

Teaching and Learning Summit draws out ideas

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<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/1416/teaching-and-learning-summit-draws-out-ideas/>

The Opening Reception and Plenary Speaker for the 2008 Provost's Teaching and Learning Summit, Sharing Expectations for Student Writing and Speaking, was held Oct. 27. Provost Al Hartman welcomed students and faculty, linking the Summit theme to liberal education reform and the recently adopted UW Oshkosh Learning Outcomes.

Recognition was provided for many scholarly teaching endeavors, with a Scholar Spotlight for Mark Lattery. Dr Lattery is contributing author to a just-released, Carnegie-recommended book entitled Exploring Signature Pedagogies. Chancellor Wells introduced the plenary speaker, David Mulroy, author of The War Against Grammar. Following Mulroy's thought-provoking presentation, dialogue was held among the 63 faculty, staff and student participants. Feedback from attendees emphasized the value of student participation in these dialogues, including Bala Thiagarajan's biology class as well as several communication students.

Participants in these round table dialogues responded to the question, "How can sharing expectations enable us to address the teaching and learning challenge of student writing at UW Oshkosh? A strong consensus emerged: the collaborative creation of shared expectations for student writing is needed.

Related suggestions emanated from the small and large group dialogues included:

- Universal standards that faculty and students understand (for writing, speaking and all the learning outcomes; in General Education courses and across the curriculum).
- Shared expectations can increase students' comfort in the classroom and thereby create more motivation among students to complete assignments due to increased confidence in their abilities.
- Faculty need for confidence and competence in teaching writing across the curriculum (faculty development activities, feedback mechanism assistance, etc.).
- Student need for clarity regarding expectations; confusion (from class to class, professor to professor) does not serve learning, motivation, or confidence in this area.
- Faculty responsibility for provision of instructive feedback to student writing (across all disciplines).
- Creation of a condensed rubric with common core elements (utilized and augmented across departments, disciplines, programs and assignments)
- On-going discussion of connection of grades and communication of expectation related to quality of papers (and speeches).
- Need for departments to begin these conversations: discussing, deciding, and sharing expectations for student writing with students.
- Standardization of expectations across the curriculum could serve student learning
- A version of Mulroy's recommended "Daily Grammar Practice" should be implemented and investigated for its potential effect on student learning.

According to Lori Carrell, Coordinator of the Center for Scholarly Teaching, the goal of the Summit is to “learn something”. Carrell says, “We’re hopeful that the dialogue we have about these issues that matter to our teaching community will serve as a catalyst for research and teaching endeavors – and that our learning will ultimately impact the student learning.”

For the full schedule of events, visit

www.uwosh.edu/grants/documents/CSt%20Summit%20Schedule1.doc.