

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: SUPPORTING UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AT WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

CII's Innovative Teaching Showcase Highlights Ethics across the Curriculum

Justina Brown, Center for Instructional Innovation

College students—more than ever before—will encounter complex ethical issues in their personal and professional lives. There's a growing body of research to support the idea that students who study ethical reasoning will be better prepared to recognize and resolve these ethical dilemmas when they encounter them outside of the classroom.

This year's Innovative Teaching

Showcase, *Ethics Across the Curriculum*, will feature three WWU instructors who integrate the study of ethics into their courses: **Brian Burton**, Management; **Janice Lapsansky**, Biology; and **Jeff Newcomer**, Engineering Technology.

The dynamic multimedia Showcase—now in its sixth year—will explore in depth the varying instructional methods (writing, discussion, reflection, self

assessments and more) used by the three professors to teach ethics in their respective classrooms.

As always, all Western faculty are invited to the



Shown left to right: Showcasees Jeff Newcomer, Brian Burton, and Janice Lapsansky. The three's methods of teaching ethics in their respective disciplines will be highlighted in this year's Innovative Teaching Showcase. The Showcase will be unveiled at an open house at the CII on June 2, noon - 2 PM.

Or, check out previous Showcases anytime for instructional strategies, including active learning, project-based learning, immersive technologies, faculty-student collaboration, and community-based learning.

See the Innovative Teaching Showcase online: <http://pandora.cii.wvu.edu/cii/showcase/>

Innovative Teaching Showcase Open House, on Thursday, June 2, Noon—2 PM, at the CII (MH 156). Here you can be the first to see the new Showcase, visit with Showcase faculty and colleagues, and enjoy refreshments.

E V E N T S

Engaging Learners in the Slovak Republic: Reflections on a Fulbright Experience

—Thurs., April 7, from 4-5 PM, MH 160 (see pg. 3 for details)

Communicating to Learn: Using Writing, Speaking, and Listening to Engage Students

Thurs., May 5, from 4-5 PM, MH 160

Educators and employers pay much attention to the importance of gaining written and oral communication skills as part of a quality undergraduate experience. But how much do we emphasize the value of these literacy competencies in the classroom, not only to display learning, but also as *ways to learn*? Faculty and students from various disciplines will share strategies they have for using communication modes as a way of learning content.

CII Innovative Teaching Showcase Open House

—Thurs., June 2, Noon—2 PM at the CII, MH 156 (See full story, this page.)

First Thursdays Professional Development in Teaching & Learning Series is sponsored by the Center for Instructional Innovation and Teaching-Learning Academy. For more info, go to the CII website:

<http://pandora.cii.wvu.edu/cii/> and click the link to "workshops & events".

New General Education Program Resources Website Launched

A new website resource is being created for faculty, one that will help them align new and existing courses to the new general education requirements.

The new general education program approved by the Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC) will be effective beginning Fall Quarter 2005. The web resource will include links to documents on the ACC's website, background documents created by campus accountability working groups in Quantitative & Symbolic Reasoning and Writing, and essential components of a first-year seminar. Eventually, resources will be included to enable faculty to demonstrate how their courses achieve the learning outcomes adopted by the ACC.

The website is being created by the Center for Instructional Innovation, in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Assessment, Research & Testing. Faculty are encouraged to make suggestions for additional resources. Either contact Karen Casto at the CII (Karen.Casto@wwu.edu) or make an online request at the website: <http://pandora.cii.wvu.edu/gened/>

Carmen Werder honored as Carnegie Scholar for 2005 - '06

Carmen Werder, Ph.D., was named recently as a Carnegie Scholar for 2005-06. She is one of 20 Scholars who were selected for the program from an international pool of nearly 400 applicants.

The Carnegie Scholar Program is run by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL). The goal of the Carnegie Scholars is to create and disseminate examples of the scholarship of teaching and learning that contribute to thought and practice in the field.

Werder said she was honored to have been selected as a Carnegie Scholar, adding that her recognition from CASTL would not have been possible without both support from administration and wide participation from the campus community.

"I am extremely happy for the way this award honors the work itself and the many faculty, staff, and students who have worked with the Teaching-Learning Academy. This selection truly acknowledges a collective effort – one that I hope will continue for as long



Carmen Werder

as teaching and learning remain central to Western's mission."

Werder will be investigating the question: *How does the active engagement of students as partners and co-inquirers into the scholarship of teaching and learning affect their own learning?*

Erik Skogsberg, a Fairhaven senior majoring in English with a concentration in critical pedagogy and a TLA co-facilitator, will work with Werder as a co-researcher.

During Werder's one-year term as a Carnegie Scholar, she'll attend three week-long residencies designed to foster a community of scholarly inquiry, which will be held at The Carnegie Foundation, located at Stanford University in Palo Alto, CA.

Western (under Werder's direction) has been affiliated since 1998 with CASTL as part of its Campus Program, when it launched an initiative to incorporate student voices in the study of teaching and learning. For more information on CASTL and the Scholars Program go to: http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/CASTL/highered/scholars_program.htm

New Writing II courses to begin this fall

—More courses needed for new gen ed program

Western's revised general education requirements now provide a new option for students in satisfying the second part of the Communication GUR: a course with a primary focus on writing instruction. Students will continue to satisfy the Communication requirement Block A by completing English 101 (or an appropriate alternative such as AP credit or SAT score). Then they can choose to take a course from either Block B or from the new Block C Writing II courses.

Four, entirely new Writing II courses have now been approved by the Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC) for Block C:

- Communication 322, *Civil Discourse as Interactive Learning*
- Education 309, *Storytelling and Oral Narrative*
- History 203, *Writing About Race and Gender*
- Women Studies 212, *Feminist Theory and Expressions*

Final Writing II designation and approval for Art History 275, *Introduction to Writing and Critical Thinking*, an existing course, is pending in ACC. Plans are being formulated to support writing instruction for the faculty teaching these courses. For more information about developing a Writing II course, contact Carmen Werder, carmen.werder@wwu.edu, x/7329.

Teaching-Learning Academy and the Ecology of an Engaged Campus

Carmen Werder, TLA Director

As part of its year-long discussion of ethical reasoning and civic engagement, the winter TLA participants (28 students and approx. 50 faculty and staff) focused on evidence of engagement in the Western community.

First and foremost, we learned Western faculty, students, and staff place high value on the place of community-based experiences in deepening learning. Participants also pointed to a number of departments and programs besides the TLA that actively promote learning partnerships with the Bellingham community, especially the Center for Service-Learning and the Campus Community Coalition, as well as colleges such as Woodring and the College of Business and Economics.

At the same time, participants expressed frustration with structural limitations (such as the quarter system and degree requirements) that precluded much engagement beyond the walls of the classroom.

For spring quarter, the TLA will extend the conversation by working to advance small, doable, *collective* acts: One pending recommendation is to collaborate with other campus groups in submitting a preliminary proposal for the Waterfront Development Project.

Join TLA for spring quarter

The TLA welcomes all members of the Western and neighboring communities to its study groups, which begin the second week of the quarter (April 6-8), and meet every other week in the Canada House Fireplace Room. Times are: Wednesdays—3 PM; Thursdays—2 PM or 3 PM; or Fridays — Noon. To sign up for a study group or for more information, contact Carmen Werder, carmen.werder@wwu.edu, x/7329.

Western Reads

Western Reads, the campus-wide reading program designed to promote intellectual engagement and civil discourse among members of the campus community, continues next year with two changes: a new director, and, of course, a new book.

Donna Qualley, English Department Associate Professor and Director of Composition, will lead the program. Second, the book for next year is *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, a debut novel by British author Mark Haddon.

Qualley noted that she and others involved in Western Reads will be meeting this spring to discuss ways that faculty may somehow use the book in conjunction with courses, and other activities for students. Western Reads is primarily aimed at first-year students, who will receive copies of the book at SummerStart, but all students and staff are encouraged to join in the discussion.

Western Reads is sponsored jointly by The Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs. For more information contact Qualley (Donna.Qualley@wwu.edu) or visit the Western Reads website: <http://westernreads.wwu.edu>



Donna Qualley

About the book

Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time centers on Christopher Boone, a 15-year old autistic savant in Swindon, England. He hates being touched, cannot tell a lie, or understand metaphors or jokes. He is a whiz at math and enjoys puzzles.

When the neighbor's dog is killed with a pitchfork, Christopher, a Sherlock Holmes devotee, works to solve the puzzle. His investigation inadvertently becomes a quest for self-discovery and allows the reader to see Christopher's struggles to negotiate an emotionally complex and illogical world. The book (which is also being made into a movie) has been a consistent bestseller since its publication in 2003, and has won high praises from reviewers internationally.

Bulcroft to give talk on differences in U.S. - Eastern Europe higher education, April 7



Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Kris Bulcroft will discuss some key differences and similarities in higher education between the U.S. and Eastern Europe, on Thursday, April 7, from 4-5 PM in Miller Hall 160.

Her talk is part of the *First Thursdays* professional development series.

During her recent appointment as a Fulbright Scholar in the Slovak Republic, Dr. Bulcroft worked with the University of Economics in Bratislava to develop an accreditation plan to aid that country as they join the European Union (EU). She will share her experiences and perspectives on higher education in general, including the difficulties that were encountered

by other Fulbrighters as they worked to engage university students. There are many differences between students in Slovakia and their counterparts in the U.S., including styles of learning, demands on their time, and resistance to innovative teaching practices.

Faculty in Slovakia experience heavier workloads than their American counterparts, lower pay, and increased pressure to find external funding and publish more. Despite these differences, universities in the Slovak Republic and the United States share many of the same challenges and are developing similar coping strategies to meet these new demands.

The Slovak Republic has been an independent nation since 1993. It joined both NATO and the EU in the spring of 2004.

More Spring Quarter Teaching & Learning EVENTS

'Turning Points' Faculty Speaker Series: "Using Face-to-Face and Electronic Discussion to Examine Controversial Issues, Develop Citizenship and Promote Thinking,"

—Wed., April 13. 5:15 PM, CF 110

Bruce Larson, 2003 recipient of WWU's "Excellence in Teaching" award, will focus on in-class as well as the increasing use of electronic discussion as tools to engage students, help them understand controversial issues and involve them in the process, and promote learning. For more information: <http://www.ac.wwu.edu/~lectures/turningpoints.html>

"A Passion for Equity: Teaching and Learning for Social Justice"— Workshop in Teaching for Cultural Understanding and Social Justice with Gary Howard

—Thurs., May 12, 6-8 PM, VU MultiPurpose Room.

Howard, founder and president of the REACH Center for Multicultural Education, will use stories and imagery to help participants consider how we can best transform our schools and communities for the purpose of achieving our vision of an equitable and pluralistic democracy. His most recent book, *We Can't Teach What We Don't Know*, is considered a groundbreaking work examining issues of privilege and power. Co-sponsored by Western's Center for Educational Pluralism (CEP), with the A.S. Diversity Task Force and WCE Alumni Association. For details, go to the CEP website: <http://www.wce.wwu.edu/Resources/CEP/> and click the link to "current events."

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.

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ADP NOTES

Spring events promote civic engagement, civil discourse

Western's American Democracy Project (ADP) initiative, designed to promote student involvement in public life, will continue this quarter and into next year. Part of the ADP's goal is to support—either directly or indirectly—events on campus that also speak to this mission. Faculty may wish to take note of the following events, to publicize to their students, build curricular connections to their courses, and attend themselves. For more information and links, go to the ADP website: <http://www.wwu.edu/depts/adp/>

AS Students Civil Controversy Series:

Marilyn Cohen & Karen Swallow Prior: *Pro-Life, Pro-Choice: Building Effective Discourse*

—Thurs., April 7, at 7 PM, Science Lecture Hall 150

Ron Arnold: *The Defense of Free Enterprise and Environmental Concerns*

—Tues., April 26, at 7 PM, Bond Hall 109

Tim Wise & Dinesh D'Souza: *Race & American Politics: From Affirmative Action to Reparations*

—Wed., May 18, at 7 PM, Arntzen Hall 100

Human Rights:

Community Human Rights Film Festival, Fairhaven College

—April 13-17 and April 20-24, beginning 6:30 PM nightly

Nightly screenings of human rights-themed films will be followed by discussions led by filmmakers, activists and academics. Admission to all festival programs is free and free parking will also be available. For films & times, go to: <http://www.whrtf.org/filmfest/>

Seventh Annual Educational Law and Social Justice Forum: *Human Rights In Whatcom County : A Town Hall Discussion on the Climate of our Community*

—Wed., April 20, 5 - 8 PM, Location TBA

Sponsored by the Center for Education Pluralism in conjunction with the Human Rights Film Festival. Details: <http://www.wce.wwu.edu/Resources/CEP/CurrentEvents.shtml>

Women Writers of the Arab World, Tues. & Wed., May 24 - 25

—Public Reading & Discussion, Tues., May 24, 7 PM, Old Main Theatre

—Reception & Discussion with the Center for Educational Pluralism May 24, time TBA

—World Issues Forum: *Gender & Literature in the Arab World*, May 25, Noon - 1:30 PM, Fairhaven Auditorium

In cooperation with Hedgebrook Retreat for Women Writers, Western will host three acclaimed writers: **Suheir Hammad (Palestine/US); Alia Mamdouh (Iraq/France); and Somaya Ramadan (Egypt)**. The visit is sponsored initially by Fairhaven College, the Art Department, Women Studies, and Wilson Library.

Faculty Input Needed for 2005-06 First Thursdays Workshop Series

Have you had an idea or made a contact this year that you think should be shared with other faculty? The Center for Instructional Innovation, in conjunction with the Teaching—Learning Academy, would like to solicit recommendations from WWU faculty for topics or speakers for next year's *First Thursdays* workshop series. Are you interested in learning more about your students, about engaging them in their learning, or in improving your teaching? Let us know what you would like to know, and we will try to find campus experts who will share their knowledge in next year's series. Simply drop your suggestion in the CII's online workshop suggestion box: <http://pandora.cii.wwu.edu/ciiforms/workshops.htm> or contact Karen Casto at Karen.Casto@wwu.edu or Carmen Werder at Carmen.Werder@wwu.edu