

Accreditation '08 UPDATE

## WWU's Self-Study Gains Momentum

Brenda Miller, Self-Study Report Editor

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." —W.B. Yeats

We are pleased to report that Western Washington University's Self-Study has garnered momentum, sparking in-depth conversations (and hard work!) across campus.



### Film-maker Eugene Jarecki to visit campus Feb. 21

Eugene Jarecki—whose film "Why We Fight" earned the Sundance Grand Jury Prize in 2005—will visit WWU on Wed., Feb. 21, for two presentations: an informal talk at the Fairhaven World Issues Forum at noon; and a talk and Q&A session about his film and work at the PAC at 6:30 PM. The evening talk will also kick off the Whatcom County Human Rights Film Festival. "Why We Fight" will be shown periodically during the week. Faculty are encouraged to attend one of these presentations with their students. Jarecki's visit is sponsored by: American Democracy Project at WWU; AS Civil Controversy Series, and Fairhaven World Issues Forum. Ticket and other details will be advertised in January. For more information contact Ann Carlson, x/2345 or [ann.carlson@wwu.edu](mailto:ann.carlson@wwu.edu)

We hope to have much of our information gathered by January 30, 2007. The final report will be completed in Fall 2007, and WWU's accrediting body, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), will make a site visit in April 2008.

The Accreditation Self-Study team has been actively gathering information for the nine Standards, engaging staff and all departments in efforts to fully represent the depth and complexity of what Western offers to our students and to the community. The Self-Study is an opportunity not only to fulfill accreditation requirements, but also to take the time to reflect on where we have been and where we are going.

During fall quarter, we have made some key decisions that start to bring this overwhelming task into focus:

- The theme of our Self-Study report will be "Working Towards Engaged Excellence." The new Strategic Plan for the University will provide guidance and coherence for all

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## Karen Casto named Interim Director of FIG Program

Karen Casto, Director of the Center for Instructional Innovation, will serve as Interim Director of the First-Year Interest Group (FIG) Program for 2007-08, according to Kris Bulcroft, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education.

Casto replaces Janice Lapsansky, who served as FIG director for the past three years. She has been involved in the FIG Program since its inception, and has extensive expertise in first-year curricula and assessment. In addition to working with the FIG program, Karen will also be working to develop FYE summer workshops, learning communities in residence, and other general education initiatives that support students and faculty.

For more information or to participate in the FIG Program, contact Karen Casto at x/4943, or via email, [Karen.casto@wwu.edu](mailto:Karen.casto@wwu.edu)



Karen Casto

## E V E N T S

MLK Day Read-in for Children and Book Drive

Mon., Jan. 15, 11 AM – 4 PM, Village Books

WWU student volunteers will read multicultural and social justice books and participate in diversity activities with children ages 3-8.

Book Donation Drive

Village Books and the AS Bookstore have selected children and youth books with themes in the spirit of the MLK Jr. holiday, which can be used at the Read-In, and can be purchased for donation to Lummi Nation schools. To participate, contact Alex Groher, Center for Service Learning, x/7520 or [Service.Learning@wwu.edu](mailto:Service.Learning@wwu.edu).

International Opportunities Fair

Thurs, Jan. 25, 10 AM – 2 PM

Viking Union Multipurpose Room

There's something for everyone who want to find out about study, work, volunteering and internships abroad. Students, alumni, faculty and the general public can meet with representatives from approx. 50 organizations to learn more. This event is co-sponsored by the International Programs & Exchanges (IPE) and Career Services Center. For more information, call IPE at x/3298, or visit: <http://www.careers.wwu.edu/intoppfair.asp>

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## Center for Instructional Innovation

# Three chosen for Innovative Teaching Showcase

Justina Brown, Center for Instructional Innovation

The Center for Instructional Innovation is pleased to announce three faculty have been selected for the 2006 -'07 Innovative Teaching Showcase, which will be published online in June.

The three were selected by nomination for their work that exemplifies this year's Showcase theme, "Teaching for a Sustainable Future." They are: Julie Lockhart, Accounting; Arunas Oslapas, Engineering Technology; and Grace Wang, Environmental Studies.



Showcase faculty, above left to right: Arunas Oslapas, Julie Lockhart, and Grace Wang

The concept of sustainability underlies human existence, and drives the evolution of methods for using the planet. The Showcase will illuminate through dynamic multimedia and text how the three nominated professors encourage students from their respective disciplinary perspectives to examine the effects of human action on local and world communities. It will also chronicle how these professors' scholarship informs their instruction and promotes their students' understanding of sustainability in our world.

The public can meet the Showcasees and see their work at the CII Open House on Thursday, June 7, Noon - 3 PM. More details will be published in the Spring issue of Praxis, and will be available online: <http://pandora.cii.wwu.edu/cii/showcase/>. For more information, please contact the CII at x7210.

## WWU leads institutional efforts to promote student voice

WWU has been selected to serve as the coordinating institution for a group of six colleges and universities, on the theme of Students as Scholars of Teaching and Learning.

On November 8, the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) convened the first meeting of this new Leadership Program in Washington, D.C. WWU Leadership Team members who participated in the first meeting are Deborah Currier (Theater Arts); Lauree Fletcher (Fairhaven senior); Bill Lay (Ed. Foundations/Special Ed); Jane Verner (Human Services); and Carmen Werder (TLA/Comm.) who serves as the group's key contact person.

The Student Voices theme group brought together 25 representatives, including students and faculty from the six institutions, to determine future directions. Besides settling on a title, "Student Voices in the Scholarship of Teaching

and Learning," the group composed a description for their collective work:

We commit to engaging students as collaborative partners in improving teaching and learning. We charge ourselves to create models that re-conceptualize learning spaces and roles. We will investigate, expand, share, and reflect upon experiences of learning founded on participation, reciprocity, and trust toward the development of student voices.

Western Washington University has been acknowledged by the Carnegie Foundation as a national and international institutional leader for bringing students into the study of teaching and learning since 1998. The Teaching-Learning Academy serves as the campus hub for these leadership efforts.

For more information contact Carmen Werder, x/7329 or [Carmen.Werder@wwu.edu](mailto:Carmen.Werder@wwu.edu)



Bill Lay

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Meet students and colleagues for news & bagels

Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Kris Bulcroft invites interested faculty and students to join in a new, weekly current issues discussion, Common Times.

The group will meet every Wednesday from 9 - 9:50 AM in VU 714, beginning on Jan. 10, for the entire winter quarter.

The goal of Common Times is to create a learning community to find common ground and solutions around current, global issues. The New York Times will provide free online subscriptions, and coffee/tea and doughnuts/bagels at weekly meetings. Faculty and students are encouraged to attend, but space is limited. To insure a spot, please contact Paul Edgeman at [paul.edgeman@wwu.edu](mailto:paul.edgeman@wwu.edu)

### Free New York Times, Seattle Times continue on campus

Monday - Fridays during regular class days, 400 copies daily of The New York Times and 100 copies of the Seattle Times are available for free for students, faculty, and staff, courtesy of ADP at WWU, AS Students, and University Residences. Locations are: Biology Building; Bond Hall; Wilson Library (north entrance). Viking Union (market area); Ridgeway Commons; Fairhaven Commons; The Haven; Rock's Edge; Carter Sub Connection; Underground Coffeehouse; and Viking Commons. Newspapers are limited; subscriptions for a guaranteed daily copy are available through the AS Bookstore.

### New exchange starts with Trent U in Canada

WWU has a new Direct Exchange with Trent University in Canada, and is now seeking students who are interested in going for a semester or academic year.

Trent is in Peterborough, Ontario, an hour and a half northeast of Toronto and about three hours from Ottawa. Trent is widely recognized for academic programs that encompass the social and natural sciences, humanities, and professional programs.

Faculty who know students who might be a good fit for an exchange experience at Trent, should have them contact Richard Bruce ([Richard.Bruce@wwu.edu](mailto:Richard.Bruce@wwu.edu)) in International Programs & Exchanges, College Hall 104.



# First Thursdays Professional Development Workshop Series

## WINTER QUARTER 2007

Brown Bag for New Faculty  
Thursday, January 11 (second Thurs.)

Noon – 1 PM  
Miller Hall 112

The beginning of winter quarter is a great time for new faculty members to reflect upon what went right—and what might have gone wrong—with their fall quarter courses. This brown bag session was created by popular demand, and is designed to give new faculty an opportunity to meet with CII staff, connect

with faculty mentors and discuss with colleagues the various methodologies, resources, and pedagogies that are proven to enhance the teaching-learning experience. Emphasis will be placed on teaching large courses. All

faculty are welcome to attend. Contact: [Ann.Carlson@wwu.edu](mailto:Ann.Carlson@wwu.edu)

Community Learning and Sustainability  
Thursday, March 1

4 – 5 PM  
Miller 160

Explore the many ways that community based

learning can enhance curricula and inspire students. Tim Costello from the Center for Service Learning will lead this interactive workshop. Contact: [Timothy.Costello@wwu.edu](mailto:Timothy.Costello@wwu.edu)

### Special Workshop:

Writing Effective Exams with

Catherine Taylor

Thursday, March 9

2 – 5 PM

Location TBA

Writing exams that effectively evaluate students' learning can be a difficult task. Yet well-de-




Maintaining Civility in the College Classroom  
February 8, from 4 – 5:15 PM  
Viking Union 464

Dr. Gerald Amada, psychotherapist and author, will present a workshop to faculty and staff on practical strategies to help classroom instructors respond more confidently, fairly, and safely with different disruptive incidents that can occur in the college classroom.

Topics include: differences between predicting dangerousness and predicting disruptions; and current trends and practical advice dealing with disruptive students

Dr. Amada was one of the founders and a director of the Mental Health Program, City College of San Francisco, and he has worked for 40 years as a psychotherapist, many of them devoted to working with faculty on student disruption issues. His visit is sponsored by WWU's Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support Services, Residence Life, and the Office of Undergraduate Education. All faculty and staff are invited to attend. For more information please contact: Pat Fabiano x/3074 or via email, [pat.fabiano@wwu.edu](mailto:pat.fabiano@wwu.edu)



signed exams can greatly inform instructors whether or not their students are achieving their learning goals. During this interactive three-hour workshop, Educational psychologist Catherine Taylor from the University of Washington will discuss test construction, specifically focusing on the creation of objective tests containing multiple choice, true-false,

matching, or fill-in-the-blank items. Contact: [Karen.Casto@wwu.edu](mailto:Karen.Casto@wwu.edu)

## SPRING QUARTER 2007

Handling Student Feedback

Thursday, April 5

4 – 5 PM

Location TBA

Students provide feedback to faculty in many ways: end-of-course evaluations, midterm assessments, and online surveys. In what ways can these evaluations be used most effectively? What happens to all those course evaluations?

This interactive workshop, led by Western faculty and staff, will give you strategies for using this valuable information from students to improve your own classroom performance, understand its use in tenure and promotion, and use it to improve student learning. Contact: [Karen.Perry@wwu.edu](mailto:Karen.Perry@wwu.edu)

Creating First-Year Curricula

Thursday, May 3

Location TBA

What makes a course work especially well for entering first-year students? This interactive and informative workshop is designed to help faculty create first-year seminars that engage students more deeply with content, as well as meet the criteria set under the new general education requirements for a "first-year experience." Join Western faculty who have created first-year courses, and learn about some of the innovative ways they challenge first-year students to learn best.

Contact: [Kris.Bulcroft@wwu.edu](mailto:Kris.Bulcroft@wwu.edu) or [Ann.Carlson@wwu.edu](mailto:Ann.Carlson@wwu.edu)

PRAXIS is published quarterly throughout the academic year by the Office of the Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education. Created as a forum for faculty and student support professionals on Western's campus, PRAXIS promotes the exchange of ideas and provides information on upcoming events and topical issues in teaching and learning at the undergraduate level.

Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education  
Western Washington University  
516 High Street Bellingham  
WA 98225-9033

Phone: 360.650.2345  
Email: [praxis@wwu.edu](mailto:praxis@wwu.edu)

PRAXIS online:  
<http://www.wwu.edu/depts/vpue/praxis/>

## Self-Study gains momentum —(continued from page 1)

aspects of our study.

- The report, in all its parts, will focus strongly on four key areas:
  1. Significant changes that have taken place since our last evaluation in 1998.
  2. Major strengths of the University, in all aspects of its operations.
  3. Major challenges the University faces as it continues to evolve.
  4. The next, specific steps we need to take to reach our short and long term goals.
- The reporting process for creation of the self-study will work most effectively from the bottom up. We

have created some key resources so that departments can best represent themselves, as well as bring more faculty into the process. This will also allow us to create a comprehensive and in-depth overview of the entire University. We have created some documents that will be helpful to departments and colleges as they conduct these individual self-studies:

1. "How to Write Up a Departmental Self-Study Report," which outlines all the areas we are asked to describe and evaluate for Standard Two.
2. "An Outline for WWU Individual College's Self-Study Report," which adapts the departmental document to help Deans give a comprehensive overview of their colleges' unique qualities, strengths, goals, and challenges.

These documents are available on the Provost's Accreditation Website, under "Resources." This site also includes examples of model Self-Study reports from other universities and a great deal of helpful information on outcomes assessment practices.

We begin shaping the final report this winter quarter. While, at times, this process can feel like "filling pails" (one after another, and they're heavy!), it can also be the catalyst for "the lighting of a fire," creating new conversations and sparking ideas that will benefit the University for many years to come.

### Accreditation Contacts & Resources

Website:

<http://www.wwu.edu/depts/vpue/accreditation>  
Or, you can go to the Provost's website and click the link under the "Announcements" section.  
Accreditation Office: College Hall 237, MS-9035  
Editor Brenda Miller x/4350, or via email:  
[accreditation@wwu.edu](mailto:accreditation@wwu.edu), or  
[Brenda.Miller@wwu.edu](mailto:Brenda.Miller@wwu.edu)

## College Hall new home for interdisciplinary and collaborative programs

College Hall is becoming the new hub for a variety of interdisciplinary and international programs, as well as other programs and projects related to improving WWU's undergraduate experience.

College Hall has been undergoing renovation since it was vacated by the Journalism and Communication departments, which were relocated to the new Communication Facility. Honors, Teaching-Learning Academy, Interna-

tional Programs and Exchanges, American Cultural Studies, and several other programs are located there now; the Writing Center, Center for Instructional Innovation, and FIG Program are slated to relocate there sometime this academic year.

Co-location of these programs provides an excellent opportunity for better collaboration and interdisciplinarity, all dedicated to furthering Western's commitment to "Engaged Excellence." Stop by College Hall soon to see the changes and share the excitement that comes from our collective efforts.