

TEEC HING

TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

Fall 2012, Issue 1

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School of Learning *WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A GOOD TEACHER?*

If a faculty member conducts extensive research and has multiple publications, does that mean that the same faculty member is an excellent teacher? Do we have to do research in order to teach effectively? Boyer (1990) states “today’s emphasis on publication is seriously out of touch with what the faculty actually do and want to do” (p. 32). While the “today” that Boyer speaks of was 22 years ago, not much has changed. In fact, recent articles on teaching and research suggest that both activities are not tightly related at all (Marsh & Hattie, 2002).

Boyer (1990) urges a more inclusive view of what it means to be a scholar. Faculty should be recognized based on knowledge that is acquired through research, through synthesis, through practice, and through teaching. Not only would this recognize the efforts of good teaching, it would recognize the great diversity within a group of faculty.

Unfortunately, the pressure for faculty to conduct research and publish still remains. With faculty time divided between teaching, scholarly work, and community engagement, the process of teaching often falls through the cracks. Many assume that good teaching just happens. This is not true. Good teaching takes effort, time, and practice. Some have called for rewarding and nurturing both teaching and research for ensuring success of our universities and broadening the recognition of excellence that validates both forms of faculty engagement (Bailey & Lewicki, 2007).

Bailey, J., & Lewicki, R. (2007). The scientist and the sage. *BizEd*, July/August, 32-36.

Boyer, E.L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Marsh, H. W., & Hattie, J. (2002). The relation between research productivity and teaching effectiveness. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 73(5), 603-641.

Upcoming Events

TEEC Development Workshops – All sessions in BC 251 from 2pm – 4pm

more information can be found at http://facultysenate.nku.edu/committees/Teaching_Effectivene.php

Module 1: Providing Effective and Efficient Student Feedback

January 31st and February 1st

Module 2: Engaging Students through Course Design

March 21st and March 22nd

Module 3: Balance: Simple Idea, Difficult to Grasp

April 18th and April 19th

Faculty Speaks about Teaching

THERE IS JOY IN THE CLASSROOM



Professor of Economics, Tom Cate joined the NKU faculty in 1975, and after serving the university in many capacities became the 2008 recipient of the [Frank Sinton Milburn Outstanding Professor Award](#). Tom has graciously agreed to share a few of his thoughts about teaching prior to his retirement at the end of this semester.

I came to NKU in August 1975 and will leave in December 2012. During my brief stay, (relative to others currently enjoy faculty status) I have learned the importance of creating a learning environment exhibiting at least four characteristics.

First, we must treat our students with dignity and respect regardless of how they may treat or view us. We should be modeling behaviors that we want our students to master.

Second, we should encourage students to ask questions. On the first day of the course I tell students that there are no silly questions...except for the one(s) that should have been asked before an assessment activity (quiz, test, term project) is to be administered and/or collected. However, we should not always answer their questions; rather nudge them to a potential solution. After all, we are here to teach them how to “fish” not to provide them with a “fish” everyday.

Third, we should provide accurate and timely feedback to students. If possible return every assignment within one class period from its submission. For example if a quiz is given on Friday then students should receive feedback about their performance by the following Monday.

Fourth, a course’s learning environment’s structure is a function of the level of the course. That is, courses at the freshman and sophomore levels should have a highly structured learning environment and as students move through the discipline’s curriculum to the capstone course the learning environment becomes less structured.¹⁻³ The purpose of this type of learning environment is to move students to the goals of mastering the art of critical thinking and self-directed learning and acquiring a growth mindset.⁴

By constructing a learning environment exhibiting the four characteristics outlined above I was able to find joy in the classroom...and I hope that you, my colleagues, discover this joy as well. Finally, it has been an honor and privilege to be a member of NKU’s faculty, to have such a wonderful set of colleagues and the opportunity to help shape some of NKU’s policies, procedures and.... yes, some of its folklore. Thank you.

¹ Cate, T. and Dynan, L. (2010). ‘Structured writing assignments as pedagogy: Teaching content, enhancing skills’, *Journal of Applied Economics and Policy*, vol. 29 (1), pp. 47-60.

² Dynan, L and Cate, T. (2009). ‘The impact of writing assignments on student learning’, *International Review of Economic Education*, vol. 8 (1), pp. 64-86.

³ Dynan, L., Cate, T. and Rhee, K. (2008). ‘The impact of learning structure on students’ readiness for self-directed learning’, *The Journal of Education for Business*, vol. 84 (2), pp. 96-100.

⁴ Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset*, New York: Ballantine Books

Technology Tips



Back Channels provide an online space for dialogue and information capture, enabling instant feedback from everyone in a room. They are a great way to capture questions from students and adjust class activities or discussions in real time. Back Channels at Today'sMeet (<http://todaysmeet.com/help/backchannel>) can remain available for up to one year, and transcripts are available for download.

Teaching Tips

Do you know a great professor in your department? Why not ask to sit in on his or her class one day to watch them do what they do best. Or, invite a colleague to come to your class and provide you with some constructive feedback. We place a lot of importance on student evaluations but feedback from other professors can be equally helpful. Though it might make us nervous to have someone sit in on our class, it is a great way to grow!

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Stacey Grippa reflects on her NKU experience

"I LOVE NKU, and the reasons are many! From the beginning, NKU has been home to me, both literally and figuratively. I have served as a Resident Assistant and Orientation Leader, which has allowed me to connect with faculty and staff that have helped me succeed both in and out of the classroom. My professors, advisors, and supervisors at NKU have pushed me to better myself, and I thank them for encouraging me and helping to shape me into the student and person I am today. Dean Waple has been a great mentor, helping me decide on graduate schools and making sure I stay up-to-date with the application process.



Last week, I turned in my graduation paperwork. Not only did my advisor refer to me by name, she assured me that I would do great things in the "real world". Next year, I will pursue a Master's degree in Higher Education in Student Affairs. The helpfulness of everyone at NKU has inspired me to focus my career on helping and inspiring college students. Although my time at NKU is coming to an end, I cannot be thankful enough for my experience at NKU. Norse Pride!"

Stacey is a senior majoring in communications studies with a concentration in organizational leadership and public relations. She is an active member of Delta Gamma sorority, Norse Leadership Society, and works as an NKU Resident Assistant and Orientation Leader.