



# CTE NEWSLETTER

## CTE Seeking Proposals

### Course Research and Redesign Project Awards

The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) is actively seeking proposals for course research and redesign pilot projects. Although the selection committee's focus will remain on the 30 highest enrollment courses at LCCC, other courses are now being considered. Faculty interested in applying for funding through this effort should visit the CTE website link on the **LCCC Intranet** or [www.lorainccc.edu/cte](http://www.lorainccc.edu/cte) for complete information, including a list of the 30 courses that qualify and an application. There are now two deadlines for proposal submissions. They are February 24<sup>th</sup> or April 6<sup>th</sup> for Spring 2012. Courses will be researched for either summer or fall and piloted in Spring 2013. Faculty interested in submitting a proposal should contact Aimee Dickinson [adickins@lorainccc.edu](mailto:adickins@lorainccc.edu) or extension 4156 to discuss ideas, indicate interest and submit proposals.

### Our Charge:

*"The Center for Teaching Excellence is a community of educators serving as catalysts and resources for professional growth and innovative teaching to enhance student learning and achievement."*

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## Innovative Learning Project Awards

Beginning Fall 2011 ILP Grant proposals will be reviewed twice annually (i.e., fall and spring semesters). Innovative Learning Projects allow faculty to collaborate with faculty from other divisions, assess new delivery methods, and evaluate strategies that improve learning and student retention. Interested faculty should submit an ILP proposal to Susan Paul [spaul@lorainccc.edu](mailto:spaul@lorainccc.edu) by February 24, 2012. If awarded, the ILP project will be piloted in Spring 2013.

Examples of past projects are available in the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) office located in the College Center in room CC 114B, soon to be relocated in the Bass Library/Community Center inside suite LC 234. ILP fact sheet, project criteria, proposal forms, and evaluation steps are available under the CTE link [www.lorainccc.edu/cte](http://www.lorainccc.edu/cte) on the LCCC Intranet. There is also a fact sheet available, which answers questions regarding writing proposals, picking teams and a budget. For help with writing a proposal please contact Susan Paul at [spaul@lorainccc.edu](mailto:spaul@lorainccc.edu) or extension 7422.

## Innovative Learning Project

### ILP Project: “Quality Matters Across the Curriculum”

By *Tammy Macek*, Institutional Representative, *Quality Matters*

*Quality Matters (QM) is a faculty-centered peer review process that is designed to certify the quality of online and blended courses (QM Rubric 2011-2013 Edition).*

Does the quality of online course design matter? How can faculty improve course design by applying the *Quality Matters (QM)* Rubric standards to their courses? Would professional development and mentoring energize faculty? How do we measure student attitudes and retention after course improvements?

These questions were the impetus for the Innovative Learning Project (ILP), “*Quality Matters Across the Curriculum*” which started Fall Semester, 2011 and will continue through Spring Semester, 2012. Eight faculty participants from various divisions were paired with eight faculty mentors who are QM-certified peer reviewers.

Participants were trained to apply the *Quality Matters* rubric to their online courses during Faculty Development Days in August. Then, each participant worked with their faculty mentor this fall to improve the design components of one online course. Participants will teach their revised online courses this spring. Student data was collected in pre-project courses and will be collected and compared to the revised, post-project courses.

ILP Project faculty participants are: Lisa Augustine, Aldena Francisco-Harris, Dee Gross, Karen Joris, Maria McConnell, Tom Paulchell, Greg Rivera, and Susan Paul. Faculty mentors are: Aimee Dickinson, Mary Jo DiGiandomenico, Laurie Grimes, Kathy Head, Rob Loftis, Lisa Sheppard, Dorinda Smith, and Janis Thompson. Project directors who developed and/or implemented the project

are: Tammy Macek, Lou Suarez and Janis Thompson.

Faculty mentors and mentees were excited about the exchange of ideas and suggestions. Aimee Dickinson said, “I feel that this process and communication will be ongoing as we share our resources and ideas to increase the quality in both of our online courses.”

According to Jan Thompson, “I know that the changes that I made to my course as a result of the feedback I received from my peers really helped me to improve my course. I hope that this will be true for Tom (her mentee), as well.”

Participants learned to improve aspects of design by looking at their course from a student’s perspective. For example, some improved course navigation with “fewer clicks.” Many added and aligned module-level outcomes to assessments, activities and content. Others sought to improve accessibility to content for physically-challenged students.

Since *Quality Matters* started at LCCC in Fall, 2010 more than 50 faculty have been trained, and twelve faculty became QM certified peer reviewers and participated in informal peer reviews of each others’ courses.

Three courses went through rigorous, formal *Quality Matters* Peer Reviews this fall and passed to meet the QM standards. The first online courses to receive the official QM certification mark are BIOG 152, Jan Thompson, faculty developer; MTHM 022, Lisa Shepherd, faculty developer; and SDEV 101 Master Course, Laurie Grimes, faculty developer.

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## Professional Development

### Retaining Students By Engaging Them In Active Participation Techniques

*By Kathy Head*

When pondering the topic to share with my colleagues, I decided upon active participation techniques for a couple of reasons. First, hands-on teaching philosophy has been endorsed by theorists in education dating back to the 1600's by proponents such as John Comenius. Second, and more important, I try to model the techniques I want my students to use as future educators, specifically active learning.

The definition of active participation according to Bonwell and Eison (1991), "Any strategy that involves students in doing things and thinking about things they are doing." Active learning is based on the Social Cognitive Theory and Constructivism and analysis of the research literature indicates that students **MUST** do more than listen; they must read, write, discuss and engage in problem solving.

The characteristics of active learning participation are:

- ▶ Students are engaged in activities (e.g. reading, discussing, and writing).
- ▶ Students are not engaged in passive listening.
- ▶ Emphasis is on the exploration of attitudes and values.
- ▶ Student motivation is increased.
- ▶ Students can receive immediate feedback from instructor.
- ▶ Students are involved in higher order thinking (analysis, synthesis and evaluation).

Although research supports the effectiveness of active learning, faculty may be hesitant to utilize teaching strategies other than lecture for a variety of reasons:

- ▶ Students will not participate actively.
- ▶ Students may not learn course content.
- ▶ Students may not utilize higher order thinking skills.
- ▶ Students may not enjoy the experience.

The workshop discussed high and low risks techniques faculty can use with college students to facilitate active learning participation. Three Sentence Wrap-up, Sentence Summaries, Pause Star Rank, and Confer, Compare and Clarify are a few of the techniques discussed. The top ten teaching mistakes that directly conflict with active participation teaching techniques are:

10. When you ask a question immediately call for volunteers.
9. Call on students' cold.
8. Turn your class into PowerPoint shows.
7. Fail to provide a variety of instruction.
6. Have students work in groups with no accountability.
5. Fail to establish relevance.
4. Give tests that are too long.
3. Get stuck in a rut.
2. Teach without clear learning objectives.
1. Disrespect students.

Anyone who would like to discuss these techniques please contact me at x 7167 or [khead@lorainccc.edu](mailto:khead@lorainccc.edu).

## Teaching Tips

### Quality Matters

*By Aimee Dickinson*

Since becoming a Quality Matters certified peer reviewer and having made changes to my online and blended courses, I receive fewer emails from students.

The teaching tips for this semester are based on QM. In no way does this short list encompass all of the standards, but the topics listed below have helped me improve my courses tremendously.

1. **Tell students how and where to get started and how to navigate the course.** How the instructor does this is up to them. Putting instructions at the announcement page or changing the lessons tab so that it states: lessons/ start here shows students what to do when they log on and acquaints the students to the CMS.
2. **Have netiquette expectations.** Let students know that a text message style email is not going to fly and that a proper hello is the standard greeting when communicating via email. I encourage students to use email for questions of a personal nature and to use my question/answer discussion forum for content questions. Thus, all students can see the questions and answers that their classmates have. I instruct them to put the question in the title part of the post within the discussion forum.

3. **Use module/chapter/weekly objectives (known at our institution as outcomes) while others prefer competencies.** Provide students learning outcomes as well as instructions on how to meet those learning outcomes.
4. **Make sure the assessment method aligns with the module/weekly objective.** Don't have your students reading about the Nyimba's polyandry (1 wife many husbands) practices and then assess them with an essay test on polygyny (one husband many wives)!
5. **Use activities that promote active learning.** I have my online students apply the sociological paradigms to controversial topics in their forum discussions. They also write reflections on numerous sociological concepts.
6. **Let students know when they can expect your feedback regarding grading.** I believe in putting a feedback grading statement in the syllabus as well as posting announcements updating the students as to the status of my feedback.
7. **Make sure there are opportunities for different types of interaction.** Try to create assignments that foster instructor-student, content-student, as well as student-student interaction.

## Spotlight On Faculty

### *Kwaku Obosu-Mensah*

#### ***How long have you been teaching here at LCCC?***

I have been working at LCCC for nine (9) years. In all, I have been teaching at the college level for about 13 years. I taught for two years at Nordland College in Bodo (Norway), a year at Lane College in Jackson (Tennessee), and a year at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green (Kentucky).

#### ***What classes do you teach?***

At LCCC, I teach Introduction to Sociology, Family, Race and Ethnicity, Social Problems, and International Studies.

#### ***What hobbies do you have outside your LCCC life?***

I have several hobbies including traveling, watching documentary movies, reading, research, writing, listening to music, fishing, and soccer.

#### ***What is your teaching philosophy? How do you see your role in the educational process?***

I derive my approach to teaching from the principles of critical pedagogy espoused by Paulo Friere and Henry Giroux. Thus, I teach not by merely lecturing, but engaging my students in a system of involvement and intellectual cooperation. I also endorse Marx's commentary on Feuerbach that the point of great teaching is not only to understand the world; it is to change it for the better. Teaching should encourage free thinking, new consciousness, dissent and an ability to deconstruct the old and create a more meaningful discourse of understanding. My teaching is open-ended because I believe that anyone who claims a final truth or a monopoly over knowledge is an authoritarian. Above all, I believe that teaching should transmit empowerment to students and help them attain their full potential.



*Kwaku Obosu-Mensah  
Associate Professor,  
Social Sciences and Human Services*

#### ***What type of student is your ideal student?***

My ideal student is the student who partakes in class discussions, including asking questions in class. I believe there is no such thing as a stupid question, so I encourage my students to ask questions in class.

#### ***What type of student is your nightmare student?***

My nightmare student is the student who does not pay attention in class or the student who is on his or her cell-phone texting in class. My concern is that such a student would not make it in life, and would therefore become a societal problem. I don't want to feel like I contributed to the failure of such a person. Another nightmare student is the one who is looking for an excuse. He or she does everything including blaming the instructor for his or her dropping out of college.

#### ***How has education changed since you entered into the field?***

Education has changed me a lot. I have learned to be more patient and dedicated. I see it as my responsibility to assist others to succeed in life. I have also come to the conclusion that as a teacher, my reward is in heaven.

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## Spotlight On Faculty

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### **How has LCCC changed since you started working here?**

Before I came to LCCC, I had taught in two other institutions in the US. Since I had never taught in a two-year college, I was a little bit apprehensive about coming to teach at LCCC. However, I am happy I decided to teach at LCCC because my experience here is splendid. I work with rational people - I have not met any irrational people at LCCC, and everybody is cooperative. In short, LCCC provides a very cordial environment to work.

### **Anything else that gives us a picture of you and your teaching.**

I have studied, lived or visited 14 countries. Hence, I come to the classroom with experience from several cultures. When teaching, I provide examples from several cultures. My strongest asset is my patience; I believe that every student has the potential to succeed. Thus, nobody was born a failure. I used corn popping to explain how I view my students. Students are different and excel at different times. While some excel at the beginning of their first semester in college, others excel toward the middle of the semester, and some others excel at the very end of the semester. When popping corn in the microwave, some corn kernels start popping immediately. These are the students who excel at the very beginning of the semester. Most of the corn pop in the middle, and when you think all the corn kernels have popped you hear some popping “po, po, po, po” at the end. These are the students who excel at the end when you think they cannot. Most of the time, these are the students we give up on - too early. I’m so patient that I always wait for the last students to “pop.”

### **ILP Project: “Quality Matters Across the Curriculum”**

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From this ILP Project grant, more Professional Development opportunities will emerge for full-time and adjunct faculty at LCCC. For more information on upcoming opportunities, contact Tammy Macek or Janis Thompson.

### **Retaining Students By Engaging Them In Active Participation**

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***Executive Steering Committee,  
2011-12***

Vince Granito	Co-Chair, Professional Development Co-Coordinator, <i>SS&amp;HS</i>
Aimee Dickinson	Co-Chair, Coordinator of Enhancement Redesign Projects, Newsletter Editor, <i>SS&amp;HS</i>
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