UNDERGRADUATE AQUACULTURE EDUCATION DISCUSSED AT WAS MEETING - Mathew Landau, NAMS

On January 24, Matthew Landau attended the annual meeting of the World Aquaculture Society (WAS), held in Orlando, FL. For the previous 14 months, Matthew had been organizing a symposium, “Employment and training – what’s the relationship?” and was the symposium moderator as well as giving the introductory presentation. Several years ago, Matthew organized a similar symposium on general principles of aquaculture education for the WAS meeting in Las Vegas, NV. It was extremely well attended, and most of the speakers published their presentations in a special issue of one of the society’s journals, World Aquaculture.

The 2001 symposium concerned the link between training/education and future employment in the aquaculture industry. Matthew invited speakers from the aquaculture education community (Dr. Megan Davis, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute; Dr. Christopher Kohler, Southern Illinois University; Dr. Bill Falls, Hillsborough Community College; Dr. Arnold Eversole, Clemson University; and Dr. John Ney III, Southern Maine Technical College), as well as members of the industry (Tim Zeigler, Zeigler Brothers, Inc.; Bob Heideman, Aquatic Eco-Systems; Josh Goldman, Fins Technology, LLC; Dr. Maxwell Mayeaux, USDA/CSREES/PAS) who spoke to a large group about what they look for in prospective employees. Following the formal presentations, a roundtable discussion was held, which was again moderated by Matthew.

Matthew has been asked to write, with his co-author Dr. John Branch Scarpa, a molluscan geneticist from Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, a series of articles on "Demonstrations and Laboratory Exercises in Aquaculture" for World Aquaculture. The editors will accept the series of about 8 to 10 papers over the next 3 years. The purpose of this series will be to present to aquaculture educators experiments that illustrate principles that impact aquaculture. These can be done as demonstrations, or as lab exercises. All the labs will carry a special footnote, “these labs may be copied for use in classrooms or other educational environments (copyright law still applies) without prior permission from authors, and we would appreciate receiving comments about these exercises.” The first of the series has already been submitted.

Feedback, Assessment And “Great Teaching”- Alan F. Arcuri

Teaching is a work in progress. All faculty can improve. How? One key that is often ignored is to gather information from students during a course. A mid-course correction could improve both learning and teaching. Stockton has a critical mass of wonderful classroom professors. Yet, both teaching “stars” and colleagues new to the classroom can sharpen their skills. If teaching is an art, the artist never should be satisfied with his/her performance.

A mid-term evaluation has a lot of merit. There are many different evaluation forms. They all should be administered strictly on a voluntary basis. Students should be guaranteed anonymity and be allowed to take the forms home and use their printer. If students’ comments cluster, they may be worth a close look. You may, for example, be lecturing a bit fast. Alternatively students may complain about your lecturing when facing the blackboard, or not being able to hear questions raised by classmates. A friendly tip, always repeat and frame student questions, allowing the entire class to benefit. Small missteps then can be easily corrected.

If, on the other hand, comments deal with “teacher is unorganized” or “lectures are confusing,” then faculty attention could focus on distributing outlines, and providing more frequent reviews. My own Stockton experience of serving many times on the Faculty Review Committee is revealing. A frequent and potentially serious complaint reported by students completing the SET forms deals with lack of organization. Organization, clarity and sequence, then, are pivotal characteristics of a course. A brief outline written on the board before class begins, and a summary

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of important teaching points at the end of class frequently help students. One method of mid-term evaluation is used by a senior colleague with a very strong reputation for teaching excellence. He uses a brief mid-term evaluation every semester. His response rate is near 100% because he makes the evaluation part of a homework assignment, and even gives each student a 10-point bonus for early completion. Further, he pleads with students to make extensive comments. After submission, the anonymous responses are shuffled in front of the students to assure that he is not secretly noting who submitted which evaluation.

Student feedback is a vital element in his successful teaching. This veteran classroom professor still makes changes, fine tunes, and acknowledges student comments and suggestions. He uses the format described below, which is part of a quiz.

“This part is to be done at home, anonymously, and handed in on _______ at the start of the quiz.”

“Please use the bottom of this page, the back of this page, and additional pages, if necessary.”

“Every effort is being made to give you the best possible course on a course that is enjoyable, informative, instructive, and explain the world around us. But the vital question is what you think about the course and what you are getting out of it. Please comment in detail about all the aspects of the course. Do not hesitate to praise or to condemn. Please be specific about what you like and dislike. Suggestions on improvement will be especially welcome. Many thanks for your feedback!”

The professor makes a special point to respond in class to specific suggestions. He wants to assure his students that their comments are taken seriously. He is not merely paying lip service to suggestions. Other faculty at Stockton also use a variety of mid-term evaluations. One colleague, for example, uses a simple take-home question. “Please list three things about the class that you like and three things that you do not like (or that do not ‘work’ for you”).” Then she responds to these points in an open class discussion.

“Fast feedback” is another variety of student assessment. It might be useful in large classes where students are often reluctant to ask questions. Students are asked to respond to two questions: “What was the muddiest point in the lecture?” “What was the most important thing you learned during this class?” In another class period a professor might ask. How was the pace of the class?” In my class, student feedback over the years, for example, has urged me to slow down in delivering lectures.

For the bold, ask a colleague to attend several of your classes (unannounced). Colleagues often provide valuable insights in criticizing how lectures are presented and received. Videotape assessment can also be very helpful. Indeed, one scholar commented, “I would no more work with instructors without using video than I would attempt to teach biology without a microscope.”

In summary, it is very difficult to improve your teaching or become a master teacher without feedback. Great teaching is much more than improving teaching techniques and rich content. Great teachers seem to be always learning, inspiring, experimenting, --and-- reaching out for feedback.

Teaching Techniques from our program-Ken Harrison

By way of introduction, while Economics has around thirty majors, we are primarily a service program with courses required by other programs both in and out of the division of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Our six-member faculty delivers a large number of seats to the college and endorses a "non-boatload" model for our courses; hence we are interested in efficient teaching methods. Recently I polled the members of our program to elicit feedback for teaching techniques that could be shared with other faculty. What follows is a short list of some of the pedagogical techniques that the program has assembled. It must be noted that the program strongly supports the WAC and QUAD initiatives as well as the Teaching Institute.

1. Make use of tutors. We use our very best majors to assist introductory students with problem solving and any assignment resubmits.

2. Use group quizzes. Much can be accomplished (gender/race pair ups) beyond just grading a smaller number of quizzes.

3. Use short research projects or papers. Much of the corporate and non-profit sectors write short and there is not much call, beyond the traditional Ph.D. thesis, for long writing. Some of us use either shorthand or a "make it better" model to resist the urge for copious comments.
The Dark Side of the Web: Combating Cybercheating - Mary Ann Trail

Mary Ann Trail, Educational Program Coordinator for the Library, gave a brief workshop on cybercheating at the ETTC Conference, "From My Classroom to Yours a Teacher to Teacher Conference". The goal of this workshop was to show how the Internet could be used to plagiarize work and explore some of the ways a classroom teacher might combat this unfortunate use of technology.

Below are some of the WEBSITES used in the presentation.

Selected Term Paper Mills or 'EXAMPLE' Sites

http://research-assistance.com/
http://www.papers24-7.com/
http://schoolscucks.com/
http://www.integreguard.com/
http://www.cheathouse.com/uk/index.html
http://www.researchcentral.com/
http://www.12000papers.com
http://www.cheathouse.com/uk/index.html

As much as we would like technology to be the cure, it is still the non-technological guidance given by the classroom teacher, both in how the assignment is structured and in how the school policies are enforced. Some Suggestions to Reduce Plagiarism are listed below.

The first line of defense
Structuring the assignment to reduce plagiarism

- Be clear about standards, use the Student Handbook, be certain all students understand what acceptable collaboration, quoting, paraphrasing and plagiarism mean.

- Use topics that can limit plagiarism, use a new set of topics for each class, develop a set of specific topics rather than letting students choose whatever, assign very narrowly focused topics, use very, very current topics.

- Manage the process with a series of steps with checkpoints. Require each step to be turned in with supporting documentation, have students turn in rough drafts, the type of material not available from term paper mills.

Precautions: (contd)
Precautions

- Keep a writing portfolio for comparison purposes
- Tell them you have the portfolio and what for
- Tell students you will be checking random citations.
- Do not put papers on a course web site where they might be copied in the future.
- Vary the length of the papers, with maybe several short papers under 6 pages in length.
- Check the working bibliography early in the assignment. Continue to review it periodically.
- Require copies of all materials found on the Internet.
- Require that all of the resources be current, most from the last two or three years unless there is a valid reason to use older materials.
- Assign one or more specific references that must be integrated into the text of the paper and referenced in the bibliography; these should be ones not likely to be found in papers from the Internet
- Require a search strategy telling where and how each source was found.
- If the paper includes some citations to Internet articles, visit those URLs to see if the whole paper is there. It is not uncommon for students to quote and cite a sentence or two and then continue to copy verbatim from the text.

ISCT Technology News:

As part of Integrating Technology into the classroom curriculum we have created handouts for the software, Adobe Premiere. The handouts explain about how to capture a video and also edit the clipping.

Handouts on the basics of Macromedia's Authorware have also been made. Both handouts will be available to faculty on request or at the Pedagogy technology Lab at F 211.

We have also created a CD ROM tutorial on Macromedia's Dreamweaver using Lotus ScreenCam. Copies of the CD-ROM will be available on request by calling Ext. 6098. Web CT tutorials are also available on request.

Upcoming Conferences:

- Lilly Atlantic Conference on College Teaching
  Towson, MD. 4/27/01-4/29/01
- AAHE, Denver, CO. National conference, 4/24/01-4/26/01.
- Pace University, Center for Case Studies-Vancouver, BC. 8/10/01-8/16/01

Scholarship

Presentations

April 12th Stockton Day of Scholarship
ISCT Director Sonia Gonsalves and student intern Dina Gruberger will present the results of their research study “Students’ Perceptions of Test Validity” at the Stockton Day of Scholarship on April 12 at 10:30-12:30 in the West Quad Room 103. Another ISCT presentation will take place between 2:30 and 4:20 PM in West Quad room 123, when Sonia Gonsalves-ISCT, Steve Kubricki-PROS and Lyn Mathis-PROS, will present “Student Errors as Diagnostic feedback.

Recent Publications


You can get copies of both these articles from the ISCT.