THE CENTER FOR
TEACHING & LEARNING

The Learning Advocate

The MSU Center for Teaching and Learning represents an exciting partnership between the Office of Academic Affairs, University Libraries, and Information Technology Services. We are especially indebted to Dean Frances Coleman and Head of ITS, Mike Rackley whose cooperation and leadership made this possible. And an additional thanks to Dean Coleman for providing a location; the Center will be housed on the second floor of Mitchell Memorial Library and renovations will occur hopefully yet this spring to create a suite of offices and workroom space.

While we do many things at Mississippi State University, providing a high quality instructional program for our students will always be of paramount importance. I believe our new Center for Teaching and Learning, with able leadership from Director Matt Raven and Associate Director Deborah Lee, will become the flagship for university commitment to achieving and maintaining excellence in this particularly important segment of our tripartite mission.

The Center will establish campus-wide leadership for the enhancement, promotion, and recognition of excellence in teaching and learning at Mississippi State University by providing services and resources to faculty including the use of technology and other innovative approaches to enhance instruction. I was pleased that one highly-regarded faculty member, who was asked to serve on the Center's Advisory Committee, responded that "the Center is something that has been long overdue in meeting the teaching/learning mission of the University and giving professors and instructors the opportunity to develop, improve, and refine their teaching skills." Of course the development of the Center and its success will depend entirely on the interest, support, and participation from the faculty; I'm confident it will be there.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

The mission of the Center for Teaching and Learning is to foster a university culture where quality teaching and engaged learning is universally revered and practiced.

Mississippi State
™ UNIVERSITY

Spring 2006

From the Director's Desk...

Learning, research, and service – the foundation of a land-grant university and the three words on the Mississippi State University Seal that succinctly describe the mission of the People's University. I have always felt it is significant that Mississippi State University has learning rather than teaching on the seal for without learning there is no teaching. It is especially important that we keep in mind the critical role teaching and learning have in keeping MSU the People's University. This is especially important as the research component of our mission continues to be emphasized in a variety of ways from a multitude of directions.

The formation of the Center for Teaching and Learning is a confirmation of the university's commitment to teaching and learning. The Center's mission to foster a university culture where quality teaching and engaged learning is universally revered and practiced is additional evidence of the university's dedication to its core stakeholders, the students. The Center is an entity that serves as a focal point of an ongoing forum on the science and art of teaching and learning in a higher education environment. This is accomplished by providing programs and services that emphasize the knowledge, techniques, and issues related to teaching and learning.

A primary goal of the Center is to be sensitive to the needs of faculty in terms of services and programs. Consequently, the Center has a Faculty Advisory Group whose membership is comprised of the members of the University Instructional Improvement Committee, the Center's Faculty Advisory Committee (with a faculty representative from each college, Meridian Campus, and the Mississippi State University Extension Service) and active Grisham Master Teachers. These groups provide the Faculty Advisory Group a breadth of experience to draw upon for advise and assistance to the Center. I am excited and honored to be part of the formation of the Center and look forward to working with faculty across the university to further Mississippi State University's reputation not only as a research institution but also as an institution of stellar teaching and active learning.

Director

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Future Events – Please watch for more information

Monthly Brown Bags	Coming Fall 2006
WebCT Roundtables	Coming Fall 2006
New Faculty Orientation	August 2006
Teaching and Learning Colloquiums	Coming Fall 2006

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Podcasting is the New Buzz-Word

With 42 million iPods in circulation, podcasting has become a buzz-word on the MSU campus. The Center for Teaching and Learning is working with ITS on a new podcasting initiative that began as a pilot phase this Spring semester. While ITS is providing the technical support, the Center for Teaching and Learning will provide support to faculty once the pilot phase has ended.

The pilot phase consists of four professors in different concentrations with varying class sizes. This was important to ensure that the pilot phase was well balanced. The professors participating include Dr. John Forde, head of the Communication Department; Dr. Stephen Foster, associate professor in the Chemistry Department; Dr. Missy Hopper, assistant professor in Curriculum and Instruction; and Dr. Michael Newman, professor with the school of Human Sciences.

To create a podcast, the professor uses one of the designated technology classroom lecterns to login to a web-based interface. There their class is entered along with lecture information. Then when the lecture begins, they select 'record' and start teaching. At the end of the class, the professor has the option to publish the podcast immediately or later. When the podcast lecture is published the students are able to access it immediately. If the professor does not teach in a technology classroom, a portable Marantz recorder is being used for the pilot phase.

One professor is taking it one step further. In Dr. Missy Hopper's methods class for future teachers, she is allowing her students to create their own podcast. It is important in her class that the students learn how to self evaluate their teaching. "I record the students' mini lesson, which is a ten to twenty minute lesson on their content area. Then they listen to it and answer about 5 questions as a form of self analysis," said Dr. Hopper.

With students being on the edge of the newest technologies, whether it is cellular phones, digital cameras, or iPods- podcasting has become second nature for many. It has also been "fun for the non-technical students; it has really stretched them and made them think of technology in different ways," said Dr. Hopper.

The portability of the iPod or other mp3 player is matchless. Students are able to listen to podcasts, music, or watch video while walking to class, exercising, or doing other activities. Students can still listen to and watch podcasts even if they do not have an mp3 player. A computer connected to the Internet and with a podcatcher such as iTunes, ensures that all students will be able to listen to available lecture podcasts.

Some professors are even planning for the future. Dr. Hopper would like to get a class set of video iPods and loan them out at the beginning of the semester and allow the students to use them. At the end of the semester, she plans to restore the iPods back to the factory settings for the next set of students to use.

The response to this initiative has been remarkable. According to Dr. Hopper, it has allowed faculty to "embrace new technology because it indicates a direction and belief of what Higher Ed should be." Professors and students alike are benefiting from the MSU podcasting features and abilities. "I didn't realize how much I would enjoy the iPod; it is a great source of self education if that is what you want to make it," said Dr. Hopper.

CTL Joins the POD Network

The Center for Teaching and Learning recently joined the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education. The POD Network is devoted to improving teaching and learning in post-secondary education. The POD Network was founded in 1975 and has over 1500 members. With approximately 400 colleges and universities in the United States and Canada participating, the spirit of networking is embraced through publications, consulting, resources, and an annual conference. The Center for Teaching and Learning looks forward to contributing to the POD Network and networking with other institutions regarding teaching and learning. To find out more about the POD Network, visit their website at www.podnetwork.org.

Bootcamp

Thirteen MSU faculty members spent three days in January learning how to "Get an Edge on Teaching" at the 2006 Boot Camp sponsored by the Center for Teaching and Learning. Boot Camp provided the group an opportunity to learn how to enhance their instruction by integrating instructional technology into their teaching. Sessions throughout the week covered a variety of topics such as WebCT, Photoshop, PowerPoint, as well as plagiarism and EndNote. The sessions were developed and taught by the Center for Teaching and Learning, ITS User Services and the Library.

At the end of Boot Camp each participant received a new Dell Laptop. The laptops also contained all of the software that was taught throughout the week. Funds for the laptops and software were provided by the Provost's Office and the Dean's offices of the respective participants. The Library provided a license for EndNote and ITS provided jump drives and a license for Respondus to the faculty.

Participants include (back row from left) Linda Morse, Burak Eksioglu, Khristi Edmonds, Amy Crumpton, Brian Rude, Deborah Eakin, Kay Brocato, (front row from left) John Shaw, Dennis Truax, Jeffrey Eells, Todd Tietjen, Amanda Powers, Seung Jae Shin.

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Upcoming Events for WebCT

WebCT Week

Introduction to WebCT	May 16	8:30 – Noon
WebCT: Preparing Documents	May 16	1:30 – 3:30
WebCT: Grades Management	May 17	9:00 – 11:00
WebCT: Assessment	May 17	1:30 – 5:00
WebCT: Content Modules	May 18	9:00 – 11:00
WebCT: Communication Tools	May 18	1:30 – 3:30

WebCT JumpStart

Introduction to WebCT	May 30	8:30 – Noon
Open Labs	May 30	1:30 – 4:00
	May 31	9:00 – 4:00
	June 1	9:00 – 4:00

WebCT Dates to Remember

Thursday, May 11	5:00 p.m.	Spring 2005 Courses removed from Academic WebCT
Monday, May 15	5:00 p.m.	Course combining deadline for Summer 2006
Monday, May 15	10:00 p.m.	Down time for all systems (Academic, External, Development) for courseloads and hotpatches
Wednesday, May 17	8:00 a.m.	All systems operational again

The Center for Teaching and Learning Locating to the Library

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) will have a new home on the second floor of the Mitchell Memorial Library (directly off the Drill Field). Renovations have already begun on the new CTL area with hopes of occupying the space in late spring. The area will include 3 offices for consultants, section for graduate assistants, conference room, resource room, and computer work stations. Until the move is complete, the CTL will continue to offer services from its current location at 10 McArthur Hall. For more information or questions, contact The Center for Teaching and Learning at 325-1403 or email us at help@ctl.msstate.edu.

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Introducing the CTL Staff

Matt R. Raven, Director, is originally from Lafayette, California. He has a BS degree from the University of California, Davis in Plant Science, a MS degree from Kansas State University in Agricultural Education, and a PhD from The Ohio State University in Agricultural Education. He has been working at MSU for 12 years and is also Director of ITS User Services and Professor of Agricultural Information Science and Education in the School of Human Sciences.

Deborah Lee, Associate Director, as well as the Coordinator of Library Instructional Services at the MSU Libraries. She has a MS in Library and Information Science from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, a MS in Business Administration from MSU and a PhD in Business/Economics, also from MSU. She has worked at MSU for the last 13 years.

Tina Green, Senior Instructional Resource Consultant, is originally from Castalia, Ohio. She has a BS degree from The Ohio State University in Agricultural Education and a MS degree from Mississippi Stare in Agricultural Education. She has been working at MSU for 8 years.

Michelle Carter, Instructional Resource Consultant, Instructional Resource Consultant, is originally from Olive Branch, Mississippi. She has a BS degree from Mississippi State University in Technology Teacher Education and a MBA from Mississippi State University. She has been working at MSU for 1 1/2 years.

Aaron Didlake, Graduate Assistant, is originally from Livermore, California and is pursuing a Master's degree in history. He will graduate in August 2007.

Yun Hui Gardner, Graduate Assistant, was born in Korea and grew up in Kentucky. She is pursuing a PhD in Counseling Education and is expected to graduate in 2006.

Hollye Raines, Graduate Assistant, is originally from Decatur, Alabama and is pursuing a Masters degree in landscape architecture. She will graduate in May 2006.

Katie Walden, Graduate Assistant, is originally from Jackson, Mississippi and is pursuing a Masters degree in Sports Administration. She will graduate in December 2006.

Chris Wilkins, Graduate Assistant, is originally from Columbus, Mississippi and is pursuing a Masters degree in Sports Administration. He will graduate in December 2007.

Getting in Touch with CTL
Phone: 325-1403
Email: help@ctl.msstate.edu
Web Site: ctl.msstate.edu (coming soon)