

Synergia

1. The interaction of two or more forces so that their combined effect is greater than the sum of their individual effects.

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REVISED FACULTY DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH GRANTS



*Sue Chaplin (Faculty
Development Director,
Biology)*

Last fall we asked faculty to fill out a survey about their experience with Faculty Development activities and services, and 176 of you provided information for that survey. Almost 64% of respondents rated the internal grants for scholarship as high value for Faculty Development support, and that response was consistent across schools and colleges, rank, years at UST, and gender. In fact, 70% of respondents told us that support for scholarly work was “urgent” or “very important” to your development as a faculty member. In response to these survey results the Faculty Development committee spent considerable time last spring semester discussing how to provide the kind of support for scholarship that you told us you needed. Two internal grant programs received the

most attention, and have been substantially revised: Research Grants and Teaching Enhancement Grants (to be discussed in the next issue of Synergia).

The newly revised **Research Grant** program is intended to support the scholarly work of all full-time, returning faculty as they advance their professional careers. Scholarship is defined in the broadest sense to include discovery, integration, application, and teaching as described by Boyer (1990). Research Grant awards can be sought for expenses to travel to research sites, attend a conference or workshop, and/or purchase supplies or they can be applied toward course release, or used for a combination of expenses and course release. Support may be sought at one of three levels: Level 1 = up to \$4300; Level 2 = up to \$8600; Level 3 = up to \$12,900. Level 1 and 2 awards are to be allocated over one academic year; Level 3 awards may be allocated over two academic years.

PRE-TENURE FACULTY may be supported a maximum of twice during the pre-tenure period, without an intervening application for external funding. The expectation is that these pre-tenure awards will help new faculty get

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their research going at a time when it is often difficult to acquire external funding. These applications would typically be funded at Level 1, with no more than one course release requested. Pre-tenure faculty may not apply for Level 3 funding. Faculty applying for a second pre-tenure award must file a final report showing evidence of successful completion of the prior project before reapplying.

Research grants awarded to **TENURED FACULTY** are designed to support the completion of current scholarly work, explore new directions in their scholarship, or for large, multi-year projects. The support requested for this award must be justified by the scope and

merit of the project and may vary from Level 1 to Level 3. These awards may not be used in conjunction with sabbatical leave and are limited to once every six years. Faculty applying for a second post-tenure award must show evidence of successful completion of the prior project (final report) and an application for external funding in the interim between proposals.

Clinical faculty may apply for any level of support, in consultation with their department Chair or Dean.

Some examples of how the committee envisions the types of proposals that might be funded at the three levels:

- **Level 1:** completing a manuscript for publication; analysis of data leading to an invited or refereed presentation at a professional conference
- **Level 2:** for larger-scale projects, such as book chapters, or manuscripts resulting from analysis of data
- **Level 3:** up to two years of support for advanced scholars who have established a significant track record of publishing, for starting up or finishing large-scale research or writing efforts, such as books.

The basic amount, up to \$4,300, represents the maximum cost of a replacement adjunct for one course release. Applicants should negotiate with their department chairs and dean to determine whether to apply for an award for expenses or course

release or a combination of the two, and the level of the request. All applicants need to carefully justify how much they request in the narrative description of the project.

Application materials (instructions and forms) are available on the Faculty Development website (www.stthomas.edu/fdc/internalGrants/default.html). Applications for Research Grants should be emailed as Word or pdf files to Pat Alexander (pmalexander@stthomas.edu) by 4 p.m. November 3, 2008 (this year's deadline). As always, applicants should make sure that any final reports from previous internal grant support have been filed with the Center prior to submitting a new application for an internal grant and that they have arranged for a letter of support from their Chair or Dean.

Proposals written in jargon-free language appropriate for a non-technical reviewer and which address each of the required criteria in the RG Instructions will have the best chance of success. Proposals will be judged on the basis of the quality of the narrative and the applicant's ability to convincingly justify the requested level of support.

The Teaching Enhancement Grant has also been revised and will be the subject of a future Synergia article. The TEG deadline has been changed to March 1 only. More information on the revised TEGs may be found on the Faculty Development website.

PROFILES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

A column devoted to celebrating innovations in teaching and learning at St. Thomas



*Erika Scheurer
(English)*

Easing Into Portfolios

A good way to think of portfolios is as a “frame” for your students’ work over the course of the semester (or even the half-semester or unit), a means of taking the long view of their efforts over time and reflecting on what and how they have learned. I have been using portfolios since my early graduate school days, and while I am always adjusting the specifics in response to my students’ needs and to my own needs as a teacher, the following three basic concepts remain constant:

- **Collection:** Students collect and organize all of their work for the course.
- **Selection:** Students review their work, selecting examples that are especially successful, examples of where they struggled, examples of how they learned over time, etc.
- **Reflection:** Students write a cover essay or respond to questions in which they reflect on their learning in the course.

Portfolios have various benefits for both student and instructor:

- Portfolios provide students with an opportunity for **metacognition**, a chance to critically reflect on what they have learned and on their learning processes. Students learn better when they stop and reflect on *how* they learned.
- Students often feel more **ownership** of their work when they look at it as a whole and reflect on their learning process.
- You can use portfolios to **holistically assess whether students have met the course goals**. For example, you can list the course goals and then ask students in their reflections to point out items in the portfolio where they successfully met goals, where they struggled, etc.
- You may choose to use portfolios to allow students to **revise work over time** and submit it as part of the portfolio. **Faculty can set higher standards** when students have more time to revise their work.



*Jonathan Stoltz
(Philosophy)*

The Use of “Clickers” in Core Philosophy Courses

In the fall of 2007, eight members of the philosophy department began using student response systems – better known as “clickers” – within their core philosophy courses. The clickers used by our class operate in conjunction with Microsoft PowerPoint. Within a PowerPoint presentation certain slides contain questions for which students are given a number of possible responses. Each student has his or her own clicker with which to answer the question posed in the PowerPoint slide. Each student’s answer to the question is wirelessly captured by the computer running the PowerPoint presentation, and the results of the question are instantaneously shown on the PowerPoint slide for the class to see. The use of such questions makes it possible to keep students actively engaged in the course material, and allows both students and instructor to note their comprehension of the course material.



While the faculty members were uncertain as to how students would respond to the implementation of clickers, our experiences from the first year of their use suggest that students were overwhelmingly happy to be using clickers in their philosophy classes. In my own sections of Philosophy of the Human Person during the past year I asked my students what method of teaching they believed helped them learn the most. 113 students replied that they thought they learned the most from classes in which clickers were used in conjunction with PowerPoint presentations. On the other hand, a total of 3 students replied that they thought they learned the most from classes in which the primary method of instruction was lecture and discussion without any use of technology. While this is far from showing that students really do learn more effectively with clicker questions than without — a more detailed study would need to be done to determine whether that is the case — it does at least show that students find clickers to be quite effective, which conforms with the impression that faculty in our department formed as well.

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The lobby area and resource room of the Center will be open from 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. M-F. Please stop by!

The opinions expressed in articles in Synergia are not necessarily those of the Center for Faculty Development.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK ...



*Sue Chaplin (Faculty
Development Director,
Biology)*

What I learned this summer...

Faculty Development Week (August 4-8) was a new venture for the campus this year, and was quite successful, judging by the more than 50 faculty who attended.

Summaries of the sessions and links to the presentations can be found on the FD website:

www.stthomas.edu/FDC/facultyResources/events/oncampus.html. Room size limits required that participants be split between two sessions on the Learning Brain on Monday morning ("how students learn, and why they don't"). **Greg Robinson-Riegler** emphasized the difficulty of moving information from short-term to long-term memory, and I emphasized the normally delayed development of brain areas associated with deductive reasoning and analytical thought until late teen-age years. The Monday afternoon session on Knowledge Surveys led by **Karl Wirth** (geologist) from Macalester College was equally well attended. Karl presented several data sets showing how Knowledge Surveys can be used to assess individual student learning gains, students' metacognitive development, as well as courses,

entire department curricula, and programs. I heard several faculty attending the Tuesday workshop on Blackboard tools say they could see how they might use blogs and wikis in their courses after hearing **Lief Johnson** explain them. **Pam Nice's** workshop participants read excerpts from "Hot Topics in the Classroom," and their discussion inspired them to keep meeting this year to further discuss these issues. Following a two-day presentation by visiting consultant **Virginia Lee** on inquiry-based learning, the week culminated with a highly informative and enjoyable session on "Best Practices" in teaching, highlighted by an explanation of how to set up and use student portfolios by **Erika Scheurer**, a role play exercise in which **Kevin Theissen** asked teams of participants to debate limits on carbon emissions in a mock climate convention, and a demonstration of the utility of the student response cards ("clicker technology") in a philosophy class with **Jon Stoltz**. The final session for the week was a summary of a variety of Classroom Assessment Techniques I discussed to evaluate student engagement, content mastery, conceptual understanding, course conduct, how specific activities were received, and learning gains.



ATTENTION! SOME DEADLINES ARE NEW!

APPLICATION DEADLINES FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS AND SABBATICALS

Note that deadlines are 4 p.m. on dates below. Late applications are not accepted. All proposals must be emailed by 4 p.m. of the designated day to pmalexander@stthomas.edu. The first 4 grants are for use the following year, beginning July 1. Please see the FDC website for instructions and application forms, at www.stthomas.edu/fdc.

Sabbatical Application and Sabbatical Assistance Grant:

October 1

Research Grant:

November 1 (Nov. 3 in 2008)

Teaching Enhancement Grant:

March 1 (March 2 in 2009)

University Scholars Grant:

Preliminary application materials on September 1 (Sept. 2 in 2008) and full application on October 1

Faculty Partnership:

September 15 for Fall Semester & J-Term

February 15 for Spring Semester
April 15 for Summer (after July 1)

Partnership-in-Learning:

September 15 for Fall Semester & J-Term

February 15 for Spring Semester
April 15 for Summer (after July 1)

Distinguished Visitor Grant:

One month prior to visit. No applications accepted between May 15 and August 15.

WEB AND MEDIA SERVICES

Suggestions for eLearning in your Courses

Lief Johnson (*Web and Media Services*)

Information Resources and Technologies staff were pleased to participate in Faculty Development Week by conducting a “hands-on” workshop exploring several instructional technology tools in Blackboard, the University’s Learning Management System. Lief Johnson explored applications for blogs (personal or class journaling) and wikis (personal or class collaborative websites). Blogs enable students to engage in reflective writing, extend classroom discussions, and provide peer review and feedback. Wikis provide students a way to collaboratively build a website for such things as group project reports or class support resources. Elizabeth Smith walked participants through the process of creating and using surveys for classroom assessment or feedback. John Heintz examined how faculty can incorporate library resources into their Blackboard courses. Faculty members can use the “Libraries” subject research guide web pages, a RefWorks bibliography, and durable links to articles in library subscription databases to improve the quality of student research and provide access to relevant readings. Please contact your liaison librarian for assistance in using these tools, or to schedule a library instruction session specifically tailored to your course research assignment. Additional workshops for January are being planned by the

Faculty Center for eLearning, and we would appreciate any ideas for topics! Contact us at: fcl@stthomas.edu.

Faculty Center for eLearning:

www.stthomas.edu/elearning

Blackboard Resources:

www.stthomas.edu/irt/support/blackboard/default.html



FD FALL WORKSHOPS

Faculty Development Internal Grants Q&A

St. Paul Campus—Wed., Sept. 17, 2008, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Room 155, Murray-Herrick Campus Center

Mpls. Campus—Thursday, Sept. 18, 2008, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Place TBA

FD Director Sue Chaplin and some members of the FD Committee will answer your questions about FD internal grant and sabbatical applications. They will specifically address the new guidelines for Research Grants, which will replace the Research Assistance and Maxi Grants. (Please see lead article in this issue.) Faculty are requested to view the application guidelines and forms before the session, so the time may be spent more productively. They may be viewed on the FD website at www.stthomas.edu/fdc. The sabbatical deadline is October 1 and the Research Grant deadline this year is November 3. The Teaching Enhancement Grant deadline has been moved to March 1, 2009.

Forming a Writing Group

St. Paul Campus—Wed., Sept. 17, 2008, 4:30-5:00 p.m.

Room 155, Murray-Herrick Campus Center

Mpls. Campus—Thursday, Sept. 18, 2008, 3:30-4:00 p.m.

Place TBA

Come hear how to get your scholarly writing back into your daily schedule and then keep it going by joining a writing group of peers.

The session will be led by Faculty Development staff.

Women in the Classroom: A Discussion of the Harvard Video Vignettes

Thursday, Oct. 16, 3:30-5 p.m.

Luann Dummer Center for Women
Co-sponsored with the Luann Dummer Center for Women

Do students view female and male faculty differently? Do faculty interact with male and female students in the same way? How might race intersect with gender in the classroom? These are a few of the questions addressed in the 5 Harvard video vignettes, created by the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning and based on real classroom situations. We will discuss the vignettes, all under 5 minutes, to discern the issues raised and brainstorm strategies for addressing them, from both faculty and student perspectives.



TEACHING CONFERENCES

Culture Matters: Designing Learning Environments to Foster Cultural Awareness and Intercultural Competence

The Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching and Learning

November 21-22, 2008
Sheraton Bloomington Hotel
Bloomington, MN

This conference addresses questions about the relationship of cultural differences to learning:

- how can cultural awareness strengthen teaching and learning?
- how can we bridge cultural differences across campus to work toward common educational goals?
- how can we create a more inclusive campus climate that supports a culture of learning for all?

The first 10 faculty to register with Faculty Development before Oct. 1, 2008, will have their registration and mileage costs paid for by Faculty Development. Send an email to Pam Nice at pmnice@stthomas.edu to ask for this bonus. See www.collab.org for more information about the conference.

The Learning Educator: Fostering Our Own Development for Better Practice and Results

Winter Conference for the Collaboration

February 13-14, 2009
Sheraton Bloomington Hotel
Bloomington, MN

Call for Proposals: Deadline: September 19, 2008

This conference will explore what individual faculty and staff can do to foster their own continuous learning and development as teaching professionals and how colleges, universities, and other groups can create environments that characterize learning organizations. Visit the website at www.collab.org for information about the call for proposals and fall and spring conferences.

The Teaching Professor Conference

June 5-7, 2009
Marriott Wardman Park Hotel
Washington, D.C.

Call for Proposals: Deadline: October 27, 2008.

The Teaching Professor Conference offers seven topical areas, presented as multiple concurrent sessions and poster sessions. Submissions for 75-minute presentations and panel discussions focusing on the agenda of “Educate, Engage, Inspire” are requested. Your submission may fall within one of these topical areas: Scholarship of Teaching; Learning; The Pedagogies of Engagement; Teaching Unique Types of Courses; Faculty Growth, Resilience, and Change; Teaching and Learning With Technology; and Undergraduate Research. To submit a proposal, visit The Teaching Professor Conference website and fill out the online proposal form at www.teachingprofessor.com.

Midwest Faculty Seminars

University of Chicago

Deadline to apply to Faculty

Development: September 26, 2008

Every year, the University of St. Thomas supports the attendance of four faculty at the Midwest Faculty Seminars sponsored by the University of Chicago. The seminars for this year are listed below. If you are interested in applying, send to Faculty Development a description (no more than one page) of how attendance at a specific seminar would affect your teaching and/or research. Priority is given to those faculty who have never attended a Midwest Faculty Seminar in the past. All expenses are paid. The seminars generally last from early Thursday morning until noon on Saturday.

You can send your application request by e-mail (to pmnice@stthomas.edu), or by snail mail to Mail 4034.

TOPICS FOR 2008-09:

American Empire and the Exportation of Democracy

November 6-8, 2008

Advocates of the so-called American Empire insist that the United States has a moral obligation and a pragmatic need to promote freedom and democracy across the globe; critics claim that this practice violates our national ideals and increases global instability and violence. Military struggles in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the looming possibility of expanded engagement in the Middle East, do little to resolve questions about America's global role. Instead, they underscore how important it is to approach this

thorny issue with thoughtful discussion and analysis. Is the American model of democracy a universalizable one? What counts as a democratic system, and what conditions are required for effective democracy? Can we resolve the tensions between a democratic electoral system and the exercise of imperial power?

The Dialectic of Enlightenment

January 15-17, 2009

In 1944 Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer published a book that was to become a foundation of the Frankfurt School of theory, and a cornerstone of aesthetic and political criticism for generations of scholars. They recast the enlightenment as a movement that devastated humans' ability to engage with the irrational and non-individual aspects of life, and postulated a "culture industry" that, stupefying the masses with simple pleasures, shores up the hegemony of capitalism and quashes the potential of the fine arts. This text-based seminar explores what we can learn from this influential work today. How do contemporary technology, art, politics, and economics reflect or challenge the conditions described by Adorno and Horkheimer? What political and economic work is achieved by today's mass culture?

Troubled Waters

March 5-7, 2009

While the scarcity of oil and other energy sources dominate news and politics, the attention of concerned scholars is increasingly focused on water, a diminishing natural resource that is still more central to everyday life. Many commentators agree that water scarcity is taking over as the likeliest cause of conflict, in the Middle East and elsewhere, as fresh

water is increasingly diminished by agriculture and industry or rendered unusable by pollution. Meanwhile, global warming threatens hard-to-predict changes to oceans and ice caps; molecular chemistry delves deeper into the unique properties of water's structure; and new evidence from Mars offers hitherto fantastical possibilities for understanding the history and future of our own planet. This seminar will invite reflections from political scientists, economists, historians, and geographers, as well as from scholars in public policy, environmental, international, and area studies.

Religion and Morality

April 16-18, 2007

Ivan Karamazov famously concluded that if there is no God, all is permitted. Much of the academic community today, however, tends to discount the possibility that religion is essential to morality, or to argue the opposite: that the removal of God is the necessary condition for moral discourse and action. This seminar will examine debates about the relation between morality and religion, considering how this relationship has been figured and refigured in different societies and at different moments in history. How can teachers maintain appropriate distance from dogma without shutting down possibilities for understanding other cultures? What are the opportunities of and constraints on an intersection between religion and morality, particularly in and between modern, pluralist societies? What role can, should, and do particular religions play in an era of global moral problems like climate change and terrorism?



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Luann Dummer Center for Women, OEC 103

See p. 5 for description.



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