

UW Oshkosh scholarly teachers go global

by Kira-Lynn Reeves - Tuesday, April 06, 2010

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/2610/uw-oshkosh-scholarly-teachers-go-global/>

Nine members of the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh teaching community are expanding their research agendas, participating in a new study and embarking on an international collaboration project with the University of Glasgow in Scotland — all without having to leave campus.

The project, organized in conjunction with the University of Wisconsin System office and professors from the University of Glasgow, has connected 15 Wisconsin participants with counterparts in the UK who have similar research interests in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL).

The SOTL movement — the study of teaching and learning in higher education — is an international movement, as evidenced by the International Society of SOTL, International SOTL journal, and International SOTL conferences. Titled “Transatlantic SOTL Conversations: Fostering Collaboration in SoTL through Facilitated SOTL Partnerships,” the project is providing a unique opportunity for UW Oshkosh professors to participate in and study SOTL work.

Teri Shors, who teaches biology and microbiology at UW Oshkosh, has partnered with a Scottish SOTL scholar who is relatively new to teaching and is implementing more technology in the classroom than her peers.

“I’ve been able to offer my support and expertise to her since we use similar technologies,” Shors said. “I’ve met an amazingly dedicated, hardworking instructor via this partnership.”

Over the next year, participants will correspond electronically about current SOTL challenges, resources and practices. They also are encouraged to initiate a SOTL research project with their overseas colleagues. In addition, e-mail correspondences will serve as data for a larger research project about international SOTL collaboration being conducted by the UW System SOTL Leadership Site.

Jennifer Mihalick, associate professor of chemistry at UW Oshkosh, was paired with another beginner in SOTL research who has very similar academic interests.

“Although we have been corresponding for only a short time, I expect that having a knowledgeable person to bounce ideas off will be very helpful to both of us,” Mihalick said.

Professors from the other side of the pond also are excited about the prospects of the collaboration.

“In this project, I think we have been given a wonderful opportunity to get to know people across the globe, who probably are doing remarkably similar things in education,” said Sheena Bell of the University of Glasgow’s Business School, who is working with UW Oshkosh’s Karen King, associate professor of public affairs.

Other UW Oshkosh faculty who are participating in “Transatlantic SOTL Conversations” include Heike Alberts, geography; Elizabeth Alderton, reading education; program coordinator Lori Carrell, communication; Karen Gibson, education; Jordan Landry, English; Yoko Mogi-Hein, education; and Bonnie Schmidt, nursing.