

# Center for Teaching Excellence

*This is the ninth of a series of newsletters encouraging faculty enrichment and excellence in teaching by announcing opportunities, sharing ideas, and promoting collaboration.*

***It is not too late to sign up for this opportunity!***

## ***Workshop on Teaching Writing***

***May 6***

***8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.***

***Dresher Campus, LC159***

***Dr. Lee Ann Carroll, Professor of English and Director of Composition, and Dr. Theresa Flynn, Director of the Writing Center and the Junior Writing Portfolio, will offer a one-day intensive workshop on the effective teaching of writing in all academic disciplines.***

### ***Topics to be covered:***

- *developing assignments,*
- *responding to assignments,*
- *evaluating assignments,*
- *other valuable teaching tips.*

- ❖ *This workshop will be designed primarily for those who teach courses which are designated as “writing intensive.” Each of these faculty members is urged to attend.*
- ❖ *All pre-tenure faculty members are especially encouraged to participate.*
- ❖ *All faculty are invited and will benefit tremendously.*

***In association with the California Writing Project, Dr. Carroll has conducted numerous workshops on the teaching of writing for teachers K-University in California and nationally. She is the author of the book Rehearsing New Roles: How College Students Develop as Writers which is based on a longitudinal study of Pepperdine University students across academic majors.***

***Each person who participates will be given these texts:***

- *Dr. Carroll's book, Rehearsing New Roles: How College Students Develop as Writers,*
- *John C. Bean's Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom,*
- *Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein's They Say I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing.*

*Lunch will be provided as well as a modest stipend.*

***It is not too late to sign up for this opportunity!***

Center for Teaching Excellence  
**Service-learning Mini-Grants**  
**Call for Proposals**

Eligible Semesters: Fall 2008 and Spring 2009

Awards: Up to \$750 per faculty per semester

Application Process

Please submit the following:

- Copy of course syllabus (or description if course is new)
- Detailed description of the service-learning component and how it will further the learning objectives of the course and fit the mission of the University
- Description of how you plan to use the funds
- Submit your application to Dr. Jeff Banks at [jeff.banks@pepperdine.edu](mailto:jeff.banks@pepperdine.edu) or via campus mail to the Humanities Division.

Timeline

Applications are due by May 1, 2008

Recipients will also have access to:

- Service-learning orientation if requested
- Assessment and publication resources
- Conference information

Those faculty funded will be required to submit a written assessment and student reflections at the end of the semester. More details will be provided at a later date.

**If you have any questions, please contact:**

**Jeff Banks**  
**310-506-7231**

**Regan Schaffer**  
**310-506-7458**

[Jeff.Banks@pepperdine.edu](mailto:Jeff.Banks@pepperdine.edu)  
[Regan.Schaffer@pepperdine.edu](mailto:Regan.Schaffer@pepperdine.edu)

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*This is being sponsored by Carrie Birmingham from Teacher Education!*

## SYMPOSIUM ANNOUNCEMENT

Heritage Hall  
May 8, 2008  
9am – 4pm

This will be a series of discussions exploring issues regarding the intersection of  
Teacher Preparation and Christian faith:

- **What is distinctive about Teacher Preparation in a Christian university?**
- **What is distinctive about the work of an individual Christian teacher educator in a secular university?**
- **How is Christian faith relevant in the world of accountability, assessments, and accreditation?**
- **How does Christian faith relate to the preparation of teachers for public schools?**

**Join colleagues from around California for structured discussions on these topics. Share your ideas, make connections, challenge your understanding, and come away with new initiatives for your teaching, program development, and scholarship.**

Please register by May 1

To register or to ask questions, please contact Carrie Birmingham.  
[carrie.birmingham@pepperdine.edu](mailto:carrie.birmingham@pepperdine.edu) or 310-506-7405

- breakfast and lunch provided
- diverse perspectives welcome
- no cost

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Professional and Organizational Development (POD)  
Network

&  
The National Council for Staff, Program and Organizational Development  
(NCSPOD)

**2008 POD Network/NCSPOD Conference**  
**October 22-25, 2008**  
**The Nugget Resort**  
**Reno, Nevada, U.S.A.**

Please join us in exploring the theme of weaving patterns of practice.  
<http://podnetwork.org/conferences/2008/>

*The Center for Teaching Excellence can pay your way to this conference!*  
*Make plans to attend!*

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### *Faculty Colloquium*

*Thursday afternoon, April 17*  
*4:00 p.m.*

*Kresge Room in Payson Library*

*Dan Caldwell, Distinguished Professor of Political Science, will present a lecture entitled "The Legitimation of the Nixon-Kissinger Grand Design."*

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*For fall semester:*

*A Reading Group led by Maire Mullins discussing Drew Faust's book on the Civil War: The Republic of Suffering.*

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*If you have ideas for fall semester or questions about any of these opportunities, please email me.*  
[constance.fulmer@pepperdine.edu](mailto:constance.fulmer@pepperdine.edu)

*Here are some thoughts about ways to have peers assess group work in your classes from Shelley Reid, Director of Composition at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.*

I've generally found that I get more useful responses, particularly from undergraduates, when I ask for facts more than judgments. My mid-project and final-project reports often ask students just to *\*list\** what each group member, including themselves, has done: attended meetings, written paragraphs, assembled resources, come up with ideas, organized the data, designed the handout, etc.

Sometimes I'll hand out a grid, listing group members' names down one axis and project elements across another, sometimes with space for groups to add their own criteria; if I want just yes/no, I can have students check or leave blank a spot on the grid, and if I want a little more judgment, I can ask students to use a check-minus / check / check-plus system. This is a *\*very\** quick form to fill out, and can be totally anonymous; I've used this strategy for small projects such as a 5-minute class presentation.

Along these lines, a colleague of mine, Sara Mitcho, discovered recently that when she asked each group member to create a simple pie chart showing what proportion of the work each student in the group did, she got more interesting and, she suspects, more accurate results. Even students whose narratives said "we all did equal work" sometimes created pie charts that showed significant disparities of workload. It would seem that something about having to move to the visual and/or numerical representation nudged participants toward a more specific accounting. I'm trying this approach for the first time this semester.

For longer group projects, I have sometimes stated directly that I prefer an imperfect project that has involved all group members' contributions to a perfect project that has been dominated (or "polished up") by a single member, and invite participants to explain a situation to me if they feel their project fits this category. ("I wanted just to rewrite so-and-so's part because I know it's not so good, but I didn't.") I have also sometimes asked group members if they would like to recognize the efforts of a peer who has gone "above and beyond" the general workload *\*\*without\*\** taking over the project. Since I usually give split grades, individual/group, I can sometimes reward these contributions.

Just one more note: colleagues of mine who do group projects a lot recommend having groups *\*start\** by writing up a group contract and setting their own performance criteria, deadlines, and consequences for group members who fall behind. (A full class discussion about possible elements of such a contract can help give all students a working collaboration vocabulary.) Even a minimalist contract can help ease tensions to start with; a group that's struggling can be asked to first go back to their contract and try to resolve a problem that way; and the contract discussion lays a better foundation for later individual assessments than any teacher-created form could do.

*If you have ideas or suggestions along this line, please share them!*