Having taught 140 iterations of the introductory psychology course, I think I could get it right, given the opportunity to teach just one more time. To do so, however, would require giving up the luxuries of retirement, which means no 8 a.m. classes, no papers to grade, and no judgments to make about the veracity of reports on the recent passing of relatives, causing students to miss the last exam. It would also require that I apply the three most important pedagogical lessons that I have learned and relearned during the nearly 3 decades that I was the entire psychology department at a small community college in southwestern Oregon.

Lesson One:
Avoiding the Coverage Compulsion

It is the text's job to cover the material—from Adler to Zimbardo. It is the teacher's job to focus on the course's core concepts—the Big Ideas in psychology. The teacher who tries to cover everything (a) reinforces students for not reading the text and (b) ignores a basic principle of cognitive learning: It is far more effective to organize information around a few basic principles than to present a large array of meaningless material. Moreover, at the level of the introductory course, there is arguably only one concept that students must learn if they are to begin thinking like psychologists: Good psychology is based on good science. If students fully understand this concept, they will be well prepared for both psychology and life—even if they remain clueless about the James–Lange theory, transduction, or the real meaning of negative reinforcement.

Lesson Two:
Replacing Logic With Psychologic

A second pitfall that trapped me repeatedly involved approaching the material at its logical, rather than psychologic, beginning. For example, in the introductory course, a logical introduction to the chapter on the nervous system might begin with the properties of the neuron, move on to essentials of axonal and synaptic transmission, and culminate with a model of how the various circuits, modules, and lobes of the brain interact. But students almost universally respond to this with yawns—which shouldn't surprise us. We may blame it on the material, but the culprit is really our failure to make the material meaningful. Unfamiliar material is difficult, even boring, when it makes little sense. And our students typically have no context—no experience—in which to assimilate the details of neurons and the nervous system.

Taking a more psychologic approach—again, based on what we know about cognitive learning—the teacher might begin with a story that both captures students' attention and shows how an understanding of the nervous system can be useful. The story I use focuses on the discovery and removal of my father's brain tumor. Not only is it an emotional tale (and hence more likely to implant in episodic memory), but it allows me to

Lessons Learned, continued on page 8
Dr. Robin J. Hailstorks Joins the APA Office of Precollege and Undergraduate Education

Dr. Robin J. Hailstorks has been appointed associate executive director and director, Office of Precollege and Undergraduate Education in the APA Education Directorate. Dr. Hailstorks will join APA in September 2006. She earned her doctorate in developmental psychology at the Ohio State University and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Purdue University. She is currently the chairperson of the Department of Psychology at Prince George’s Community College in Largo, Maryland. Dr. Hailstorks has been an active member of APA, serving on the Board of Educational Affairs (BEA) and as chair of BEA’s Technology Working Group. She also served on APA’s Commission on Ethnic Minority Recruitment, Retention, and Training in Psychology (CEMRRAT). She is the past national president of Psi Beta, the national honor society in psychology for community colleges.

Dr. Hailstorks is currently the executive codirector of Diversity Project 2000 and Beyond, a national mentoring and leadership program for ethnic minority honor students interested in research careers in psychology. She is also a core team leader for APA’s National Institute of General Medical Sciences grant on increasing the number of ethnic minorities in the biomedical sciences. She has been recognized as an outstanding teacher–scholar by APA’s Division 2, the Society for the Teaching of Psychology, and by Prince George’s Community College’s faculty senate, where she has received numerous teaching awards. Her many talents and leadership skills will enable her to make significant contributions to the mission of the Education Directorate and APA, and we look forward to her arrival.
The American Psychological Association recently announced availability of the Online Psychology Laboratory, or OPL (opl.apa.org), as the first funded psychology entry in the National Science Digital Library. Although you may have visited the site, you may still have questions about the best way to use this innovative new teaching resource. This article is the first in a series of articles that will offer suggestions about how you might incorporate OPL into your introductory psychology course.

The OPL Web site offers highly interactive activities that can be used by students who have access to the Internet. These activities are grouped by topic (e.g., abnormal, cognition, social), and several activities are designed to illustrate principles of memory. One way to engage students might be to integrate one of many activities that offers the opportunity to discuss memory in the context of forensic psychology—for example, an activity that allows students to consider the validity of eyewitness testimony.

When describing memory and perception, most introductory texts include a discussion of reconstructive memory. Explanations typically address factors that are influential in the recording of memories, including the likelihood that memories are almost always flawed. Memories are reconstructed. Recall of an event, or memory of the event, can be influenced by the circumstances under which the person witnessed the information and/or the framing of questions in a courtroom (Bernstein, Penner, Clarke-Stewart, & Roy, 2003; Weiten, 2003). Despite the reported fallibility of memory, juries are frequently convinced that a witness who reports information in significant detail must be accurate in his or her recall of the event. Thus, not taking fallibility of memory into account has resulted in false convictions of innocent people.

Students can experience the role of evaluating eyewitness testimony by participating in an activity designed to illustrate this concept. The “Be a Juror” study contained in OPL offers a simulation of the classic experiment, originally conducted by Loftus (1979), which demonstrated how juries value eyewitness testimony despite the cautions about the fallibility of memory. In this online activity, students are randomly assigned to one of three conditions in which they read a scenario that describes a defendant trying to vindicate himself under one of the following conditions: (1) an unrefuted eyewitness (2) no eyewitness, or (3) a discredited eyewitness. After reading the scenario, the student must rate the defendant's level of guilt. Students can participate in this activity in class, work on it as a homework assignment, or, if the class is being taught online, complete it as a requirement of the course.

This activity allows students to simulate the original findings of the Loftus (1979) study. After an instructor registers a course at OPL, students can enter the study, and their data will be recorded specifically for the section that the faculty member has designated. Students indicate which class they are enrolled in; they then participate in the activity and, at the conclusion, are provided a participation number, which is a mechanism for tracking student participation. After all students have completed the study, results can be downloaded in raw data or graph format to illustrate the phenomenon. In this case, the graph illustrates the average level of guilt for each of the three conditions. Results for this activity should indicate that the level of perceived guilt is higher for the two conditions that include an eyewitness, even if the eyewitness is not credible. In other words, a defendant is more likely to be perceived as guilty even if the eyewitness provides inaccurate information. The graph depicts the actual data from students’ participation, and this can help to increase the validity of
High School Student Symposium Held at APA

Martha Boenau
APA Education Directorate

The American Psychological Association welcomed students to the APA building in early spring for a high school student symposium. Following a suggestion by APA's Chief Executive Officer Dr. Norman Anderson, Emily Leary, Precollege Psychology Programs officer, developed a program for local high school students about psychology and career options. Using some outreach models created by the APA Teachers of Psychology in Secondary Schools (TOPSS) and by the American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS), Ms. Leary, with help from Jewel Beamon, Special Projects associate, planned a half-day symposium for high school psychology students.

Ms. Leary and Ms. Beamon located psychology classes in three local public schools in the District of Columbia and invited them to come to the APA building on February 28, 2006. After an introduction by Dr. Cynthia Belar, executive director of APA's Education Directorate, Dr. Anderson gave a keynote address that highlighted many of the unique contributions of psychology and psychologists. His remarks were followed by an interesting question-and-answer period and some informal conversation.

Next, several undergraduate and graduate students in psychology participated in a panel discussion moderated by Dr. Robin Hailstorks from Prince George's Community College. Dr. Hailstorks will be joining the APA staff in September 2006 as associate executive director and director, Precollege and Undergraduate Education (see page 2). The panel responded to questions about why they chose to study psychology and what it's like being a psychology major or a graduate student in psychology. The student participants included Karen Arrington (University of Maryland, College Park), Lynnett M. Gray (Morgan State University), Avis Jackson (Morgan State University), Jessica Wiley (Howard University), Dennis R. Bourne (Howard University graduate student), Marcos Salazar (George Washington University graduate student), and Julie Sampson (2005 University of Missouri graduate).

The final segment of the program featured psychologists from the APA staff, including Dr. Rena Subotnik of the Education Directorate, Dr. Kim Nickerson of the Public Interest Directorate, Dr. Clare Porac of the Science Directorate, and Dr. Dan Abrahamson of the Practice Directorate. These psychologists shared interesting stories about their educational and career paths.

The symposium was a success, and we later heard from nearly all of our participants that they would like to participate in this event again. In fact, a similar program was held on March 17, 2006, at the Eastern Psychological Association Conference in Baltimore, this time in partnership with Psi Chi and Psi Beta. Please stay tuned for announcements about possible future events.

Psi Beta Programs at the 2006 APA Annual Convention

Psi Beta Community College Student Research and Leadership Awards Presentations
Chair: Alberta Johnson, Highlands College

Psi Beta 25th Anniversary and Celebrating Carol Tracy's Retirement
Chair: Jerry Rudmann, Interim Executive Director, Psi Beta

Symposium on Training Student Leaders
Chair: Alberta Johnson, Highlands College

Educating Psychology Students for Leadership
Ginger Osborne, Santa Ana College

Leadership Under Duress—Dealing With Difficult Students
Sharon Burson, Temple College

PT@CC/Psi Beta Symposium
Chair: John Phelan, Western Oklahoma State College

Service Learning: Bringing the Community Into the Classroom
Laura Bittner, Carroll Community College

Inclusion in the Classroom: Helping Students Connect With Psychological Science
Ladonna Lewis, Glendale Community College

Invited Address: Ruth Hubbard Cousins
Distinguished Lecture
Chair: Sharon Burson, Temple College

The Two Most Important Ideas About Teaching and Learning
Robert Johnson, Umpqua Community College
I think most educators would agree that attending conferences and workshops is time well spent. These experiences give the typical teacher a chance to learn new techniques, share ideas with colleagues, and network with other professionals in the field. I usually come home with many great ideas; unfortunately, only a few of them ever get put into practice. But sometimes the contacts that you make at these events can lead to a treasure trove of resources.

Last June I was privileged to be one of the participants in the first American Psychological Association/Clark University Workshop for High School Teachers. James Cordova, PhD, associate professor of psychology at Clark, presented a workshop describing his research on family and marriage relationships. At the end of the session I spoke briefly with Dr. Cordova about the possibility of integrating his work into my advanced placement (AP) psychology curriculum. He agreed to help.

In September I told my AP class that we were going to “learn” several units of the course without a text. They were somewhat stunned. Many high school students believe that if an idea is published in a textbook, the information must have come from a divine source sitting on a mountaintop. We discussed the fact that textbooks are a summary of what an author believes to be important. While textbooks clearly have their place in the classroom, there is little substitute for using source materials. A scholar always goes to the source, reads the content, questions the ideas presented, and offers his or her own opinion and interpretation. I told them we would be using Dr. Cordova’s research and published works as our reference point and that he would be willing to answer questions that we might have about his research. My kids were somewhat apprehensive at first about studying cutting-edge psychology. But they were truly excited to learn that a university researcher would be willing to respond to their e-mails. It turns out that this collaboration has worked out extremely well.

For our unit on research methods, Dr. Cordova e-mailed me a copy of his article “The Marriage Checkup: A Motivational Interviewing Approach to the Promotion of Marital Health With Couples At-Risk for Relationship Deterioration” (Cordova et al., 2005). This article describes Cordova’s current research involving the Marriage Checkup (MC). He observed that people go to their physician and dentist for regular checkups to prevent major health problems. He theorized that married couples would also benefit from a “marriage checkup” to forestall serious problems that might jeopardize the health of their marriage.

The MC process involves a series of questionnaires, a structured lab interview, and a follow-up feedback session with a trained therapist. Cordova’s methodology for this study was a controlled experimental design. Couples were recruited through the local media and randomly assigned to the MC group or to the control group. The results showed that there was a significant difference in marriage satisfaction between the MC group and the control group. This study provided a great way to look at many concepts: hypothesis formulation and testing, randomization, subject selection, causation, experimental design, survey methodology, independent/dependent variables, and confounding/extraneous variables. My students got to study a “real” experiment and had a chance to question the lead experimenter. Over the course of this unit, I encouraged them to e-mail Dr. Cordova directly with their questions. His responses were timely, clear, and concise.

For our unit on ethics, Dr. Cordova provided me with the informed consent document that he uses with his participants in the MC. This helped the students to see and discuss the importance of ethical standards that encompass the concepts of consent and deception. Because Cordova is also a member of the institutional review board (IRB) at Clark, we discussed with him the role of the IRB in safeguarding the rights of research participants. The students were eager to see a real working document and to question a member of an IRB. Dr. Cordova provided cogent responses to the issues raised by my students.

For our unit on statistics, we used both the MC and Cordova’s earlier work: “Predicting 2-Year Marital Satisfaction From Partners’ Reaction to a Marriage Checkup” (Gee, Scott, Castellani, & Cordova, 2002). Cordova’s findings were statistically significant: Couples who went through the MC showed less distress 2 years after completing the MC. We used this paper to look at the concepts of mean, median, mode, standard deviation, correlation, and statistical significance.

For our unit on assessment, Dr. Cordova provided me with a copy of the Intimate Safety Questionnaire (ISQ; Cordova, Gee, Warren, & McDonald, 2004). In this paper, Cordova described his creation of the ISQ as a tool to measure the level of intimacy within a relationship. Cordova used the ISQ as a major assessment tool for the MC study. These documents prompted the students to raise questions about the construct (what is intimacy?) and also about validity and reliability. As in the past, Cordova graciously answered questions posed by my students.

Since we have not finished the course, I plan on calling on Dr. Cordova’s expertise in several other areas: social psychology (theories of love and attraction), developmental psychology...
Here are some of my observations about successfully integrating university research into a high school curriculum:

• Find a researcher who is truly willing to help. This is obviously the most important step.
• Find a research topic that has practical, “real-world” implications.
• Reassure your students that they will be able to understand the material with your help.
• Set up a reasonable contact schedule between you and the researcher. You shouldn’t expect the researcher to respond to e-mails from 20 different students every week. My class compiled questions, which we sent to Dr. Cordova about once every 2 weeks.
• Don’t be afraid to “break free” from a textbook (see also Johnson & Carton, 2005).

This collaboration between Dr. Cordova and my students has been a great experience. It has allowed the world of psychological research at Clark University to enter my high school classroom at Aquinas Institute. I won’t throw away the textbook just yet, but I plan on using it a lot less in the future.

References


Poor writing skills among students are neither new to the college classroom nor restricted to the discipline of psychology. Although undergraduate courses in English composition usually pave the way for improvement of student performance, generalization of acquired writing skills from these to other college courses remains problematical. This problem is exacerbated by the common student misconception that writing well is the exclusive domain of the English major.

In teaching undergraduate psychology, there are two schools of thought on how to improve the quality of student writing. One approach advocates for the development of a separate course for the sole purpose of teaching effective writing skills tailored to psychology (e.g., Calhoun & Selby, 1979). Consistent with the “writing-across-the-curriculum” argument, a far less sweeping solution to the problem entails reinforcing sound writing skills in the existing framework of established courses. This latter stance is the one that I have adopted in my own undergraduate psychology classes.

As a collaborative research effort while co-constructing an undergraduate educational psychology course early in my teaching career, the Colleague Swap (Camplace & Mayo, 1982) was born as a systematic means of improving students’ writing skills. In educational psychology and a wide range of other undergraduate psychology courses (e.g., general, life span development, adjustment, applied, and history and systems), I have since successfully reprised the use of this classroom innovation many times on my own in the years that have followed.

**How the Colleague Swap Works**

In using the Colleague Swap, students earn grade-applicable credit by exchanging or swapping writing assignments with three to five of their classmates. Throughout this process, students evaluate, proofread, and critique one another’s work. General guidelines governing peer critique of term, theme, research, and other papers take into account the following questions:

1. Does the introduction properly launch a connecting thread of ideas?
2. Does the summary effectively recap the main points?
3. Do the second, third, and following sentences in each paragraph follow closely from the opening sentence?
4. Are relevant ideas expressed accurately, completely, and coherently?
5. Are all grammatical, spelling, and other mechanical errors eliminated?

In addition to incorporating their suggested revisions directly into the body of the writing assignment, peer evaluators use a preprinted evaluation ticket—a checklist of standard rhetorical, contextual, and bibliographic considerations—to help them organize and present summative comments to their student colleagues. As reviewed preliminarily in class with an opportunity for students to ask clarifying questions, the evaluation checklist is organized into comprehensive categories containing descriptive subheadings. Points are assigned to each subheading on the checklist, and room is provided for writing constructive criticism related to that item. The contents of the evaluation ticket can be modified to conform to the idiosyncratic needs of the course and the writing assignment involved. The Appendix (page 14) presents a sample checklist that I have employed in several of my own classes.

After the colleague swaps are completed, the marked papers and attached evaluation tickets are returned to their student authors, and class time is allotted for each student to meet briefly with corresponding peer evaluators. During the resulting work sessions, students explain their critique evaluations and help one another improve the quality of their papers.

It is optional, as a measure of quality control over the peer-critique process, for both the instructor and the student authors to rate the critiques offered by student evaluators in a manner that ties to overall grade determination for the course. Rating systems may vary in accordance with instructors’ individual preferences.

**Cost–Benefit Analysis**

There are curriculum-specific advantages afforded through the use of the Colleague Swap. Once revised papers are submitted to the instructor for final grading purposes, most technical errors will have been eliminated, and the content will typically be stronger. With mechanical and grammatical mistakes minimized, instructors can concentrate more freely on the task of judging each paper’s content in the general absence of distracting technical errors.

Allowing students to critique one another’s papers also creates a more cooperative learning environment and increases stu-
Lessons Learned, continued from page 1

show how his symptoms made sense in terms of the location of the mass growing in his brain. (If you don’t have a comparable tale to tell, you can borrow one from Oliver Sack’s [1985] The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat or Ramachandran and Blakeslee’s [1998] Phantoms in the Brain.) I usually ask, as a follow-up, whether students have their own stories about people they know who have sustained brain damage. These shared experiences, then, become the meaningful context for discussions of neurons, transmitters, lobes, and all the rest.

Lesson Three:
Involving Students Rather Than Telling Students

I can illustrate the third important lesson by describing a class session that fell utterly flat, despite my enthusiasm for the topic. I had been reading psycholinguistic studies of Pidgin and Creole languages and couldn’t wait to tell students how these amazing hybrid tongues support Chomsky’s nativist theory of language. Unfortunately, my enthusiasm wasn’t contagious. Students were polite, but they were obviously bored. After some serious reflection and the reinflation of my self-esteem, I began the next class period with a short exercise in which groups of students generated their own Pidgin sentences. This more participative approach, then, led us easily into a discussion of Chomsky’s theory. Active learning had engaged students’ interest.

The corollary lesson is that our own enthusiasm can interfere with our better professorial judgment, causing us to tell students what we have learned rather than craft a lesson that draws them into the excitement. So, how does one craft a lesson that involves students? Happily, recent research on teaching points the way.

Research on the Best Teaching Practices

In parallel studies, Bill Buskist (2004) and Ken Bain (2004a, 2004b) found what may be the Holy Grail of teaching. Independently, they discovered that the best teachers—those who were identified by students and colleagues as the most outstanding teachers on their campuses—spend much of their class time engaging students in solving meaningful problems. Bain speaks of this as creating a natural, critical learning environment. And, looking back at my own teaching career, this makes a lot of sense: In classes that went exceptionally well, I now realize that I was usually doing exactly what Bain and Buskist recommended. Conversely, when things went into the pedagogical toilet, I was usually telling students rather than involving them. Let’s consider an example of the sort of approach that Buskist and Bain found to be effective.

The Problem of Clever Hans

The first chapter in the introductory course is notoriously difficult to teach (and learn) because students are impatient with the usual (logical) menu of defining psychology, learning about the “schools,” and grinding through the scientific method. They’re impatient to get on with “what makes people ‘tick.’”

Two of those dread introductory birds can be felled with one well-placed instructional stone—by employing psychologic.

Try opening the first day of class with the story of Clever Hans, the wondrous horse that amazed the world at the beginning of the 20th century with his seeming ability to calculate. As many readers know, it was a German psychologist, Oskar Pfungst, who devised a test that revealed how Hans managed to be so clever. (The full story of Clever Hans is available on the following Web sites: www.thoemmes.com/psych/pfungst.htm, http://skepdic.com/cleverhans.html, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clever_Hans, and www.kbrhorse.net/tra/hans.html.) But—this is the important part—don’t tell your students what Pfungst did until they have had a chance to think about the problem themselves.

Before divulging Pfungst’s solution, put your students in Pfungst’s shoes by having them design their own test of Hans. Ask them to discuss the problem, in groups of two or three, before you have them share their ideas with the whole class. You should find that the concepts of hypothesis, controlled test, operational definition, random presentation, independent variable, and dependent variable will easily emerge from the discussion.

You might have your students work through the parallel problem of “facilitated communication” with autistic children as a follow-up. (Good references are available from the American Psychological Association at http://suedweb.syr.edu/thefici/apafc.htm.) By working through such problems, your students will learn about the scientific method in a meaningful context—a natural, critical learning environment—that will help them understand and remember the big ideas.

Please let me know how it goes in your own classes. You can reach me at bjohnson@cmspan.net.


References


Over a year ago, a colleague who teaches at a university asked me what it’s like teaching psychology at a community college. Although I can share my perspective based upon my experience, I cannot direct you to a body of literature on the subject. Perlman and McCann’s (1999) study of psychology curricula offered at various postsecondary institutions examined a sample of community college catalogs and described the types of courses offered. But 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 a group whose central purpose was to network and represent the interests and needs of psychology teachers at community colleges. Fortunately, the American Psychological Association (APA) established a Committee of Psychology Teachers at Community Colleges (PT@CC). Gathering information on community college psychology is a top priority for the six community college psychology teachers who serve on the PT@CC Committee. More on PT@CC in a moment, but for now please allow me to describe my perspective on teaching psychology over the past 25 years at a community college in southern California.

Public community colleges have nonselective admission policies and therefore provide open access to anyone who is 18 years 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 are 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 in 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 who already have 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 didn’t have a choice; their high school grade point averages (GPA) and/or SAT scores precluded them from being admitted to a university.

As for academic readiness, in a given fall semester, as many as 50% of the freshmen don’t know about, or choose not to use, the most basic strategies necessary for learning: note taking, reading and highlighting text, managing time, and attending class regularly. These students are in somewhat of a gray area. Some of them, with help, adjust and become very capable students, and others drop out, perhaps for the short term. 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.”

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 at the university level. We must also instill in our students strategies for efficient learning and attitudes appropriate for academic success. In short, teaching persons 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. Community college transfer students do quite well in California. The University of California’s research unit recently reported that the junior-year GPAs of transfer students usually exceed the junior-year GPAs of the university’s native students. This 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 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 at 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. That translates to teaching five 3-unit classes each semester. Teachers earn supplemental pay for teaching overload and summer classes. Other duties include 5 office hours per week and service on at least one standing committee that meets monthly. Although some faculty do research and publish their work, this isn’t expected, encouraged, or even recognized by most community colleges. Advising a student organization, such as Psi Beta, is completely optional and uncompensated. Nevertheless, it is satisfying work and provides one with an opportunity to network with colleagues from other community colleges.

There are what some might consider negative aspects to community college teaching. For example, depending on the size of the department and student body, 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
ACTIVITY: Immediate Impressions on the First Day of Class

Heidi R. Riggio, PhD
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For decades, a main area of research within social psychology has focused on social perception, or the processes by which we seek to know and understand other people and events (Franzoi, 2003). One central process within social perception is that of impression formation, which occurs whenever we form an overall judgment of another individual on the basis of whatever information we have about that person. The problem, of course, is that impressions tend to be formed quite rapidly, basically as soon as we receive any information about an individual; it is this early, readily perceived information, particularly concerning physical appearance features, that is likely to dominate processing in impression information, coloring our interpretation of any information about the person that is subsequently received (Asch, 1946). Because we have numerous expectations and many ideas about what kinds of people “typically” have certain traits (i.e., we use category stereotypes and person types; see Fiske, Bersoff, Borgida, Deaux, & Heilman, 1991; Hamilton, Sherman, & Ruvolo, 1990), we tend to form very broad, detailed impressions of individuals at first glance on the basis of salient, visible characteristics. This cognitive tendency that affects social interaction behavior and social understanding is certainly quite functional, yet it may lead us to form impressions about people that are in fact quite wrong.

As a teacher of undergraduate students, I believe that students have an implicit understanding of this process; they are aware that upon seeing a stranger, they have many immediate ideas about that person—their likes and dislikes, background, hobbies, personal relationships, and just about everything else. It also seems that despite this awareness, students tend to be unaware of how wrong they can be and tend to feel quite certain of their accuracy; they speak of intuitive, gut feelings that “feel right” (Uleman, Blader, & Todorov, 2005). As an introduction to my undergraduate course in social psychology, which necessarily focuses a great deal on schematic processing of social information, it is always a very fun and funny activity to ask students to form impressions of each other and of their new professor. This activity not only helps students begin their thoughtful pursuit of understanding the cognitive processing of social information but also helps to break the ice, enabling classmates to become acquainted with each other and with me. The activity is also easy to accomplish and to adapt to one’s own style (it is also easy to use in other psychology classes).

I generally begin the activity by giving students a list of about 10 questions on the overhead, including the following: What kind of job does this person have? What kind of car does this person drive? How old is this person? What kind of music does this person enjoy? What are this person’s hobbies? Is this person married? (cf. Swinkels & Giuliano, 2001). After students have reviewed the questions, I ask them to answer those questions to themselves (privately) about two classmates sitting near them (impression formers write their answers down, without any interaction with target persons). After students have formed their impressions, I ask them to then turn to each target person, introduce themselves, and ask the target person those questions directly (the targets are of course assured that they may invoke their constitutional right against self-incrimination if they so desire, particularly in regard to age). This leads to a full-room discussion between classmates, an excellent way for students to make classroom friends and study partners.

After students have talked with each of their targets, I ask them to turn their attention toward me and answer the same questions, which I then answer myself. Students are often grave- ly wrong in their impressions (a colleague of mine who is in her 40s claims Metallica as her favorite group), and these inaccuracies open up a dialogue about stereotypes and other schematic expectations and about how those expectations are likely to guide subsequent behavior toward the target and influence the behavioral responses of the target (à la Snyder, Tanke, & Berscheid, 1977). They also get to understand through this interaction that their professor is a regular person, who actually has hobbies, likes, dislikes, relationships, and a life outside the classroom. Because this exercise has always been, fortunately for me, positive and enjoyable as well, it seems to increase a feeling of “groupiness” in the class and sets the tone for kindness, respect, and friendliness among the players.

Of course there are many different activities with which to begin a new quarter or semester, but I have found it particularly useful to start with activities that demonstrate important principles and that are also fun and require social interaction and participation by all. On the first day of class, students are forming their first impressions, not just of classmates and professors but of courses as well—impressions which may dominate or at the very least influence their experience within the classroom over the course of the term. Beginning with a welcoming, enjoyable social experience (that allows much opportunity for self-deprec- ation by instructors, which almost always, when done with flair, makes students laugh) may set the tone for individual students in their approach and expectations of the course.

References

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Teaching Psychology, continued from page 9

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, the Association for Psychological Science, or state and regional psychological associations. Nor can one expect much financial help to attend professional conferences. A PsyCINFO subscription is far beyond the budget of the department or college library. 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 course work. Except when we hear from former students who have stayed in touch, we rarely receive student-level feedback as to how well former psychology students are performing at the university level.

Although we believe we are making a considerable contribution to the education of future psychologists, we are only now beginning to collect the outcome data of transfer students through a series of data-sharing consortia under development throughout the state. These consortia arrangements will soon 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.

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

Several years ago, APA’s members voted to establish a membership opportunity for community college teacher affiliates who, together with APA members and associates teaching at community colleges, belong to PT@CC. Designed especially to serve community college psychology teachers, PT@CC hopes to facilitate professional networking, involvement, and recognition of community college psychology teachers. To this end, the PT@CC Committee initiated strategies on several fronts. One strategy was to gather information on community college psychology. The APA PT@CC Committee conducted a survey (Johnson & Rudmann, 2004) to study the demographic makeup and educational preparation of community college psychology faculty. Another study gathered information about the needs and services desired by community college faculty.

In the 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” Listserv for its members. PT@CC and the APA Education Directorate are using the Listserv to send periodic announcements of important news and events to PT@CC members. The Listserv also serves as a discussion forum for community college faculty to share issues and concerns. (To subscribe to the Electronic Update, please contact Martha Boenau in the APA Education Directorate at 202-336-6140 or e-mail her at mboenau@apa.org.) The PT@CC Committee will continue to develop resources designed to meet the unique needs of those teaching psychology at community colleges.

PT@CC is also exploring strategies to develop regional clusters to provide networking and professional development opportunities to all community college psychology teachers, even if their community colleges are geographically remote or small in size.

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 a group like PT@CC to provide professional development and leadership opportunities and to recognize the important work being done by psychology teachers at community colleges. PT@CC has great potential to help community college teaching become even more effective, rewarding, and satisfying.

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

References


Dear Doctor

I know psychology is a science, but some of my classmates don't believe me when I tell them this. What can I say to convince them otherwise?

Psychologists must often explain to friends and family members that psychology is a science. The fact that such an explanation is necessary is probably based on popular misconceptions about both psychology and science. Psychology is frequently seen as a helping profession in which psychologists assist individuals with various types of problems on a one-on-one basis. Depictions of psychologists in movies and TV shows tend to further the image that psychologists spend all of their time in therapeutic interactions with people who have problems. On the other hand, science is often associated with people in white lab coats peering into microscopes in laboratory settings surrounded by test tubes, computers, and other high-tech equipment. When most people think about science, they think about astronomers using telescopes or chemists, biochemists, and geneticists using sophisticated microscopes and molecular analyzers. Your friends may not realize that science is not a “thing.” Rather, science is a way of looking at the world that involves the application of the scientific method to many areas of inquiry, including those areas that fall into the domain of psychology, such as the study of animal and human behavior.

Let’s look at a dictionary definition of science to answer the question, Is psychology a science? One dictionary definition states that science is “the observation, identification, description, experimental investigation, and theoretical explanation of natural phenomena.” Psychologists study animal and human behaviors, which are areas of interest that certainly fall into the category of natural phenomena. Do psychologists apply observation, identification, description, experimental investigation, and theoretical explanation to the study of behavior? Let’s look at two specific examples from the psychological research literature to answer this question.

In 1964 a young woman was brutally stabbed to death outside of her apartment building in Queens, New York. Upon investigation, the police found that the vicious attack occurred over a 30-minute period, and close to 40 people residing on the street where the attack took place witnessed some or all of the events of the attack. These witnesses neither came to her assistance nor telephoned the police to intervene. Two psychologists, John Darley and Bibb Latané, observed the circumstances of this murder and identified a factor in the situation that they thought may have influenced the decision of individual witnesses to refrain from assisting the victim in some way. They described the fact that the presence of other witnesses may have reduced a single individual’s feeling of personal responsibility to assist in this emergency; the presence of multiple bystanders caused a diffusion of personal responsibility to assist the victim, and no helping behavior occurred.

Darley and Latané began a series of experimental investigations into the circumstances under which bystander intervention in an emergency is more or less likely to take place (see Darley & Latané, 1968). They conducted research in which they systematically altered both the number of witnesses to an event and the type of emergency that the witnesses thought was occurring. The results of these studies indicated that the frequency of intervention of an individual bystander decreased when the number of witnesses to the emergency events increased. The experimental results confirmed Darley and Latané’s original theoretical explanation of the murder case—namely, when multiple witnesses view an emergency, there is a diffusion of responsibility that leads to inaction on the part of individual bystanders.

Bystander intervention research conforms to all of the properties used to define science in the dictionary definition given earlier. If I add the final scientific requirement, which is to use the confirmed experimental results to predict future events, these findings allow us to say that we are more likely to see individual bystander assistance in emergency situations in which there are only a few witnesses as opposed to those in which many people observe the emergency events unfold.

Another example from my own research shows the application of the scientific process to behavioral problems of interest to psychologists. In 1990 two psychologists provided a theoretical explanation for the low prevalence of left-handedness among people over the age of 65 years. They said it was due to the fact that left-handers did not live as long as right-handers. This was a startling theory, especially for left-handers, and it gained much attention in the popular press. I searched the literature and observed from previous studies that, indeed, the percentage of left-handers among older adult groups was reported to be about one third of that found among young adults (5% vs. 15%, respectively). However, I identified and described an additional factor that could contribute to this age difference. For example, older adults, born and raised in the early years of the 20th century, were more likely to have been pressured to switch their handedness from left to right; these pressures have eased in recent years, leading to an increased percentage of observed left-handedness among younger adults and a reduced percentage among older adults.

I conducted a series of experimental investigations with young and older adult right- and left-handers and found that older adult left-handers were much more likely than young adult left-handers to report that someone had tried to switch their handedness from left to right. The success rate of these switch attempts was also higher among older as opposed to younger adults, leading to a large group of older adult left-handers who performed a number of tasks with the right hand. In particular, they frequently wrote with the right hand because writing is one of the behaviors most frequently targeted for change to the right side. When I included the switched left-handers with the other left-handers in the older adult groups, the percentage of people classified as left-handers rose to the same level as that seen among young adults. In other words, there was no age difference

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in the prevalence of left-handedness (see Porac & Friesen, 2000; Porac, Friesen, Barnes, & Gruppuso, 1998).

I proposed a new theoretical explanation for apparent age differences in left-handedness. Older generations of people have experienced rightward handedness switch experiences that have not been experienced by younger generations. When researchers assess their handedness, older adults appear to be right-handed, but this is not their natural handedness. I can predict that groups of older adults will contain more switched left-handers; therefore, extensive handedness assessment and questioning of past experiences are needed in order to separate the natural from the converted right-handers among older adults.

Psychologists use the scientific method to investigate a variety of interesting natural phenomena. If psychologists use the scientific method to answer questions, and these answers allow us to predict future events with greater accuracy, we have to say affirmatively and definitively that psychology is a science.

This answer was provided by Clare Porac, PhD, senior scientist, APA Science Directorate. Dr. Porac is also a professor of psychology at Pennsylvania State University, Erie.

Questions submitted to this column by teachers and students will be answered by experts in the field of psychology. Please send your questions to: Dear Doctor/PTN, Education Directorate, American Psychological Association, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242 (e-mail: mboenau@apa.org).

References


Psi Chi Convention Programs
Psi Chi/Frederick Howell Lewis Distinguished Lecture: The 10 Commandments of Helping Students Distinguish Science From Pseudoscience in Psychology
Chair: Robert A. Youth, Dowling College
Speaker: Scott O. Lilienfeld, Emory University

Psi Chi/STP Pedagogical Debate: Should Psychology Adopt a Theory of Multiple Intelligences?
Cochairs: Mary E. Kite, Ball State University, and Robert A. Youth, Dowling College
Debaters: Linda Gottfredson, University of Delaware, and [Participant TBA]

Discussants: Brent D. Slife, Brigham Young University, and Janie H. Wilson, Georgia Southern University

Psi Chi Innovative Career Paths in Psychology: Integrating Career Paths: Catholic Priest and Forensic Psychologist
Chair: Robert A. Youth, Dowling College
Presenter: Anthony J. Pinizzotto, FBI Behavioral Science Unit

Psi Chi Conversation Hour With Gerald P. Koocher, President, APA
Cochairs: Melanie Domenech Rodriguez, Utah State University, and Paula Miller, Psi Chi National Office
Discussant: Gerald P. Koocher, Simmons College

Psi Chi National Honor Society Annual Reports and Open Forum
Chair: Robert A. Youth, Dowling College
Outgoing President’s Report: Robert A. Youth, Dowling College
Executive Director’s Report: Virginia Andreoli Mathie, Psi Chi National Office
Executive Officer’s Report: Paula Miller, Psi Chi National Office

Psi Chi Poster Session
Cochairs: John M. Davis, Texas State University—San Marcos, and Melanie Domenech Rodriguez, Utah State University

Psi Chi Research Award Presentations and Awards Ceremony
Cochairs: Christopher Koch, George Fox University, Virginia Andreoli Mathie, Psi Chi National Office, and Vincent Prohaska, Lehman College, CUNY

Psi Chi/Psi Beta Toast Honoring Carol Tracy, Executive Director Emeritus, Psi Beta
Cochairs: John M. Davis, Texas State University—San Marcos, and Paula Miller, Psi Chi National Office
dent involvement in the content and flow of the course. It is only natural that students develop a greater vested interest in a class in which they believe their feedback visibly matters.

For instructors, the primary disadvantage associated with the Colleague Swap is expenditure of time—both in rating critique evaluations (if applicable) and in devoting class time to student work sessions that could otherwise be used to lecture and/or discuss salient course topics. However, this difficulty is offset by students’ writing gains and the consequent need for significantly less time by instructors to correct mechanical errors in students’ revised papers.

Another potential pitfall in the use of the Colleague Swap is the assignment of students to peer-critique relationships. Due to the high probability of rating inflation, it is wise to avoid allowing students who know each other well to swap papers. As a related consideration for instructors regardless of the nature of the peer-critique relationship, students are generally inhibited about criticizing a classmate’s paper—either out of personal insecurity or fear of reprisal. Before undertaking the Colleague Swap in their classes, instructors should advise students on the need for unbiased feedback in their critique evaluations as a valuable means of helping one another become more proficient writers.

As a final caveat in employing the Colleague Swap: students need to know that suggestions for change offered by their classmates are purely advisory in nature. Ultimate responsibility for researching the necessity, accuracy, and validity of these recommended revisions lies squarely on the shoulders of the student authors.

References


Appendix
Sample Evaluation Ticket

Directions: Print your name as student evaluator and the name of the student author in the designated areas. On the blank line appearing to the left of each of the following 20 elements of writing, assign between 1 and 10 points (1 = excellent, 10 = extremely poor) as a means of rating your classmate’s paper. Blank space is provided directly beneath each element for you to summarize constructive criticism that you believe will improve the quality of your classmate’s work. Once you have finished, staple your critique evaluation to the front of the paper.
BOOK REVIEW:  
Teacher Man  
Frank McCourt, Author  
Publisher: Scribner  
Copyright: 2005  
Length: 258 pages  
Price: $26.00

Most of us who teach psychology at a college or university have little or no background in teaching or education. Many universities do not even offer any courses in teaching for their psychology graduate students who are teachers’ assistants. Thus, many of us are thrust into the classroom armed only with our knowledge of the material and our wits. Teaching is a profession that is often best mastered through one’s on-the-job training; we eventually learn to get through to our students by becoming resourceful and by learning from our successes and failures.

And so it went for Frank McCourt. In his excellent new memoir, Teacher Man, he chronologically recounts his failures and successes in the classroom. McCourt studied to become a writing teacher, but he did not really learn how to teach until he taught. The book discusses his 30-year career teaching writing in New York high schools. In Teacher Man, he conveys to the reader the following messages: (a) It pays to be creative, (b) storytelling—even about one’s own life—can be a useful tool, (c) you need to really connect with your students to help them learn, and (d) one needs to practice what one teaches. This book is an authentic must-read for any educator or future educator.

McCourt discusses his many insecurities and imperfections as a teacher. His engaging writing style is humorous and self-deprecating as he shares his own struggles in the classroom. He writes in a cohesive, engaging, analytical, and straightforward manner that will interest and entertain readers—teachers and nonteachers alike. Still, the book will resonate most with those in the field of education.

His unorthodox methodologies (eating his students’ lunches, reading recipes in class, having students write excuse notes for Adam and Eve, taking students to the park or to the movies, etc.) can serve as inspiration for anyone who employs novel techniques to reach students. McCourt was not necessarily actively pursuing new ways of presenting material; rather, it was often his frustration, boredom, and/or need to challenge that led him to “think outside the box” as he tried new ways of getting through to his students. It was interesting that many of the approaches that worked best were the ones for which administrators and parents took him to task.

As a psychology instructor, I have wrestled with the issue of how much of my personal life to share with my students. McCourt provides support for the benefits of storytelling as a way to reach students. His own personal stories helped him relate to his students (who in many ways were quite different from him), and the students were often quite engaged by his atypical teaching strategies. He would often describe his own background in response to students’ questions. As McCourt makes clear, our own stories frequently can help students better connect both with the material and with us.

Students can sense when teachers are going through the motions and when they are not being genuine. I admire Mr. McCourt’s (admittedly slow) path to finally being the kind of writer he had often encouraged his students to be. He urged his students to read and write, but often he did not take his own advice. It was not until his retirement that McCourt completed his first book, Angela’s Ashes. He was 66 years old when that book was published in 1996. The book became a bestseller, was made into a Hollywood movie, and earned him a Pulitzer Prize. His follow-up, ’Tis, was published in 1999, and it, too, became a bestseller. Not bad for such a late bloomer! While he could have heeded his own advice about writing much sooner, it seems that his life got in the way, in a manner of speaking.

Although Teacher Man does not directly address any issues typically covered in a general psychology class (though creativity, diversity, and interpersonal relationships are addressed), the book would be useful for any student considering a career in education—including teaching psychology. This book taps into the insecurities and imperfections of all educators. I would also encourage any conscientious teacher to read this book for validation that there are many different roads that can lead to real learning. Sometimes it is the things that seem the strangest at the time that will leave the greatest impressions on the students—and it is those very experiences that may lead to the best learning.

Review by David E. Baskind, PhD, Delta College, University Center, Michigan

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2006 STP Teaching Awards Winners

The Society for the Teaching of Psychology (APA Division 2) Teaching Awards Committee is pleased to announce the 2006 recipients of the STP Teaching Awards. The recipients will be honored at the STP social hour during the 2006 APA convention:

Robert S. Daniel (Four-Year College/University) Award  
Dean Keith Simonton, University Of California, Davis

Two-Year College Award  
Diane L. Finley, Prince George’s Community College

Moffett Memorial (High School) Award  
Amy C. Fineburg, Spain Park High School

McKeachie Graduate Student Teaching Excellence Award  
Trisha A. Benson, Auburn University

Early Career Teaching Award  
Jeffrey R. Stowell, Eastern Illinois University

Congratulations to this year’s recipients!
PT@CC Convention Highlights

The APA Committee of Psychology Teachers at Community Colleges (PT@CC) is pleased to announce highlights for the 2006 APA annual meeting. Please check the PT@CC Web site (www.apa.org/ed/pceu/ptatcc/home.html) to confirm dates, times, and locations. All PT@CC programs will be held on Friday, August 11, and Saturday, August 12, 2006.

Symposia

The Last Lecture
Chair: Robert Johnon, Umpqua Community College

In My End Is My Beginning
Maureen P. Hester, Holy Names University

Warning: The Study of Psychology May Ruin Your Life
Patricia Puccio, College of DuPage

PT@CC/Psi Beta Innovative Teaching Techniques
Chair: John A. Phelan, Western Oklahoma State College

Service Learning: Bringing the Community Into the Classroom
Laura J. Bittner, Carroll Community College

Inclusion in the Classroom: Helping Students Connect With Psychological Science
Ladonna Lewis, Glendale Community College

Teaching, Learning, and Assessing in a Developmentally Coherent Curriculum
Chair: Donna Killian Duffy, Middlesex Community College

Undergraduate Learning Goals and Outcomes: Past, Present, and Future
Patricia Puccio, College of DuPage

PT@CC Invited Address: The Diane F. Halpern Lecture
Chair: Susan K. Pollock, Mesa Community College

Why Do Psychologists Think Like Scientists but Teach Like Dummies?
Stephen L. Chew, Samford University

Reception in the PT@CC/Psi Beta Hospitality Suite

Society for the Teaching of Psychology Announces Convention Highlights

Addresses

Presidential Address
Mary Kite, The Richness of Diversity
William Addison, Chair

G. Stanley Hall Lectures
Nora S. Newcombe, Uses and Abuses of Evolutionary Psychology
Daniel J. Simons, Failures of Visual Awareness
Susan Folkman, Positive Emotions in the Stress Process: Should We Care?

Harry Kirke Wolfe Lecture
G. William Hill, Teaching and Technology: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Divisional Activities

Business Meeting: Mary Kite, Chair

Executive Committee Meetings: Mary Kite, Chair

Social Hour and Teaching Awards Ceremony
Mary Kite, William Addison, William Buskist, Bill Hill, Elizabeth Yost, Valerie Whittlesey, and Janie Wilson, Hosts

Symposia

Assessing Quality: Benchmarks for Undergraduate Psychology Programs
Chair: Dena S. Dunn, Chair

Assessment Advances and the Need for Quality Benchmarks in Psychology
Dana S. Dunn, Chair

Attributes of High Quality Programs in Psychology: A Developmental Framework for Assessment
Maureen A. McCarthy

Applying the Student Learning Outcomes Developmental Rubric to Assess Learning
Jerry Rudmann, Irvine Valley Community College

Linking Authentic Assessment to Pedagogical Applications of the Developmental Rubric
Joseph A. Mayo, Gordon College

Community College Program Review: Assessment, Student Outcomes, and Curriculum Changes
Vincent J. Granito, Lorain County Community College

Using the Developmental Framework for Effective Academic Program Evaluation
Suzanne C. Baker

Prospects and Perils of Program Benchmarking
Jane S. Halonen

G. William Hill, Discussant

Assessment of Clinical Competency: An Experiential Model
Stephanie C. Woods, Chair

Clinical Diagnoses and Treatment: Active Assessment
Ann Elise Parkhurst

Interviewing and Interpersonal Feedback Process
Andrew P. Groves

Exam Feedback and Training Loop
Susan L. Franklin

Laura S. Brown and Frances M. Parks, Discussants

STP Convention Highlights, continued on page 17
Benefits of an Undergraduate Research Practicum Experience in Psychology
Bradley B. Huffey, Chair

The Benefits of Utilizing Active Learning in a Research Practicum
Sara R. Church

Benefits and Roles of Mentoring Within an Undergraduate Research Practicum
Michelle M. Toliver

Benefits of an Undergraduate Research Practicum Related to Graduate School
Mary C. Wagner

Additional Suggestions for Optimal Learning From an Undergraduate Research Practicum
Amy F. Rewa

Collaboration Across Academic and Ethnic Cultures: Preparing for Diverse Futures
Sue C. Jacobs, Chair

Year One Lessons: Collaboration, Cultural Competence, and Research Mentoring
Angela Belden (Allen Eason, coauthor)

Challenges and Changes in Year Two
Kimberly Haala

You Must Wear a Tie to Succeed as Faculty Here!
Yvonne Montgomery

Langston Undergraduate Psychology Student Views
Andrea Park (Brittni Ware, coauthor)

Rosemary E. Phelps and Paul D. Nelson, Discussants

Curricular and Extracurricular Community-Building Strategies for Psychology Departments

Building Community With Peer Advisors and Teaching Assistants
Drew C. Appleby, Chair

Peer Advisors and Teaching Assistants as Mentors
Barbara A. Myers

Building Community Through Professional Development
Kenneth A. Weaver

Effective Classroom Activities: A Hands-On Symposium
Using Small Groups in a Research Methods Course
Cynthia B. Gray, Chair

We Are All More Similar Than We Are Different
Nancy Ashton

Learning About Language Development With Ludwig Wittgenstein’s Language Games
K. H. Grobman

From Listener to Lecturer: Tips for Novice Graduate Student Instructors
Brooke J. Cannon, Chair

Syllabus Preparation and Student Relationships
Patricia Fox

Testing and Grading
Mary Gruber

Course Content and Lecture Preparation
Mia Bartoletti

Graduate Distance Education in Psychology: Adapting Best Practices
Denise DeZolt, Chair

Course Management and Curriculum Models in Distance Education
Marcia J. Moody

Building Community and Developing Psychology Graduate Faculty at a Distance
Nina Nabor

Student Success in a Graduate Distance Education Learning Environment
Gary Burkholder

Interdisciplinary Collaboration on Field Training in a Distance Learning Environment
James Nolan (Chris Kerno, coauthor)

Distance Learning and Face-to-Face Components in Skill Acquisition
Martha Giles

Conducting Thesis and Dissertation Research Online: New Opportunities on the Net
George Smeaton

Honoring James (Jim) Korn: Teacher, Mentor, Friend
Barbara F. Nodine, Chair

The IRB—Basics All Students (and Faculty) Should Know
Loreto R. Prieto, Chair

Federal Law and the IRB
Sara Lynne R. Bennett

Tips on Dealing With the IRB for Student Researchers
David J. Winer

Live From New Orleans: Statistics and Research Methods Activities
Randolph A. Smith, Chair

What’s in a Question: Pitfalls in Survey Wording
Bernard C. Beins

More Than Just Chi Square
Janie H. Wilson

Developing Student Research Topics by Jumping From Thought-to-Thought
Michael A. Clump

Experimentation Bias
Natalie S. Kerr

Making Lemonade: Psychology Departments Rebound From Catastrophe

Incorporating Catastrophe Into the Curriculum
Elizabeth Y. Hammer, Chair

Keeping Them Wanting More: Maintaining Morale Following Disasters
Elliott D. Hammer

Beyond Ourselves: Addressing Catastrophes on a Community Level
Stacy Overstreet

STP Convention Highlights, continued on page 18
Making the Invisible Visible: LGBT Education in High Schools/Universities
Nathan Grant Smith and Gary W. Harper, Cochairs

Assisting High School Teachers in Raising Awareness of LGBT Psychology
Jeanne A. Blakeslee (Gary W. Harper, coauthor)

Training School Mental Health Professionals: APA’s Healthy LGB Students Project
Hank L. Tomlinson (Clinton W. Anderson, coauthor)

Representing Diverse Populations in Introductory Psychology Courses: Strategies and Resources
Beverly Greene

Creating Safe Spaces for University-Affiliated LGBTQ Faculty and Staff
Gary W. Harper (Marco Hidalgo, coauthor)

Pathways to a Career in Teaching
Bernard C. Beins, Chair

I Always Wanted to Be a College Professor
Drew C. Appleby

It Takes a Village to Raise a Good Teacher
Linda M. Noble

Using Student Feedback to Improve Teaching
Margaret A. Lloyd

Teaching Psychology, Teaching Peace: The Path Less Traveled
Linda M. Woolf

Pragmatic Pedagogy: Using Cognitive Science to Optimize Learning
Regan A. R. Gurung, Chair

How Cognitive Psychology Can Enhance Your Students’ Learning
Margaret Matlin

Improving Student Learning: Lessons From the Memory Laboratory Applied to the Classroom
Mark McDonald

Preparing Undergraduates for the Workplace: Is an “Extreme Makeover” Necessary?
Paul I. Hettich, Chair

Connecting Liberal Arts Majors to Careers: Should We Stop Trying?
Elizabeth V. Swenson

How Faculty Can Promote Career Preparation for Psychology Majors
Bernardo J. Carducci

Becoming a Freshman Again: Anticipating Workplace Attitudes, Beliefs, and Behaviors
Paul I. Hettich

Psychology and the Liberal Arts: Teaching Students to Make Connections
Bernard C. Beins, Chair

Psychology as One “Course” in a Liberal Arts Tasting Menu
Beth M. Schwartz

Psychological Concepts: Richness Through the Liberal Arts
Bernard C. Beins

Spaces for Living: Design, the Mind, and Liberal Education
Dana S. Dunn

Jane Halonen, Discussant

Reflections on Why Psychologists Make Effective Administrators in Higher Education
Jane S. Halonen, Chair

Preparing Students for Futures in Psychology
Sara L. Rieder Bennett and Loreto R. Prieto, Cochairs

Success Strategies for the Bachelor’s-Level Job Market
Margaret A. Lloyd

Reaching the Next Generation: Career Options for Precollege Teaching
Amy Fineburg

Building Bridges to the Future: Advising the Nontraditional Student
Patricia Puccio

Preferred Undergraduate Knowledge: The View From the Podium
Karen R. Scheel (Loreto R. Prieto, coauthor)

Learning about Privilege: If You Could See What I See
Sara L. Reider Bennett

Speaking From Experience: Challenges Facing a Culturally Diverse Student
Karmen M. Garrett

Mary E. Kite, Discussant

William Hill, Sharon Stephens Brehm, John Cavanaugh, and Jill Reich, Discussants

Schema Formation and Cognitive Load: Key Components for Optimal Learning
Attention, Cognitive Load, and Automaticity in Student Learning
Stephen L. Chew, Chair (Constance L. Baughman, coauthor)

Can Concept Mapping Promote Course Mastery?
Jack W. Berry

Maureen A. McCarthy, Discussant

Tapping the Creative: Using Self-Expressive Methods in Teaching Psychology
Holly B. Sweet, Chair

Masking the Self/Unmasking Identity
Deborah A. Gagnon

Role Playing of Psychological Disorders
Melissa S. Terlecki

Composing Your Life: Exploring Self Through Photography, Art, and Writing
Holly B. Sweet

Beyond Words: Using Photo-Journaling as a Window Into Adult Development
Rebecca Stoddart

Teaching About Cultural Privilege: Perspectives and Method
Loreto R. Prieto, Chair

Teaching About Privilege: The View From the Podium
Karen R. Scheel (Loreto R. Prieto, coauthor)

Learning About Privilege: If You Could See What I See
Sara L. Reider Bennett

Speaking From Experience: Challenges Facing a Culturally Diverse Student
Karmen M. Garrett

Mary E. Kite, Discussant

Psychology Teacher Network Summer 2006

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STP Convention Highlights, continued on page 19
The First Day of Class: Empirical Data Rather Than Gut Feeling
The Truth About the First Day of Class
William Buskist, Chair (Amber Henslee, Danny Burgess, and Jessica Irons, coauthors)
Match or Mismatch: Student and Faculty First Day Preferences
Elizabeth J. Adams (G. William Hill, coauthor)
Negative First Day of Class Does No Long-Term Damage
Janie H. Wilson (Shauna B. Wilson, coauthor)
Topical Teaching: Classroom Politics, Sustainability Education, and Identity
Identity Politics: Teaching Racialized Systems in a Global World
William R. Woodward, Chair
Sustainability Education: Teaching Citizenship in a Time of War
Melinda Salazar
Classroom Politics: Developing Political Selves in an Activity-Based Classroom
Mary E. Nikityn
Cospresented Symposia
Ethical Acculturation of Psychologists: Ethics Education Throughout Professional Development
(Eospresented with Division 42)
Ethics Education: The Acculturation Model in Practice
Michael C. Gottlieb
Teaching the Ethics of Supervision to Doctoral Students: Strategies and Challenges
Janet T. Thomas
Ethics and Supervision in the Practicum and Internship
Carol A. Falender, Chair
Postdoctoral Ethics Teaching: A Model for a Mixed Bag
Thomas F. Nagy
Walking the Walk: Assessing Comprehension and Application of Ethical Principles
Gary R. Schoener
Stephen H. Behnke, Discussant
Psi Chi/STP Pedagogical Debate
Should Psychology Adopt a Theory of Multiple Intelligences?
(please see program for details)

Using OPL, continued from page 3

the concepts that are discussed in the memory section of introductory psychology.

Offering students the opportunity to participate in this activity increases interest in the concepts of perception and memory. Not only do students participate in the activity but they also have the experience of judging the importance of an eyewitness and participating in a popular activity that is related to forensic psychology.

References

Update on the DCS

The Society for the Teaching of Psychology (STP, APA Division 2) and the APA Board of Educational Affairs (BEA) jointly sponsor the Departmental Consulting Service (DCS) through the Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology (see www.lemoyne.edu/OTRP/memberservices.html#dcs).

Under the direction of Tracy Zinn, the DCS maintains a roster of consultants, approved by both the STP and BEA, who are specialists in various evaluation areas and who can be contacted to perform external reviews. Specific areas for consultation include (but are not limited to) curriculum (evaluation, development, designing/improving special programs or courses, fieldwork, or honors); faculty (writing grant proposals, developing funding sources, writing for publication, promoting professional development, enhancing/evaluating teacher effectiveness); advising (student advising for career planning, graduate school preparation, changing enrollments, minority recruitment and retention); research facilities (designing psychology labs, teaching facilities, computer applications for courses, labs, or administration); and departmental program evaluation (self-assessments, program evaluation, department evaluation).

The “brokering” service that the DCS offers is free of charge; all stipends and other arrangements for external evaluations are strictly between the site and the consultant(s).

If you are interested in becoming a consultant, please contact Tracy Zinn for information about the application process. Applicants should have expertise in a number of the areas listed above. Experience as a program evaluator is also desirable. Application materials are reviewed by the BEA at its fall or spring meetings.

Please do not hesitate to contact Tracy Zinn directly at (540) 568-6309 or by e-mail (zinnte@jmu.edu) should you have an interest in the DCS.
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