



ATLE
 Academy for Teaching and
 Learning Excellence
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CO-DIRECTORS

Dr. Steve Edison
 Dr. Dave McAlpine
 Dr. Carol Thompson

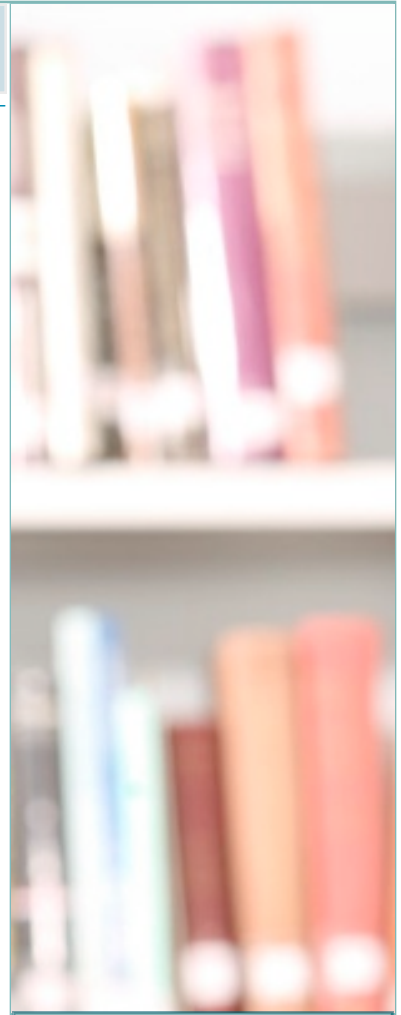
**ATLE
 THE ACADEMY FOR TEACHING AND
 LEARNING EXCELLENCE**

ATLE Awards Distinguished Teaching Fellows



Front, left to right: Rosalie Cheatham, Stephanie Harvey
 Back: David Briscoe, Alan Lytle, Jim Fulmer

ATLE awarded the first UALR Distinguished Teaching Fellows to five faculty members at its Annual Report Luncheon in May 2009. The recipients, Rosalie Cheatham, International and Second Language Studies; Stephanie Harvey, Information Technology; (Continued on page 2.)



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UPCOMING EVENTS

October 14
 Syllabus Workshop
 DSC room G
 11:30 a.m.- 1 p.m.

October 26
 Teaching Demo
 DSC room G
 11:30 a.m.- 1 p.m.

November 11
 Teaching Demo
 DSC room G
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Continued

David Briscoe, Sociology & Anthropology; Alan Lytle, Intensive English Language; and Jim Fulmer, Mathematics & Statistics, received a bronze medallion in recognition of their active commitment to teaching excellence, demonstrated by participation and presentation at ATLE events and in scholarly publications during the academic year.

The UALR Distinguished Teaching Fellows award may also serve as quantifiable evidence of an instructor's teaching focus for tenure and promotion decisions. Instructors who demonstrate a commitment to continued growth in teaching excellence can qualify for the award by accruing points with ATLE through a combination of activities within a single academic year. Visit the ATLE website for more information on the award, a list of qualifying activities, and a tracking form: www.ualr.edu/teachingacademy

“What we learn to do, we learn by doing.” -- Thomas Jefferson

ATLE Welcomes New Co-director



The Academy for Teaching and Learning Excellence warmly welcomes our newest member of the team to promote dialogue about teaching and learning on campus, Dr. Steve Edison.

Steve replaces our friend and colleague, Dr. Michael Kleine, as one of the three directors for ATLE. Coming from the marketing department Steve brings to us a fresh perspective on our growing Academy. Already, in the short time that Steve has been with us on the team, we are working on new plans to promote our already successful Teaching Academy even further.

Steve has won the Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award for his innovative approaches in the classroom, such as using role plays, quizzes and other active exercises to involve students even more in their own practical learning. Additionally Steve brings his experience in the private sector in marketing and sales. The Academy welcomes him, and we look forward to a fruitful year of innovation and success!

Dave McAlpine and Carol Thompson

Reflections From Our Co-Directors

I am proud to be associated with ATLE and am looking forward to my third year as a Co-director and to be working once again with Dr. Carol Thompson and our new Co-director, Dr. Steve Edison. Please stop by our ATLE office located on the main floor of Dickinson Hall, directly behind the auditorium.

How did you spend your summer away from full-time teaching? Did you recharge your batteries and accomplish all those academic and life tasks that you never can find time for during the nine-month school year?

My summer was somewhat normal and at the same time inspirational. I taught two sections of Spanish online during summer II and am amazed at the 24/7 demands that teaching online generates. I also found time in SS II to travel to Washington, DC, in order to serve on an Audit Team that reviewed over sixty program reviews from the spring submissions to the ACTFL/NCATE Program Review process. I spent an extra day in DC serving on an NCATE team representing the foreign language profession that is developing a paradigm for MAT programs that submit Program Reviews to NCATE.

A wonderful week in Disney World with our five-year-old grandson and weekend trips to two out-of-town weddings provided needed getaways from academia.

My most memorable experience this summer was being asked to do a week-long training for foreign language professors from Nangahar University in Afghanistan. The training was held at SDSU in San Diego, California, and was sponsored by a grant from the World Bank. The WB is attempting to build an infrastructure in Afghanistan so that one day they could be self-sustaining.

The professors who participated are in their third year of training to learn how to set up a BA degree in foreign languages and then follow that with an MA. Somehow I feel I learned more from these men than I provided them! The Department Chair from Nangahar told me that he works from 8:00 to noon Monday through Friday and then after lunch goes to the University Medical Center where he works until 8:00 PM as a cardiologist. On the weekends he provides free medical assistance to needy residents in this area located in the heart of Taliban-ruled Afghanistan.

The professors told me of their daily fear of being blown up by a bomb while at the University and of their attempts to get the Chancellor to fortify the campus for their protection and that of the 8000 students. I learned that they have no women faculty members in the foreign language department and that it is a year and a half process to get one hired. If and when they find a woman for their faculty, she will not be able to attend faculty meetings and will have to observe through closed circuit TV.

The men also told me that they do not have daily Internet access and that the Internet is “opened” for them at times. I also learned to adjust my training to their rather long “tea breaks” and their need to be back at their apartments for prayer time.

All in all it was a great experience and I returned to UALR with a new respect for the freedoms we have as professors here in this country. Somehow the issues that once seemed to frustrate me seem to pale in comparison to what my colleagues around the world are experiencing as they attempt to teach at their institutions.

Let's be thankful for the professional development opportunities we have here at UALR that help make us better teachers for UALR's students. Have a great year!

Dave

(Continued on page 4.)

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Summer, 2009

My Trip to University of Gloucestershire, UK

On the way back from a conference in Maynooth, Ireland, I rode the ferry across the Irish sea and found my way to the University of Gloucestershire in Cheltenham, England. My contact person, James Derounian, was a popular speaker at one of the ATLE events in April of 2009, and I was intrigued with how active learning was perceived in Great Britain and further, I wanted to see CeAL, or the Center for Active Learning on campus.

The University of Gloucestershire has a mixed student body of traditional, nontraditional and international students. Encompassing about a city block, the university grew from a religious institution to a fully developed university and has its own mixture of charm blending older buildings with the new. James was a terrific host and marshaled me through the maze of buildings to the newly constructed building devoted entirely to the British version of active learning, CeAL.

How the university defines and practices active learning was most intriguing. A rough equivalent on our campus is our service learning program, or programs found in departments such as Speech Communication that work intimately with nonprofits, community leaders and governmental agencies to provide students with the experience they need to understand how practice, theory and content converge. At the University of Gloucestershire the focus is placed, according to their brochures, “on inquiry in the field, studio, laboratory and classroom using real sites, community-related and employer-linked activities.” More than learning by doing, this active learning approach “enables students to construct theoretical understanding through reflection on practical activities.”

The program is developed around a community of learners where all students, including the instructor, problem-solve together. One feature that may be of interest to UALR is the joint student projects that involve institutions in England and ten universities overseas. At some point UALR could become a part of this interlinking effort so that our students might work with students in Gloucestershire for mutual benefit. Essentially, the active learning program makes contributions to what their faculty terms “evidence-based” learning through active learning practices and research.

Kolb’s learning model provides the frame for the program. The model asks the student to experience, generalize, reflect and test. At each stage in the learning model students participate in projects in the community and in other organizations. As students come to each stage of the Kolb model, they perform practical assignments that enhance their learning and pull them deeper into course content, requiring students to apply their knowledge from the course to develop new and creative ways to solve problems.

In their state of the art CeAL building devoted to active learning, students research topics, conference with their teams, work on solutions to problems and meet professionals from industry, community outreach groups, non-profit agencies, government agencies and other organizations. Through participating in these kinds of real world activities concepts, theories and other information from the course are embedded into the ultimate solutions they create.

In order to plan this type of course, faculty develop an inquiry-based planner that consists of three elements: 1) a checklist that encourages a focus on inquiry based approaches in course development, 2) a list of principles of good learning design that assist in the development of course modules or projects and 3) a plan for incorporating learning activities and the resources needed to fulfill the course design. Students who take the courses and work on real problems have access to computers, computer tablets, digital cameras, plasma screens and other hi-tech resources. Instructors work together to craft the plan for a single course, assisted by a tech person who helps realize the course through technology. The University of Gloucestershire is moving from WebCt based online courses to using the free Moodle online program to design the distance learning components of the program. (Continued on page 5.)

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The University of Gloucestershire has received numerous requests from other institutions to learn more. To respond to these inquiries, the university developed a Visiting Fellowship program. The ultimate goal of this program is to attract colleagues working in similar programs both in the UK and overseas to work with University of Gloucestershire staff in learning about and further developing this model of active learning. While this program is connected to institutions throughout the world, there is a link in the US at the Online Center for Global Geography Education, a consortium based at the Association of American Geographers (funded by the National Science Foundation), USA. They also have active links to the Carnegie Foundation for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the United States.

There is so much more to share about the program for active learning at the University of Gloucestershire in Cheltenham, England. The program works to marry course content with practical experience in order to solve actual problems. It also promotes service learning as an active component in all courses while establishing connections for international collaboration. I came away impressed.

Carol

Below, Susanne Wagner shares what teaching means to her.

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

Susanne Wagner

At the beginning of my teaching career, I asked an experienced TA how to become a successful teacher. He answered: “Keep them [students] under control.” While I am not sure if he was referring to power over the students, I interpret his statement the following way: Successful teaching is to captivate students and help them to enjoy the learning process. In return students will show active participation, independent thinking, and creativity.

HIGH ENERGY LEVEL, ENTHUSIASM, AND COMMITMENT TO MY STUDENTS

I am confident that students, who see my passion for the subject, will inevitably be affected by this energy, and will engage themselves more actively in the learning process. I strive to create an appropriate affective filter. My genuine concern for my students' progress, my respect and value of them as individuals, acknowledgement of their achievements in class, and the use of peer- and self-correction contribute to such an atmosphere. In my language teaching, I use the proficiency-oriented communicative approach, with the goal of guiding students towards a functional use of German.

Creativity is vital in teaching a foreign language. I believe one should teach in the target language from the start. This is not an easy task for students who encounter their first foreign language with this method of immersion. It is my responsibility as a teacher to put students at ease so that they can get the most out of the classroom time. As an effective teacher I have created ways to communicate information in German without resorting to the use of English. I integrate a variety of communicative and interactive activities that focus on the basic foreign language skills: speaking, reading, writing, listening, and culture. Dividing the class period in different types of smaller activities that require active participation by all guarantees a livelier class and a deeper learning level.

I am aware that most students take German to fulfill their language requirement – a fact that requires extra motivational effort to gain and keep students' interest. I bring in authentic ‘realia’, and use audio/visual material to make the class more interesting. A variety of contextualized activities using teaching technology when appropriate allow my students to connect language with real-life situations, an additional motivator. (Continued on page 6.)

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I actively involve students in the learning process, try to personalize material, and make it relevant to their lives. At the beginning of the semester, my students fill out questionnaires with personal information, which I draw upon during the course of the semester. Most of all, I encourage humor in the classroom. It is important to have fun while learning and to give strong positive re-enforcement: it is better to use phrases such as *ausgezeichnet*, *sehr gut*, and *wunderbar* than *ok* and *hm-hm* (I realized this while taking Italian). I comment and build on students' responses. I show my interest and respect by incorporating key elements of a student's response when continuing to discuss the point. By referring to the specific student, I give credit where credit is due.

Commitment to my students is the third trait that marks me as a teacher. In my understanding the learning process is not restricted to the classroom nor does it end with the final exam. My students know that I always have time for them and that I want them to succeed. I stress the importance of office visits both to me and to them. My ultimate objective is to serve as a guide for my students and to provide them with the tools they need to communicate effectively in German. I view foreign languages as an opportunity to integrate multiculturalism in a global world, to open my students up to other cultures and nations, to help them become tolerant independent thinkers.

My teaching philosophy is fundamentally optimistic. I believe that every student will be able to overcome difficulties that the study of German might present. That is, each student will be guaranteed the opportunity to express herself/himself. One of my best qualities as a teacher is my ability to inspire my students to try their best and to aim high. Just as I expect each student to participate equally, I do not overlook weaker students. Rather, I try to include them as well as possible in class discussions, check in with them frequently, and offer extra support: I never give up on a student and in return do not want my students to ever be satisfied with a low grade. I have high yet attainable standards for them and for me as a teacher. At the beginning of the class, I clearly state my expectations and make the grading system available.

I understand that students learn best when motivated, comfortable, and treated with respect. In my teaching evaluations, many students refer to the class as a "family". My students create a sense of community through in-class activities such as interviews, role-plays, and group work that leads to peer-support and team spirit outside the classroom. I believe students learn best through hands-on learning. I therefore implement *Darstellendes Spiel* into the class period.

When it comes to the instruction of German literature and culture, I believe that, in addition to the environment described above, it is of the utmost importance that students express their ideas unreservedly. My courses are characterized by a shared respect of all viewpoints and observations. I do not claim to have the 'one and only' interpretation of a literary work and I do not ask my students to regurgitate my ideas. Instead, I share a variety of possible interpretations, because I believe that intellectual growth is a road from reading and description to new conceptualizations of a given topic. I therefore treat my classes as intellectually demanding as my own research and try to incorporate part of my scholarship into the classroom.

In my teaching, I always have the learner in mind. I alter and assess my teaching style to the needs of the class. Having had my share of good and bad foreign language teachers, I know how important it is to teach to the learner. I utilize these experiences and students' feedback to stay alert. Teaching improvement, in my understanding, is an ongoing process: I take teachers' workshops, observe professors I admire, seek feedback from students and peers alike, and am looking for new teaching resources in an ongoing effort to improve my teaching. I care deeply about teaching. My students' progress is of utmost importance to me. I believe there is a link between the quality of teaching and the students' learning.

In conclusion, if my students were to fall asleep in the back of the class I would clearly have lost 'control'. However, if I have touched the lives of my students, helped them to become independent and critical thinkers, which will help them succeed in an increasingly globalized society, I succeeded as a teacher and have 'kept them under control.'

How Has ATLE Impacted Your Pedagogy?

More comments from faculty. Thanks to all those who responded last semester. If you didn't, it's not too late to do so.

“I attended three of the teaching and learning sessions, and they were all excellent. It made me very proud of UALR to know that we have all this going on, because, like many others, I tend to stay in my own area and not have the opportunity to interact with instructors from across the campus. I not only enjoyed the presentations, but meeting the other attendees was nice. I also really enjoyed hearing Ken Bain’s talk on *What the Best College Teachers Do*, and I’m still pondering how to incorporate his information into the courses I teach. You are all doing an excellent job, and I look forward to learning more in the fall.” ---- *Nancy G Wood*

I would like to thank the directors of the Teaching Academy for their work in offering faculty opportunities to learn and about teaching and to share our thoughts with each other. Michael, Dave, and Carol have created a warm, friendly environment in which faculty members feel comfortable sharing and participating in discussions. I joined the faculty at UALR this past fall, and the directors came to faculty orientation to tell us about ATLE. I very much appreciate their taking time to do that. I probably would not have gotten involved if they had not come to orientation.

I have particularly enjoyed the teaching demonstrations. Each session, I learn something about different ways to engage students in the classroom. As a new faculty member, it has been nice to be able to see that there are many different effective ways of teaching. I have taken pieces of what I have learned from these demonstrations and used them in my classroom. For example, I have never tried using the Socratic method in my classroom. After participating in that demonstration and taking time afterwards to discuss it, I employed that method in one of my graduate classes – with great success.

I have also become more relaxed and approachable with my students. I think this is, in part, because I have become more comfortable with engaging students and with thinking about my own teaching. Again, I have seen that there are several paths to effective teaching – each of us needs to develop our own personal philosophy of teaching...

Thanks for all of your hard work. It is appreciated. ---- *Rebecca Kelly*

Visit ATLE's New Library

Browse, Borrow, Listen

ATLE now has a collection of books and DVDs on a variety of topics.

Books cover faculty development, student development, teaching and learning, and adult and continuing education. They are all listed in a brochure for your convenience and you may check them out for one-month periods.

DVDs include the Derek Bok Series on College Teaching as well as topics that will help to sharpen your skills for personal success. You can watch and listen in quiet at the office.

Teaching Demonstration

September 21, 2009

Gary L. Geissler, Ph.D.

Professor Geissler earned his Ph.D. from the University of Georgia in 1998. Prior to his doctoral work, Dr. Geissler worked in corporate America for eight years and as a Marketing Research Manager for U S West (now Qwest). In 2009, he was promoted to Full Professor.

Dr. Geissler has been honored to receive several international, national, and college teaching awards including the following:

- The 2009 Hormel Foods/Marketing Management Association Meritorious Teaching Award
- The 2004 and 2008 UALR College of Business Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award
- The 2007 International Society of Business Disciplines Teaching Excellence Award (open to professors from all business disciplines)
- The 2007 Sherwin Williams Distinguished Marketing Teacher Award finalist (considered by many to be a lifetime achievement award)
- The 2002 Prentice-Hall/American Marketing Association Award for Innovative Excellence in Marketing Education
- The 1997 University of Georgia Kathryn H. Hunnicutt Award for Teaching Excellence

He has taught 14 different marketing and advertising courses in his career. In addition, Dr. Geissler and his students have served the broader community by conducting more than 100 client-based, class projects for local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies during the past decade.

Professor Geissler's research interests include various advertising and consumer behavior issues, such as the Web as an advertising medium and relationship marketing tool and how consumers perceive and use the Internet. To date, Dr. Geissler has published twenty-five articles in numerous journals.

“You are all learners, doers, teachers.” -- Richard Bach

Calendar

Fall 2009

October 14

Syllabus Workshop
DSC room G
11:30 a.m. -1 p.m.

October 26

Teaching Demo
DSC room G
11:30 a.m. -1 p.m.

November 11

Teaching Demo
DSC room G
11:30 a.m. -1 p.m.

Join Us!

EVERY WEDNESDAY TO TALK ABOUT TEACHING

9:00 A.M. TO 10:00 A.M

Come join other faculty in discussions on classroom management, engaging students, or a variety of other topics. Coffee and pastries are available.

REMEMBER

Our website offers a variety of resources for the classroom, a chance to watch other teachers, our newsletters, and a calendar of events.

www.ualr.edu/teachingacademy