



Center for Teaching Excellence Hampton University Teaching Matters

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Teaching Excellence Related Links

◆ Bloom's Revised Taxonomy
[http://coe.sdsu.edu/eet/Articles/
bloomrev/index.htm](http://coe.sdsu.edu/eet/Articles/bloomrev/index.htm)

◆ TechLearning – Free
subscription
<http://www.techlearning.com/>

Other Useful Links

◆ Stimulus Funds from the
U.S. Department of Education
[http://www.ed.gov/news/
pressreleases/2009/03/
03072009.html](http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/03/03072009.html)

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An Interview with the Provost Teaching Innovation Award Recipient

By Zina T. McGee, Ph.D.

Each year, Hampton University honors and recognizes outstanding faculty who serve as models of excellence for their profession and exemplary mentors for their students. For this issue of the CTE newsletter, I had the pleasure of interviewing the 2007-2008 recipient of the Provost Teaching Innovation Award, Dr. Bryan Herek, Assistant Professor, Department of English.

Briefly describe your teaching philosophy. What strategies do you use to create a technologically enhanced student-focused learning environment? I am firmly committed to exploring new avenues of instruction, and have dedicated myself to investigating the ways in which advances in information technology might encourage students to take a more active role in their education. For instance, I was the first Hampton University English Professor to implement an electronic textbook based on Northwestern University's WordHoard database of Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare. This electronic interface encourages my students to take ownership of these texts and thereby connect more closely to these canonical authors.

How do you recognize creativity and innovation both within and outside of the classroom setting? When assessing creative and/or innovative educational tools, I concentrate on flexibility. In other words, I find that the most effective tools are those that allow students to explore options, make connections, and ask questions. The best tools I have found are those that encourage students to ask questions that cannot be answered by a quick search of Wikipedia or Cliff's Notes. By asking and answering novel questions through the use of new media, students are encouraged to engage with a text in ways that print media cannot accommodate. In short, students participate in the evolution of literary studies through technology.

In what ways does technology help you to stimulate self-growth and professional development among your students? Professional development is of paramount concern when I incorporate new technology into the classroom. To be prepared for a career in the information age, students must hone their IT skills. Text mining, or

locating data through search, is a vital skill for any English major as they prepare to enter the job market. They must be able to locate data in order to assess and analyze information. Text mining tools like WordHoard help students strengthen their IT skills and thereby distinguish themselves among potential job candidates.

What strategies do you use to facilitate reflection, professional learning and enhanced student accomplishment through technology?

In my experience, engagement with technology enhances a student's sense of accomplishment. It is one thing to simply sit down and read one of Shakespeare's plays. It is another to ask, "Why do men have more lines than women in the Tragedies?" or "Why is 'love' such an important noun in Shakespeare's vocabulary." Being able to ask and answer such questions through the use of digital concordances like WordHoard encourages an active engagement with the text. In other words, a student need not rely solely on the instructor to guide them through the process of textual analysis. By taking ownership of the text a student takes ownership of her education.

Announcements

June 17-21, 2009 University of Vermont The **2009 AAC&U Greater Expectations Institute** has been designed to help campuses respond to national calls to improve the quality of undergraduate education for more Americans in the highly competitive new global century. Specifically, the Institute's intensive five-day program is designed for campuses working to build their own institutional capacity and campus leadership to increase the engagement, inclusion, and high achievement of all their students. The Institute provides ample time for team consultations and skill building sessions with national experts, and advanced reading resources that enable teams to create concrete action plans for implementation upon your return to campus. For more information about the Institute, and to request a brochure and application, contact Nakia Bell at 202-387-3760 x. 407 or bell@aacu.org.

July 8-12, 2009 University of Pennsylvania The **2009 AAC&U Engaging Departments Institute** will provide campus teams of academic administrators, department chairs, and faculty with an intensive, structured time to advance their plans to foster, assess, and improve student learning within departments and across the institution. Recognizing that most faculty identify strongly with their discipline and department, and students are engaged in more complex and sophisticated practice of liberal learning as they complete their majors, the institute builds from those academic "homes" toward effective educational leadership and intentional collaboration among departments to achieve program and institution-wide learning outcomes consistently and at high levels. More details about the Institute are available in the brochure, including fees, detailed descriptions of the curriculum and a faculty list. For more information about the Institute, contact Gretchen Sauvey at sauvey@aacu.org or 202-884-7413.