Areté

Upcoming Events at CTE

Sep 19 - Noontime Conversation:
Engagement & Civility
on Campus

Sep 21 - Bill McKeachie's
Teaching Tips

Oct 24 - Noontime Conversation:
Student Alcohol Awareness

Nov 7 - Noontime Conversation:
Disability & Accessibility

Jan 11 - Ann Ferren Teaching
Conference

See the newly redesigned CTE website for more details on these upcoming events!
http://www.american.edu/cte

Modernizing the Model Classroom

By Jim Lee
Associate Director, Teaching & Tech.
and Jason Diebler
Manager, New Media Center

The university continues to experiment with differing modes of teaching related to the use of technology and classroom space. Jack Child created the original Model Classroom in Hurst 211 nearly ten years ago. His vision was realized with an innovative teaching podium, which contained a computer, a VCR, and a monitor encased under a glass screen for easy use with class lecture notes. Both the computer display and the VCR video could be projected onto a screen. This was a revolutionary idea that combined new technologies within a single piece of furniture. Faculty soon drifted towards this experimental style and wanted to incorporate these new modes of class interaction into their teaching.

All good things must pass. Yet, they can also renew and live again. CTE is investing resources into a rejuvenated, renovated Model Classroom, which still focuses on the interaction between technology and teaching.

The space has been fully redone, with new carpet, freshly painted light blue walls (not eggshell white!), and brand new furniture. Innovations that will be at the instructor's disposal include state-of-the-art AV equipment, with one of the first Blu-ray DVD players on campus. Other features of

AU's President Elect: Grounds for Optimism from a Compelling Book

Letter from the Director

My traveling companion on a recent journey from Washington to Colombo was management guru Jim Collins' best-selling new book, *Good to Great*. By the time Sri Lankan Airlines flight 005 touched down at Bandaraniake International Airport, my copy was heavily marked with highlighted ideas that could be put to use in CTE. *Good to Great* is among the best books on management and one of the finest pieces of social science research I have encountered in nearly forty years as an academic.

Collins sought timeless, widely applicable answers to the question: "can a good company [or organization] become great and, if so how?" (p. 3). Answers are derived from inductive research on eleven carefully selected companies whose performance was undistinguished but then, after a transition, produced cumulative stock returns that outperformed the market by at least three times for a period of fifteen years. They were contrasted with eleven matching comparison companies, that stagnated or worse during

Areté is often equated, seamlessly, with the English terms "virtue," "excellence," "goodness," and "knowledge." It embodies a belief that "the highest human potential is knowledge and all other human abilities are derived from this central capacity."

Collaborating Across Continents with Blackboard

By Beth Scudder
Assistant Director

How do you publish a journal when your editorial board and your contributors are all over the world? AU's Center for Global Peace has a suggestion for you: Use Blackboard.

The Journal of Peacebuilding and Development, a peer reviewed publication that was founded by an AU faculty member and an AU Ph.D student (now graduated), is co-published by the Center. The editorial team has members in Africa, Costa Rica, Europe and various places in the US. Rather than using email to transmit the nearly 30 articles per issue to editors, reviewers and contributors, the Center for Global Peace requested that CTE build a special administrative Blackboard course for them. Betty Sitka, Associate Director, explained how they use this course to "undertake intensive internal review … post outside peer reviews, [and] help strengthen articles for publication."

The journal has used Blackboard for about four issues. Sitka said that everyone is now comfortable on how to use Blackboard. She added that the new process has simplified the journal editing process immensely. With so many people involved and all in different locations, Sitka said contributors, reviewers and editors would "get back to their email four days later, and not know which [article] is the current one. This way they go straight to the site."

The Center for Global Peace looks forward to using the Announcement Board as a "repository of the project data as it evolves," and is exploring Blackboard's group email function to make their administrative course "even

Making Teaching and Learning Visible

By John Doolittle
Associate Director, Teaching & Learning

Professors know a lot about teaching but often much less about learning. Pondering what students really get from a class or whether a lesson is meeting course goals can be daunting. Four University of Kansas professors have created a guide for building and analyzing course outcomes. It provides teachers with a self-reflective approach to identify course goals, describe plans that meet those goals and find ways to evaluate the student outcomes.

Dan Bernstein writes that "when all the careful, difficult, intentional, and scholarly work of planning and teaching a course is undocumented, it is lost for further use." Instead, he and his colleagues urge faculty to make visible the intellectual effort they put into the design of a course and the impact the class has on student learning. At the same time, the text acknowledges most instructors do not want to become educational researchers.

The model presented is based on course portfolios used by hundreds of teachers from various disciplines. The course portfolio allows the instructor and others to get a sense of a course that would otherwise not exist. Creating the portfolios takes time, but the rewards can be remarkable. A professor of art and art history discovered it was worth the effort:

I am a new teacher and an untenured faculty member. I teach intuitively. I go by how the class feels to me, and the overall atmosphere, and the general level of student response. I have a plan for each class day and I always vary it to respond to what arises in the studio. I used to feel strongly that the methods I used in a given situation were effective, but I never articulated why. I never voluntarily used the word "pedagogy" and was quite sure

I never would. I was insecure about the intellectual underpinnings of my teaching and fearful I wouldn't be able to justify how I teach if necessary.

After developing a course portfolio, she wrote, "I found to my enormous relief that many of the methods I had chosen intuitively are used by other teachers and that they even have a pedagogical basis, which I am beginning to be able to articulate."

The authors argue that the course portfolio process makes students the beneficiaries of well designed courses, provides faculty with evidence of their classroom success and involves the campus community in a discussion about how the university's teaching mission is being met.
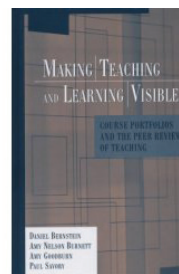
Making Teaching and Learning Visible: Course Portfolios and the Peer Review of Teaching by Daniel Bernstein, Amy Nelson Burnett, Amy Goodburn and Paul Savory; Anker, 2006; 234 pages; $40.00

Welcome New University Librarian, Bill Mayer!

We look forward to collaborating with you!

From 'Good to Great': Envisioning AU's Future

the same period. "It is important to understand," Collins emphasizes, "that we developed all the concepts in this book by making *empirical* deductions directly from the data. ...We sought to build a theory from the ground up, derived directly from the evidence" (p. 10). AU community members may ask: are the findings applicable to almost *any organization*, as the author claims and, more important, are they applicable to us? I believe the answer is "yes."
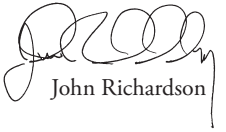
Not long after I reached Colombo, Board Chairman Gary Abramson's announcement that Neil Kerwin had been named AU's President-elect arrived by email. My first reaction was that Neil's journey from first-year student to President is a remarkable saga that will appeal to prospective students and their parents. The trustees' decision affirmed his contributions, perhaps not fully appreciated, to raising AU's academic profile, both externally and internally.

But naming a new president is not about rewarding past services, however meritorious. It is about looking to the future. Having recently completed Chapter 3 – "Level 5 Leadership" – in *Good to Great*, I was reassured by the author's findings. His profile of good to great leaders bore a strong resemblance to Neil Kerwin. Collins writes, "Ten of eleven good to great CEOs came from inside the company. The comparison companies turned to outsiders with six times greater frequency – yet they failed to produce sustained great results" (p. 32). "...Level 5 leaders employ a paradoxical mix of personal humility and professional will... They are ambitious to be sure, but ambitious first and foremost for the company, not themselves" (p. 21).

CTE looks forward to working with faculty colleagues and President-elect Kerwin in the coming year and the years ahead. I am optimistic that a transition from "good to great" is in our future.

John Richardson
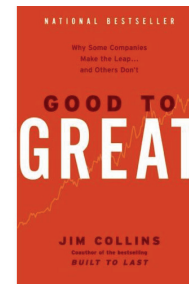
Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap... and Others Don't by Jim Collins; Collins, 2001; 320 pages; $27.50

Cisco Clean Access & Your Laptop

By Beth Scudder
Assistant Director

Beginning this fall, you'll be prompted to log into your computer twice. The second login is to go through a new health check process using Cisco Clean Access (CCA), a computer security measure that has been implemented campus-wide at AU this summer.

Before allowing you to connect to the internet, CCA will check to make sure that your virus and malicious software protection is up to date. If your computer isn't secure, it will let you know how to bring it up to snuff, quickly and easily.

For the first month of the fall semester, faculty members will *not* be prevented from accessing the network if your computer is not in compliance. After the first month, however, CCA will prevent any unsafe computers from accessing the network.

Implementing CCA was a result of an AU policy decision aimed at protecting AU computers from viruses, spyware, and other potential hazards. Thus far, CCA has been extremely successful. It was first implemented among students, and has resulted in a drop in reported cases of viruses and malicious software by almost 80%.

For more about CCA, please call the 24-hour IT Help Desk (helpdesk@ american.edu, x2550). For help with bringing your laptop into compliance with CCA, you can also drop by the Faculty Corner (Hurst 204 B, x2734).

A Model Classroom

the classroom include integrated video recording, audio recording, videoconferencing capability, dual-boot laptops for students and instructor, and CTE staff support. Moreover, the room was designed with flexible furniture that can be configured for various teaching styles – whether you want a conference room setup, traditional row seating, or a small-group oriented workspace.

The Model Classroom will go online this Fall 2007, in what will essentially be its pilot semester. Please let us know if you are interested in teaching in the new Model Classroom, and we will work with the registrar to accommodate you. We would be glad to brief you on the room or offer a tour. We can also provide guidance in making the most of the various features of the Model Classroom. The room can accommodate up to 25 students, so please keep this class size limit in mind.

For more information, contact Jim Lee or Jason Diebler at CTE, x2117.

CTE Hours & Locations

MAIN OFFICE
Hurst Hall 206, x2117
Mon - Fri: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

BLACKBOARD
Hurst Hall 11, x2553
Mon - Fri: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

FACULTY CORNER
Hurst Hall 204B, x2734
Mon - Thu: 9:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Fri: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

TEACHING &
LEARNING RESOURCES
Hurst Hall 11, x3904
Mon - Fri: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

AUDIO & VIDEO
SYSTEMS & SERVICES
Anderson Lower Level, x2296
Mon - Thu: 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Fri: 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
(later as requested)
Sat & Sun: as requested

NEW MEDIA CENTER
Hurst Hall 212, x2560
Mon - Thu: 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Fri: 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Sun: noon - 11:00 p.m.

SOCIAL SCIENCE
RESEARCH LAB (SSRL)
Hurst Hall 202, x3862
Mon - Thu: 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Fri: 9:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Sat: noon - 7:00 p.m.
Sun: 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION LAB
Ward Sub Terrace, x3866
Mon - Thu: 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Fri: 9:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Sat: noon - 7:00 p.m.

STARS LAB (for students)
Hughes Hall - First floor, x3709
Open 24 hours, staffed:
Mon - Thu: 6:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Sat - Sun: 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers (Twelfth Edition)

By Heather McDonald
*Assistant Manager, Faculty Corner*

As this newsletter goes to press, I'm reviewing my syllabus and evaluating what needs to stay, what needs to be tweaked, and what needs to go. I can't think of a better time to come across *McKeachie's Teaching Tips*.

McKeachie originally wrote this for his own teaching assistants and new teachers; yet *McKeachie's Teaching Tips* is not limited to this audience. New adjuncts and tenured faculty alike will benefit from McKeachie's questions to evaluate how they conduct classes and courses, as well as from suggestions for further reading. McKeachie's approach to teaching is "learner-centered", a term which "may appear to diminish the importance of the teacher. Not so!" He writes that "Your unique qualities as a person, your integrity, your commitment to your students' development – these are even more important than they were when the teacher's role was simply that of a talking textbook." McKeachie believes that while not everyone is a born teacher, anyone can learn to be a good teacher. This essential volume creates ways to see one's teaching goals – whatever your subject, style, or career stage – in a new light.

While the focus of the book is on teaching, McKeachie addresses issues surrounding teaching at a university, such as the ever-present research vs. pedagogy debate, and ways of managing (or managing *being*) a teaching assistant. Rather than defining good teaching, or describing what worked in his classroom, McKeachie outlines many components of teaching and provides several ways of approaching those components. While reading, I felt like I was sitting down with a mentor and colleague for a cup of coffee – not reading a manual.

The book's organization makes it accessible for quick reference. There are sections dedicated to the practical aspects of the classroom, as well as understanding students and yourself as a teacher. Additionally, McKeachie includes not just his own experiences and research; several chapters in this edition are by other professors.

McKeachie will lead an interactive workshop at AU entitled "How to Evaluate Teaching" on Friday, Sept. 28, from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., in MGC 4, 5, 6. All are encouraged to attend.
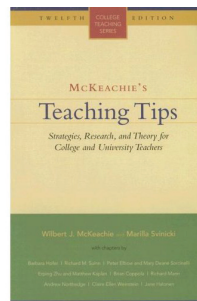
McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College University Teachers by Wilbert James McKeachie and Marilla Svinicki; Houghton Mifflin, 2005; 407 pages; $48.76

Blackboard in New Ways

more of a hub" for the journal editors.

Other departments are also using Blackboard creatively. The College Writing Program has a site for faculty that allows them to share lesson plans, syllabi, guidelines, and tips. The Department of Language and Foreign Studies has created online "libraries" for different languages. If you have a need that you believe could be met by using a Blackboard administrative course, contact Jim McCabe at x2553 to discuss the possibilities.

The Faculty Corner
Computers, couches, and free coffee...what could be better? Visit Hurst 204-B, x2734