

FACULTY FOCUS

A Quarterly Newsletter from the Center for Teaching Excellence

Fall Quarter 2005

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Teaching Tips from CTE: 10 Ideas for Starting the Quarter

The first days and weeks of a course are crucial in establishing the tone and the attitudes that will pervade the entire quarter. The following suggestions are aimed at creating an environment in which students feel motivated, focused, and ready to learn from the first day.

Provide structure for the course

In the syllabus and at the first class meetings, help students see the class as having a beginning, a middle, and an end. Show how the various topics of the

quarter work together to create a bigger picture. Refer back to this structure periodically as the quarter progresses.

Clarify expectations

State learning objectives in concrete terms; specify what students will need to do to be successful in your course; describe the level of commitment (study time, attendance) you expect; provide grading rubrics for assignments, encouraging students to self-evaluate as they complete work.

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A Technological Approach to RealTime Course Recording

by Gabriel H. Elkaim, Assistant Professor,
Computer Engineering

The ability to “pause,” “fast-forward,” or “rewind” a lecture is incredibly attractive to students as this removes the time pressure of keeping up with notes, and allows later review in preparation for exams.

Other universities (see, for instance, Stanford University SCPD) capture (record) select classes, which are then available for viewing either in the library or via the web. Universities typically have a few lecture halls with this capability, but these are expensive resources, and often require a semi-professional technician to run the class and assure high quality capture. Typically, only classes which are exported to distance learning programs are captured, and hence driven by external rather than internal university needs.

Within the past years, three major

technologies have come together that allow for the inexpensive capture of a class using a modest amount of equipment. With funding from an Instructional Improvement Program Mini-Grant, I set up the course recording technology, and have used it successfully for four courses. I evaluated the improvement in instruction based on the course recording technology.

The tablet PC, when combined with a computer projector, acts as a “digital chalkboard,” allowing the instructor to present not just the slides, but to mark them up and record the pen strokes as well as what the instructor is pointing at on the screen. Camtasia software allows the sequence of pen strokes to be recorded into a file, along with the audio stream, creating a video file of the lecture (missing the image of the instructor, of course). Both prepared

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Teaching Tips from CTE: 10 Ideas for Starting the Quarter

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Encourage students to get to know one another

Studies show that an important factor in college students' academic success (as well as retention) is their sense of belonging, of having connections to other students. Help students make connections in your course by building in introductory and ice-breaker activities at the beginning of the quarter, encouraging students to exchange email addresses with classmates, setting up in-person or on-line study groups, incorporating small group activities during class time.

Create an inclusive environment

In an inclusive classroom, students of all backgrounds feel that they are welcome and that their contributions will be valued. Building such an environment can begin with encouraging all students to participate, being equitable in your responses to student effort (e.g., encouragement, constructive criticism), inviting students with special needs to communicate them to you, ensuring that your selection of reading materials is as inclusive as possible, and establishing ground rules for civil exchange of views in the classroom.

Give students a reason to be there

You can make a course interesting and attractive to students by conveying your own interest in the subject, by showing how it may connect to students' lives, by bringing in real-world examples or applications, by starting the quarter with a fascinating problem in the field.

Help students understand the learning process

By communicating to students what you know about the learning process, you will help them develop the study skills necessary for success. This is particularly important for beginning college students, but may be just as helpful as students progress to higher-level courses that require more complex skills.

Understand your students' prior learning

Knowing where your students are starting from can have a profound effect on how you present material in your course. Rather than making assumptions about prior learning, it is a good idea to find out first-hand. A few ways to assess prior learning: give an ungraded pre-test; have students complete a survey; ask students to write a paragraph or more about their prior experiences with the subject and their expectations for this course; ask them about their learning styles in this subject area.

Provide opportunities for early success

Resist the temptation to "weed out" less capable students by giving a killer first assignment. Instead, help students develop a positive sense of their own

capabilities by giving a first assignment appropriate to the expected level of prior learning, by providing extra guidance on the first assignment, and by giving prompt feedback geared toward improvement. Consider allowing students to revise their first assignment (or retake a first exam) to improve their performance.

Communicate your interest in students' learning

Students believe their teachers care about whether they learn when teachers are available and approachable for assistance outside of class, when they take time to address student questions, when they ask students how things are going, and when they convey a belief in their students' capabilities.

Model the kinds of thinking you want to promote

From the very first day, your "thinking out loud" and asking questions send a message about what kinds of thinking you value. For example, if you want students to ask higher-level questions, ask such questions of them during class; reveal (and cite) the research you have done in preparing lectures; demonstrate problem-solving or application of theory; show how you evaluate evidence to arrive at a conclusion.

Resources

McGlynn, Angela P., *Successful Beginnings for College Teaching* (2001, Atwood).

Nilson, Linda B., *Teaching at Its Best* (1998, Anker).

Chapter 7: Your First Day of Class

Chapter 11: Motivating Your Students

Barbara Gross Davis, *Tools for Teaching* (1993, Jossey-Bass).

Chapter 3: The First Day of Class

Chapters 4-7: Responding to a Diverse Student Body

Helpful links from the University of Washington Center for Instructional Design and Research:

<http://depts.washington.edu/cidrweb/FirstDayTools.htm>



faculty focus

A Quarterly Newsletter from the

Center for Teaching Excellence

CTE online: <http://ic.ucsc.edu/CTE>

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Faculty Focus features the voices of the UCSC community speaking out on teaching and learning. The Center for Teaching Excellence encourages the submission of material representing divergent ideas and opinions. These opinions are not necessarily shared by CTE. Letters to the editor and comments may be e-mailed to cte@ucsc.edu.

CTE is located at 168C McHenry Library.

Re-Imagining Instructional Technology Services

by Bruce Horn, Media Services

Last spring, ITS Division began a process of evaluating how it supports instructional technology on campus, including classroom media, student computing labs, faculty support, and instructional development. The end result of this process may be a reorganization of units that provide technology services in support of instruction. This article summarizes progress to date. Please send your comments to itr@ucsc.edu or contact Bruce Horn, 9-3458 or Phillip Stark, 9-5214.

What instructional technology support do you need that you have not been able to get? What instructional technology support is most important to you?

Information Technology Services (ITS) has been asking these questions of faculty and others since April 2005. ITS is creating a vision statement, projected to be finished by the end of October, to guide its instructional technology support structure based on faculty responses and other campus reports on this topic.

Once ITS has a clear idea of UCSC's priorities for instructional technology support, ITS will begin designing the support structure to provide those services. This structure may or may not be similar to what exists today. It will not be changed just for the sake of change, but only if that change will provide better service to the campus. The design phase will take about 6 months. Implementation of these changes will start immediately after that.

Based on the discussions so far, here are some of the features that the new structure will need to include:

1. Most importantly, instructional technology services must be responsive to the needs of faculty and the educational goals of this campus. A client committee will tell ITS what instructional technologies should be supported. ITS will assist that committee in gathering faculty input.

2. Both this project and the 2002 Instructional Technology Group identified a deficiency in the amount of instructional development support provided. The campus has a large investment in classroom and lab equipment, but an insufficient amount of staff time available to assist faculty in determining what technology, if any, would best enhance their students' learning, help them incorporate technology into their teaching, and use it most effectively. Staffing needs to be added here.

3. Many faculty do not know what instructional technology support is available and how to find it. The new support structure will integrate services currently provided by Instructional Computing, Media Services and other units into one system with a single easy to find entry point. This integration will also enable higher quality instructional technology services through

improved collaboration between support units. An outreach function will also be created to inform faculty about the services that are available and how to access them.

4. During the design phase, a comprehensive catalog of the instructional services that are currently provided will be created. A clear structure will be created to move new items into this catalog, both to incorporate the services faculty have told us are missing and to provide a mechanism to adapt to future needs.

5. The instructional technology provided to the campus should help to improve student learning. ITS will work with faculty and the client committee to assess which technology uses enable the greatest learning improvements.

6. Installation of baseline services faculty expect in classrooms, such as data projection and network connections, need to be completed.



Announcing the 2004-05 Excellence in Teaching Awards

Congratulations to the following faculty, who were honored in May 2005 for their commitment to and success in teaching, as evidenced by student nominations, letters from department chairs, and the nominees' own statements on teaching. We invite you to read these inspiring statements on teaching, which are available on the CTE web site (<http://ic.ucsc.edu/CTE/awards>), and will be printed in Faculty Focus throughout the year.

Radhika Mongia, Women's Studies

for challenging and sensitive teaching of women's studies, for difficult questions, close reading, and constructive feedback, for outstanding commitment to students' intellectual and personal growth

Jerome Neu, Humanities

for inspirational and interdisciplinary teaching of philosophy, for offering intellectual challenges, guidance, feedback, and respect, for engaging students in a search for knowledge, and self-knowledge

Paul Ortiz, Community Studies

for exceptional dedication in teaching community studies, for understanding that reading, critical thinking, and collaboration are empowering, for matching high expectations with encouragement and mentoring

Grant Pogson, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Ron Ruby Award for Teaching Excellence in the Division of Physical and Biological Sciences for extraordinary commitment to teaching evolutionary biology, for fascinating examples, clarity of presentation, and sensitivity to students, for sharing the excitement of science with the next generation of biologists

Julie Tannenbaum, Philosophy

for engaging and effective teaching of philosophy, for fostering shared inquiry through listening, critical thinking, and self-reflection, for connecting philosophy with experience

Susana Terrell, Art

for exceptional creativity in teaching drawing, for encouraging personal expression along with technique and discipline, while fostering a community of artists in the classroom

A Technological Approach to RealTime Course Recording

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slides and blank slides were attempted for lectures (in CMPE012C, and CMPE293, respectively), and used to contrast the teaching effectiveness of the capture technology.

Students have been very enthusiastic about the technology. In the course evaluations for the four courses in which I have used this technology, two additional questions were asked relating directly to the video capture technology. The first was to “rate the utility of the video capture for your learning,” and the second was to “quantify how often you viewed the captured material.” (Note that only the utility question was asked in the CMPE-12C class.) The results were impressive: Class averages on “video utility” ranged from 4.02 to 4.57 out of 5, with between 78% and 100% of these classes rating them “Very Good” or “Excellent.” On frequency of use, the two classes who were asked this question averaged 2.7 and 3.03 out of 5, with 10% and 29% of students in the two classes selecting “Very Often.”

Based on these results, it is clear that the technology is a success, and I am continuing to use it in all of my classes, including guest lectures that I give for other classes in the future. Perhaps the most succinct summary of the results of this project were the comments from the students:

“The lecture videos are really helpful because its not always clear what you are saying during the lectures. It lets me go back and watch it over, and since we don’t have a textbook, I go to the lecture videos as a main source for help on homeworks and to clarify anything.”

“The Lecture Videos are great. I’ve only had to watch three of them in segments, but they helped even though I attend every class. At times I don’t understand my own notes, and it is very nice to be able to rewatch and reunderstand what you said the previous week.”

“The videos online is a huge help to making up the material in case you missed a class, clarification/ etc.”

“The online video idea has been a huge help. For instance, while studying for the test, I brought up lectures I needed to review. Really good idea.”

Several different combinations of hardware were attempted before the winning combination was found. Typically, problems encountered with the set-up were almost always with the audio capture. Early attempts using an analog headset (standard) showed that the sound and video lost sync about 15 minutes into the lecture. Additionally, PowerPoint was quite brittle, halting or crashing at unpredictable times. Camtasia, however, proved to be excellent and robust, handling all these crashes without dropping a single frame. Typ-

ically, with the audio compressed into an MP3 format, a two hour lecture runs about 30-45 MB, depending on the complexity of the slides. Using a bluetooth headset (Jabra FreeSpeak) makes the lecture much more instructor friendly, as you are no longer tethered to the Tablet PC. The end system which works very well is a tablet PC (with at least 512MB of RAM), running Camtasia software, using a D-Link DBT-120 dongle to communicate to a Jabra FreeSpeak bluetooth headset.

Update: A group of faculty in the Baskin School of Engineering has recently received a grant of HP equipment, including 20 tablet PCs, to assist with implementation of classroom applications such as this one.

All of the videos for the courses can be seen on their respective websites:

<http://www.cse.ucsc.edu/classes/cmpe012c/Winter04/Videos.html>
<http://www.cse.ucsc.edu/classes/cmpe293/Spring04/#videos>
<http://www.soe.ucsc.edu/classes/cmpe012/Winter05/Videos.html>
<http://www.soe.ucsc.edu/classes/cmpe118/Spring05/#videos>



Have you thought about Mid-Quarter Feedback?

Just as frequent and timely feedback to students helps them learn, feedback to an instructor can improve both teaching and learning. Mid-Quarter Feedback from CTE can provide valuable information about students’ experiences in a course, and whether the course is meeting its goals, indicating whether mid-quarter adjustments are called for.

All options are free, voluntary, and confidential. Individual consultation is available in conjunction with any MQF option. The best time to request feedback is during weeks 3, 4, and 5 of the quarter.

- ***Electronic Mid-Quarter Analysis of Teaching (EMAT)***
- ***Teaching Observation***
- ***Class Interview***
- ***Survey Forms***
- ***Videotaping***

For more information on Mid-Quarter Feedback see <http://ic.ucsc.edu/CTE/mqf.html>, or call the CTE director at 459-5091.

Award Winning Teachers on Teaching

Following are teaching statements from recipients of the 2004-05 Excellence in Teaching Awards.

Teaching Statement

Radhika Mongia, Assistant Professor, Women's Studies

I have now been teaching for almost twenty years, in a variety of settings. A medley of experiences thus shape my pedagogical approach, though some of my earliest and, coincidentally, also most challenging teaching situations have been formative to my teaching philosophy and practice. My first experience as a teacher came when, as an undergraduate student (majoring in Mathematics) at the University of Delhi, India, I volunteered to teach English to Afghan refugees through the UNHCR in Delhi. This was a most perplexing pedagogical situation: For, not only was I untrained in any aspect of how to teach languages, or, indeed, in how to teach at all, my classes had students who ranged in age from twelve to fifty and many of my students were infinitely more educated than I, having been doctors, engineers and -- most intimidating of all -- teachers in Afghanistan. It is, of course, a cliché to say that a teacher also learns through teaching; but for me, this cliché embodies more than a grain of truth: The lesson here for me was the shocking revelation that despite my students' fluencies, indeed erudition, in certain domains, they were in the class to learn; and that I had something to teach them.

Another key event that informs my pedagogy relates to my experiences, as a graduate student in Mathematics in the US, when I worked as a TA for various introductory-level courses. Despite their introductory level, I was struck by the high percentage of students who failed the classes. Teaching introductory college math can be a relatively easy task: you solve problems on the board and quickly grade student assignments, simply marking answers right or wrong. However, one can also teach mathematics otherwise: by explaining how one moves through what one can call the phases of an "argument" that constitute a solution; by spending time on unpacking the abstractions; and by trying to work against the pervasive "math anxiety" by helping students appreciate the beauty and elegance of "clean" solutions. Faced with the prospect of innumerable students failing the courses, it was the latter route I chose to adopt; one that required far more preparation on my part and taught me the truth of another cliché: that one really grasps and masters material through the process of teaching it.

After many an intellectual detour, I now teach in Women's Studies. Oddly enough, teaching feminist theory

is a lot like teaching math, and those early experiences are an indispensable part of my pedagogical vision and practice. My pedagogical vision seeks to make education and learning not (only) about the material on the syllabus, but about a love of learning and inquiry that would motivate students to do "unnecessary" work and make pleasurable those aspects of learning that are for students often the most intimidating and the most dreaded: rigor, difficulty, hard work. I wish to cultivate in students an eagerness to learn, to enjoy struggling with new and difficult ideas, to prefer the doubt and constant questioning that attends grappling with paradoxes, over and above the certitude that attends resolutions. Thus, I want students to leave my classes *both* having mastered key elements of the course *and* haunted by unresolved, nagging questions. I wish to cultivate such an approach to learning not simply for the sake of it, but because I believe the complexities of our world mandate it, and also because I believe such an approach best serves any attempts to transform our world.

I wish to cultivate in students an eagerness to learn, to enjoy struggling with new and difficult ideas, to prefer the doubt and constant questioning that attends grappling with paradoxes, over and above the certitude that attends resolutions.

Quite surprisingly, I have found that a fairly "traditional" pedagogical practice is the most amenable to achieving this pedagogical vision. Thus, in the classroom, I "teach." For many, "to teach" implies an undemocratic formation with the teacher positioned as the font of knowledge, "imparting wisdom" to students, who, simultaneously, are positioned as passive observers, "blank slates," discouraged from voicing their opinions on a matter. Students here are thus conceived as disempowered, where their voices are unimportant. Within feminist pedagogy, this is, in fact, an entrenched view. I am not entirely averse to this view; however, it can sometimes lead to an abdication of responsibility on the part of the teacher in explaining, clarifying, and enabling students to grasp the complex materials they confront. As with my Afghan students to whom I could teach English, though many were, as I noted, far more educated and erudite than me, I recognize that I have something to teach my current students; this, however, does not gainsay their knowledge and fluencies in other areas. Teaching, for me, then, means taking ones responsibilities seriously and recognizing that one does, in fact, have something very valuable to "impart" to students. Such recognitions, however, had evaded me in my first year of teaching at Santa Cruz; by reflecting on my past experiences, I have now been able to complicate the standard practice of feminist pedagogy and thereby make my teaching far more effective. Hence, in my classes, I try not only to challenge my students, but also to give them the intellectual resources with which to meet such challenges.

Such an approach has proved particularly useful for

Teaching Statement

Jerome Neu, Professor, Humanities

the kinds of courses I teach at Santa Cruz, courses that derive from my research interests. The broad question that animates my research is the historical production, sedimentation, and naturalization of forms of domination and subordination, or of forms of inequality. My classes pursue this abstract question by giving it concrete shape. Thus, on the one hand, some courses I have designed, such as “Feminist Critical Race Studies” and my version of the core course “Feminist Theories,” focus on the US and have the aim of familiarizing students with the kinds of inequalities that saturate their more localized context: inequalities that operate through complicated networks of race, class, gender, sexuality, and, increasingly, religion. In my classes, we consider the historical lineages of these inequalities, their mutations, and present resonances. And we seek not only to understand them, but also how we might transform them.

On the other hand, courses I teach on “Gender and Postcoloniality” and on “Feminism and Cultural Production: Non-Metropolitan Film and Feminism” aim, instead, to thoroughly de-familiarize the US context in order, precisely, to localize or particularize it. These courses seek to discourage students from transposing their world onto other worlds, by drawing attention to different histories, different operations of power, and different human concerns. Alternatively put, these classes stress that inequality appears in varying forms, and I wish to have students gain an appreciation for such variety. Indeed, this variety teaches us that domination and subordination are not given, but both produced and sustained through historical processes. And it is an appreciation of such variety that most vividly illustrates the possibility of transformation.

This is a sketchy and abstract outline of the kind of issues I encourage students to consider. However, I have learned that some of the best teaching we can do is to teach rigorous reading and writing practices, skills that my constituency of students at Santa Cruz often lack. Teaching these skills is therefore a crucial element of all my courses, though I am better able to give it the attention it deserves most systematically in independent studies, advising senior theses, and in my course on “Advanced Feminist Theory.” This course has minimal, if dense, readings and is structured to require students to read and re-read the material, carefully and closely. Though an unconventional syllabus, it is perhaps the most successful course I teach, precisely because it clarifies for students what it means to fully engage in nuanced reading and writing and, thus, in nuanced learning. I am delighted by student responses to this course that, despite having the reputation of being notoriously difficult, is increasingly popular with them. The course best encapsulates my pedagogical vision as cultivating in students a love of difficulty, of rigor, and of the enjoyment – rather than the dread – of, as one student put it, “having their heads hurt.”

I cannot thank them enough for wishing to engage in such learning, for keeping me intellectually honest by asking those “simple” questions that demand that I am thoroughly prepared, and for doing me the honor of nominating me for a teaching award.



I try to upset the students, that is, get them to confront comfortable, unexamined assumptions. In all my courses, the focus is on critical analysis (including self-critical analysis). I endeavor to get students to see that argument is a form of respect—unthinking acceptance an evasion. As Nietzsche put it, “It is a common error to have the courage of one’s convictions, when what is needed is the courage for an attack on one’s convictions.”

So, for example, the course I regularly teach on the “Philosophy of Law” (sponsored by both the Philosophy and Legal Study programs) is structured in such a way as to, right off, make the students feel the need for the sort of theory that the course goes on to develop and explore. We start with some simple assault and rape cases, where students tend to have strong intuitions about the right outcome. But conflict in the underlying principles and standards that might be used to justify those intuitions quickly emerges, and the course moves rapidly and deeply into more abstract issues that might otherwise not have seemed to have a compelling interest from the students’ point of view. Their comfortable presumptions are made explicit and confronted, and they are offered help in thinking through the difficulties (the genuine difficulties). In this course I make use of regular quizzes to make sure students are keeping up with and understanding the rather demanding reading. An unusual feature of the quizzes is that they are closed book but open notes: the point, once more, is to encourage them to keep up with and understand the readings—not to memorize—and as a side-benefit they also learn to take more concise and selective notes, which in turn helps them prepare for the longer essay exams in the course.

In my seminars, the same goals of critical analysis are served through a special emphasis on paper writing. (The large lecture course on “Introduction to Philosophy” that I regularly teach is also writing intensive, but there the paper reading is done by TAs.) In seminars, both undergraduate and graduate, I typically require weekly short papers in response to the readings and issues (which I spell out in a detailed syllabus). I make it a point to return the papers either at the end of the class (if they were submitted in advance) or at the next class, so that the students have constant feedback and the experience of writing can be cumulative. Happily, the later papers in the course typically reward my efforts by being markedly better than the earlier ones. Feedback works. I also use the papers to structure the discussion in the seminar sessions, asking a few students to read their papers and then focusing class discussion and my own (in effect) mini-lectures around them. Thus, in choosing their paper topics, the students also determine the direction and content of the session.

Over the years I have taught seminars on, among other topics, “Injunctions” for Legal Studies (a program that, in its original form, I helped found in collaboration with Robert Meister of the Politics Department), “The Emotions” for both the Philosophy and Psychology Departments, and “On Insults” for both the Philosophy and Anthropology Depart-

ments. I believe in interdisciplinary teaching and research and in the mutually reinforcing effects of teaching and research. My teaching always involves readings from a variety of disciplines and on occasion it has involved active collaboration with instructors from other disciplines. I have been doing periodic collaborative teaching since my very first years at Santa Cruz, when I co-taught a graduate seminar on "Interpretation" with C.L. Barber of the Literature Department. (That was in the early 1970s when I was Chair of the program in History of Consciousness, which sponsored the seminar.)

The topics I teach in seminars tend to be the topics I am writing on, which by their nature are multidisciplinary (if not eccentric). The reason for crossing boundaries is simple: I always start with a question and I let the question take me wherever I need to go to find answers. It is almost always to multiple disciplinary ports. And students are almost always glad to join me on the journey. For example, I regularly teach an undergraduate seminar on "The Emotions." (My book, *A Tear Is an Intellectual Thing: The Meanings of Emotion*, emerged from the work done over the years in connection with that seminar.) The readings are largely a mix of psychoanalytical and philosophical writings (with some sociology, anthropology, and literature as well). The seminar itself is organized in a slightly lunatic fashion: we do a passion a week. The sessions follow a certain natural order: starting with love, jealousy, and boredom, the course concludes with grief. I use the analysis of particular emotions as a way to explore general issues (including universality, expression of emotion, and control), and to encourage the students to apply theoretical understandings to concrete experience.

I am currently writing a book *On Insults*, and I've begun teaching a graduate seminar on the subject. It is not a topic in any regular discipline, but it touches on issues in many. The schoolyard wisdom about "sticks and stones" does not take one very far: insults do not take the form only of words, even words have effects, and the popular as well as the standard legal distinctions between speech and conduct are at least as problematic as they are helpful. The questions addressed in the course include the following: What kind of injury is an insult? Is its infliction determined by the insulter or the insulted? What does it reveal of the character of each and of the character of society and its conventions? What is its role in social and legal life (from play to jokes to ritual to war and from blasphemy to defamation to hate speech)? In pursuing the questions, philosophical, anthropological, linguistic, psychoanalytic, and legal materials and approaches are emphasized. The same resources of critical analysis and techniques of interrogation through writing that I use in all my courses and seminars are brought to bear.

I also teach a lecture course on the development of Freud's concept of mind for the Psychology and Philosophy Departments every other year. I do it mainly as a service, because I think every university should provide an op-

portunity for students to read systematically and critically through Freud. While bits of Freud are touched on in many courses, I think his model of the mind and its mechanisms (from displacement and transference to identification) is crucial to social and individual understanding, and that a proper understanding of his thought requires a careful tracing of its development and consideration of the evidence and argument that moved Freud and that perhaps should move us.

I also like teaching the Freud course (and edited the Cam-

bridge Companion to Freud) because it helps make clear why Socrates was right to believe that the unexamined life is not worth living. The unexamined life is not worth living because you are not then living it: you are instead moved by unexamined forces that determine what you do. Understanding such forces is the first step towards greater freedom. Examining one's life is essential, among other reasons, because otherwise you risk always tripping over yourself (because of unacknowledged inner conflict). Knowledge, including self-knowledge, is a condition of freedom and control. My teaching, like my writing, is informed and motivated by the Spinozist hope that understanding our lives can help change them, can help make us more free.



My teaching, like my writing, is informed and motivated by the Spinozist hope that understanding our lives can help change them, can help make us more free.

Congratulations!

(<http://nettrail.ucsc.edu>)

UCSC's NetTrail, an online research & information literacy tutorial at the University Library, has been selected by the Association of College & Research Libraries' Instruction Section as the PRIMO (Peer-Reviewed Instructional Materials Online) Site of the Month for October 2005.

UCSC's NetTrail team includes:

Christy Caldwell, Christy Hightower, Ann Hubble,
Danielle Kane, Ken Lyons, and
Debbie Murphy.

Topics in Teaching

Course Design

Tues., Oct. 18, 3:00-4:30 p.m., Bay Tree Conference Center, room C
Ruth Harris-Barnett, CTE Director

This workshop will explore how well-designed courses can foster the kinds of learning we value. We will address how to align course objectives, assessments, and learning activities, and participants will have an opportunity to discuss their own course development challenges with colleagues. Participants are encouraged to bring ideas for a course they are currently planning or revising, or for a “dream course” they would like to create.

Instructional Improvement Colloquium: Teaching with WebCT

Thurs., Nov. 10, 2:00-3:30 p.m., Soc Sci I, room 261
Presenters TBA (check CTE web site for updates)

Back by popular demand! Three faculty members describe how they have used WebCT (UCSC's on-line course management system) successfully in their courses, how it has affected teaching and learning, and what lessons they learned in the process. Each will show examples from their courses. Robin Ove, Mgr. of the Faculty Instructional Technology Center, will also be on hand to answer questions.

Instructional Improvement Grants: Information and Planning

Thurs., Nov 17, 1:00-2:30 p.m., Bay Tree Conference Center, room B
Ruth Harris-Barnett, CTE Director

Is an Instructional Improvement Grant what you need to get that course design project underway? This session will give you general information about the Instructional Improvement Program, as well as insight into the criteria used to select proposals for funding, and tips for writing an effective proposal. Participants are welcome to come with specific questions about possible projects.

Tell your TAs about:

Brown Bag Lunches for TAs

See <http://ic.ucsc.edu/CTE/workshops-TAs.html> for topics and times.

To register: Contact the Center for Teaching Excellence, cte@ucsc.edu or 459-5091.
Or register on-line at <http://ic.ucsc.edu/CTE/workshops.html>.

