrative.com/>.

Thanks MO!



## Resources

***Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers* (Thomas A. Angelo and K. Patricia Cross) 2nd Edition**, This revised and greatly expanded edition of the 1988 handbook offers teachers at all levels how-to advice on classroom assessment, including: what classroom assessment entails and how it works; how to plan, implement, and analyze assessment projects; twelve case studies that detail the real-life classroom experiences of teachers carrying out successful classroom assessment projects; fifty classroom assessment techniques; step-by-step procedures for administering the techniques; and practical advice on analyzing your data.

***Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom* (John Bean) 2nd Edition**  
Learn to design interesting writing and critical thinking activities and incorporate them into your courses in a way that encourages inquiry, exploration, discussion, and debate, with *Engaging Ideas*, a practical nuts-and-bolts guide for teachers from any discipline. Integrating critical thinking with writing-across-the curriculum approaches, the book shows how teachers from any discipline can incorporate these activities into their courses. This edition features new material dealing with genre and dis-

course community theory, quantitative/scientific literacy, blended and online learning, and other current issues.

\*These books are available in the Mary & John Gray Library on the 6th floor next to the Center for Teaching and Learning Enhancement.

Congratulations to **SARA GUBALA**, ACES Fellow Cohort 3!  
 She will be honored with the  
**2012 Julie and Ben Rogers Community Service Award** on  
 Thursday, November 8, 2012 at 3 p.m.  
 University Reception Center—John Gray Library 8th Floor

# The Center for Teaching and Learning Enhancement

The Center for Teaching and Learning Enhancement welcomes Dr. Lacy M. Johnson for a workshop entitled *Mentoring Better Graduate Writers* on November 7, 2012 at 12pm, in the Cardinal Club Room, Montagne Center.



Dr. Johnson received her Ph.D. from the University of Houston's Creative Writing Program. She has been awarded fellowships from the Kansas Arts Commission, the Mitchell Center for the Arts, and Millay Colony for the Arts. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Creative Nonfiction*, *Sentence*, *TriQuarterly Online*, *Memoir Journal*, *Gulf Coast*, *Irish Studies Review* and elsewhere. She recently left a Tier 1 Research University where she taught graduate students to teach writing to pediatric cancer patients.

Writing is a professional practice. In most fields, faculty contribute to the collective knowledge of their disciplines by writing and documenting their research. In theory, our graduate students will go on to do the same. And yet, one of the most pervasive criticisms of graduate students today is that they simply cannot write. When we lose students from our programs, or when they "fail to progress," it is often for this reason. The most substantial writing tasks we give to our students—the comprehensive exam, the thesis, and the dissertation—often separate the students who come to our institutions already prepared with the skills they need to succeed, from those who have not come with those skills. What's troubling about this trend is that the division often occurs along ethnic, cultural, and linguistic lines. In order to improve rates of completion, and to better respond to all of our students' needs, we need to take a long hard look at our approach to writing instruction. This workshop will suggest strategies and practices for faculty who are interested in mentoring better graduate writers.

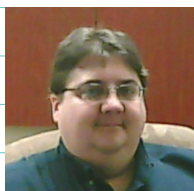
*This event is worth 1 Faculty Development Program Point*

***"Your Teaching is only as good as your learning."***  
***Ben Stern***

## **QEP/ACES Overview Continued**

Dr. Steven Zani brings to the Center fourteen years of service to Lamar and twenty years of teaching in Higher Education. An interdisciplinary scholar having co-taught classes with faculty in departments and colleges across the entire university spectrum, he has been twice awarded Honors Faculty Member of the Year and will retain his active teaching role in English and Modern Languages as he works with faculty to support and complement their teaching and research projects.

Dr. Zani received an MA in Philosophy and a PhD in Comparative Literature from SUNY Binghamton University.



The Quality Enhancement Plan and The Center for Teaching and Learning Enhancement offices are located in the Gray Library on the 6th floor.

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