On January 5, 2017 Professor Regan Gurung from the Department of Development and Psychology at University of Wisconsin-Green Bay presented “Cultivating Learning: Evidence-Based Strategies to Enhance College Teaching.” Gurung presented a number of concepts with evidence available from research on teaching to challenge how we think about teaching and learning. He provided several citations throughout the presentation on available research (see his website where one can find a number of references for research on teaching http://www.uwgb.edu/gurungr/resources/).

Gurung talked about what contributes to quality lifelong learning, what factors influence learning, and strategies that help cultivate learning. As teachers we play an important role in motivating students and in helping students to understanding their own learning. Some of the things that we can do to accomplish this is to share research with student on learning. We can also foster a positive relationship. As an example Gurung talked about “that annoying email” that you receive in which the information is in the syllabus. How you hand that situation is important especially since it might be the 1st contact/interaction that the student has with you. That interaction could impact how the student perceives you/the class.

I think the one study discussed that best typifies the presentation is the results of Hattie. Hattie in the Journal of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology in 2015 presented a meta-analysis of prior research on the factors that predict learning. Gurung suggested using the chart from Hattie as an exercise in which the chart is presented to students and they have to fill in what factors go with what percentage. When he does this exercise, he finds that students often put the teacher down as the single largest factor contributing to learning (50%) and other factors including themselves as the second (25%). Gurung then shares with students that it is the opposite in which the student accounts for the largest factor (50%) for learning followed by the teacher (25%). Another technique to help students with their own learning was to provide feedback on note taking. Gurung said that a couple times during the semester after covering material he would “stop” and asked students what they had in their notes. He would then go over what should be in the notes. Helping students with their mind-set about learning (growth vs. fixed) was another topic mentioned. With a fixed mind-set, students will not try as hard when the material is difficult and they believe it is an area they do not have a strong ability in. It is important to help students develop more of the growth mind-set. Gurung cited a 2015 article by Paunesku, Walton, Romero, Smith, Yeager, and Dweck that discusses intervention to help students.

The overall metaphor that Gurung used was that of a pearl and how it is formed. In order to cultivate learning, we at times need to be that piece of sand (irritant) and provide students with a challenge. Out of the uncomfortableness something special maybe created. This analogy was powerful, as, though the learning process can contain irritants the resulting acquisition of knowledge is as beautiful as a pearl.
From the Director
Adam Dirksen, CELT Director

What a start! I joined the already wonderful CELT team in January and we have been busy with spring presentations and workshops. We are grateful for the support and the participation of so many faculty at these events. Our goal moving forward is to engage even more of you. My sense is that there are faculty and departments who are familiar with CELT putting on presentations and workshops but are unsure of what other services we offer. I will gladly take my space in this newsletter to simply let you know different ways CELT can help you.

CELT’s Teaching Fellows are IPFW faculty members, skilled teachers themselves, who have received training in teaching consultation. They provide a number of services to meet the needs, goals and interests of the individual seeking the consultation. Common requests include syllabi review, review of instructional materials, classroom observations, analysis of student evaluation data, etc.

CELT’s Online Course Design Review Team can complete a full course review and provide you with new ideas for your online course. Our review team members are all trained in a formative review process by Quality Matters™.

CELT’s Peer Review Team will design and deliver workshops to departments and groups to teach and facilitate formative reciprocal peer review: a process for gathering feedback on teaching; reflecting on the alignment of teaching strategies with objectives, activities and assessments; and improving the fit between teaching approaches and student learning. Contact Adam Dirksen or Carrie Stumph to arrange a workshop.

Course Design Consultations and Technology Consultations are provided by CELT on a one-on-one basis with Ludy Goodson, Katia Jia, or Adam Dirksen. Additionally, Media Digitization Services are available through CELT by contacting Michelle Lussier.

The above services are available through the academic year. Over the next several months, CELT will of course continue its regular workshops, most immediately this summer’s Northeast Indiana Higher Education Teaching Workshop in collaboration with five other universities in our region on May 23, followed by our Summer Writing and Project Development Institute on June 1 and 2. We continue to plan for our Fall Teaching Conference, which will be held on Thursday, August 17. I look forward to working with you in my new role as Director for IPFW’s Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching.

Donate to CELT

As budgets remain flat and demands increase, your support insures CELT meets future needs and sustains innovative response to a changing academic environment.

Current use gifts provide immediate funding for faculty travel support to teaching conferences, a SoTL Fellow, co-sponsorship of Lilly teaching conferences, purchase of books on teaching, and helping CELT stay current with emerging technologies.

“Donate to CELT”

Honors Program
By Farah Combs, Continuing Lecturer in ILCS & Director of Honors

I have taken over the directorship of IPFW’s Honors Program at a moment of considerable transition and growth. Past directors have established a coherent system of honors courses and projects that have served IPFW’s honor students very well. In particular, Dr. Ann Livschiz arranged generous community grants to build the Honors Program Center into an impressive physical space that helps to foster community among students, faculty and staff. On any day of the week the Center has multiple classes being taught, students studying in the study rooms or the computer lab, faculty meetings in the conference room, or a program going on in the lounge. Dr. Livschiz, Assistant Director Michele Shawver, Director of Major Scholarships James Toole and Chapman Scholars Program Director Kelsey McQuillin, have created a healthy intellectual culture that is exciting to join.

I look forward to continue working with this great team and to continue providing Honors students with meaningful classes and honors projects, and to expand into more experiential learning. The Center has provided students with experiential learning in the past throughout various summer programs by collaborating with different professors from different departments to assure that students getting the best experience possible while they are here. The idea behind experiential learning is for students to build on their course learning by directly experiencing situations outside the classroom. Many honors programs at other universities are moving in this direction. We are currently consulting other universities about their honors experiential learning, and the Honors Program Council will consider the best means to integrate this exciting component into the IPFW Honors Program without taking from the tremendous traction the program has right now.

I have some familiarity with experiential learning. While teaching at West Point, I participated in basic training exercises that simulated experiences Cadets would face in Iraqi villages. This type of experiential learning will not directly translate for IPFW students, but the idea of implementing classroom learning into the so-called “real world” will provide our honors students with another leg up in career preparation, or strengthening their applications for professional or graduate studies. The breadth of majors and programs of honors students means there is no single approach to experiential learning. This is why we will be peer-reviewing other universities’ programs and tailoring their successes for IPFW’s honors students.

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Getting Assessment and Grading Right
By Laura Link, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership

You don’t have to be an educator to know that assessment and grading are central to the educational experience of students. If you’ve been a student, at any level or learning institution, you’ve been affected by the role assessment and grades have played in your academic success, challenges and even failures. Within the current American educational system, assessments and grades are inescapable. And this affect has a broad reach beyond teachers and students: parents, school leaders, district administrators, state officials and education policy makers are part of the student assessment process. As federal, state and local accountability has increased, there has been greater emphasis on assessments and how those assessments should measure and account for student learning.

Moreover, it is estimated that one-third of a teacher’s time at any level of education is spent in activities directly or indirectly related to assessment of student learning (Stiggins, 2002). Yet, extensive research has revealed that minor attention is given to train teachers/educators on classroom assessment and grading practices so they are better equipped to design meaningful assessments, assign grades with more reliability, and report student progress and achievement accurately (Brookhart, Guskey, Bowers, McMillan, Smith, J., Smith, L., Stevens, & Welsh, 2016). To address this training gap, the Getting Assessment & Grading Right professional learning institute was conceived.

On March 20, over 400 educators from across the state of Indiana convened at IPFW to learn and discuss the topic of K-16 assessments and grading. Participants included student teachers, teachers, principals, superintendents and university faculty and administrators. There were two institute sessions: Beyond Assessment for Learning: Assessment That Improves Learning and Grading & Reporting Student Learning: Effective Policies and Practices co-facilitated by an international expert on assessments and grading, Dr. Thomas Guskey from the University of Kentucky (www.tguskey.com) and IPFW assistant professor of educational leadership, Dr. Laura Link.

The Getting Assessment and Grading Right institute was co-sponsored by a professional learning alliance made up of IPFW’s educational leadership program, Northwest Allen County Schools, and Learning Forward Indiana, a state affiliate of Learning Forward International, which is a professional organization devoted exclusively to setting and guiding K-16 educator professional learning standards of practice.

Learning Forward Indiana is a newly re-emerged organization that helps build the capacity of educational leaders to establish and sustain highly effective professional learning by:

- advocacy at all levels to improve educator effectiveness and increase student learning
- modeling high-quality learning designs, and
- offering high-impact learning aligned to the Learning Forward national standards

A new Learning Forward Indiana website is coming soon that will include an array of professional learning resources such as scholarly articles, newsletters, virtual communities, blogs and more.

To learn more about Learning Forward, visit: https://learningforward.org/who-we-are Learning Forward Indiana is also seeking new members for leadership roles within the organization. Members enjoy access to website resources, discounted registration fees for all Learning Forward Indiana professional

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There are some natural areas we can grow, however. For instance, we can work with the impressive offerings from the Office of International Programs to increase international experiential learning for our students. There are also internships and practicums to include in offerings to our students. There are already many healthy models for this at IPFW in these areas for the Honors Program to find partnerships or to emulate.

I am extremely honored to be the Director of the Honors Center. I am even more honored to work with such an amazing team. I look forward to working closely with many of you to build on the foundation that Dr. Livschiz and her predecessors built for the Honors Program.

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learning events, and various/advisory role options

If you are interested in becoming a Learning Forward Indiana member, please contact Laura Link at linkl@ipfw.edu
