



## Who is teaching college teachers to teach adults?

**H**ow many college professors proceeded straight from an undergraduate institution, got their master's, then a doctorate, and stayed on in academia as a member of the faculty? Anyone with such a commitment to learning has surely mastered his subject matter. But over the course of eight years, did anyone teach him how to teach?

Are the college teaching ranks populated with under-prepared instructors, most of whom will merely repeat the paradigm they themselves encountered? Lecture, memorize, regurgitate, pop-quiz, mid-term, final. Done.

### Is adult learning theory merely theoretical?

There are quite a few academic experts whose subject matter is adult education. These students of andragogy know that adults learn differently than children, because adults bring their life experiences as voters, parents, employees to the classroom. Their experience shapes their attitudes toward learning itself, which can help or hinder their ability to connect classroom material and learning to their needs.

College instructors who know this can utilize a host of techniques that facilitate learning for adults. Tom Drummond, an adult education specialist at North Seattle Community College, classified a vast array of techniques into 12 categories. (See this column in *The Greentree Gazette*, March 2006). Dr. Carol Kasworm, head of adult and higher education at North Carolina State University, identified

five "voices" to help instructors recognize differences among adult learners and know which strategy motivates them (*The Greentree Gazette*, May 2006).

Are college instructors becoming 'andragogy proficient?' Are schools of education teaching andragogy in the U.S.?

### Is it widespread on university campuses?

Of the 2,500 U.S. Title IV degree-granting institutions, about 100 offer master's or doctoral degrees in adult education or some close variant. Many, but certainly not all, are slanted toward human resource development in a business setting.

According to Daniel Denecke, best practices director at the Council of Graduate Schools, the community colleges have taken the lead preparing adult educators because of their large adult populations. Universities have been slower to address the change in their student populations.

Most universities have a faculty development office with resources for instructors who are seeking consultation or materials. Many universities help Teaching Assistants (TAs) adjust to the classroom. This often takes the form of a one-day workshop staffed by professors and other TAs who have gone through the experience. The tenure process at some universities may require professors to develop a portfolio of achievements, including evidence of success as a classroom instructor.

Collaborative techniques like team teaching and mentoring and peer review are effective tools for improving teacher performance. However, at a university, these techniques are used more often in research projects than in classroom instruction.

In 2005, the University of North Carolina and its Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL) created a Certificate of Accomplishment in Teaching. UNC students must successfully complete six credit hours of teaching and be evaluated by a member of the faculty or FCTL staff. A graduate level course entitled "Teaching in College" is a requirement. Or the UNC student may opt to attend six workshops on topics related to teaching and learning; create a teaching portfolio

## 7 ways to improve instructor performance

1. **Teaching assistant orientation workshops**
2. **Faculty development workshops**
3. **Teacher portfolio reviews**
4. **Collaboration and peer review**
5. **Campuswide Preparing Future Faculty participation**
6. **Adult education certification**
7. **Advanced degrees in adult education**

and prepare a bibliography containing 20 or more sources on teaching and learning in higher education.

### Preparing future faculty

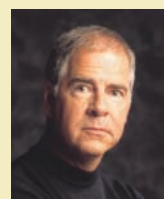
Because of increasing dissatisfaction with the job-readiness of new Ph.D.s, the Council of Graduate Schools and the Association of American Colleges and Universities launched "Preparing Future Faculty (PFF)" in 1993. Initially supported by grants from the Pew Charitable Trusts, the National Science Foundation and the Atlantic Philanthropies, PFF today influences 200,000 doctoral students on 295 participating campuses from Harvard to Howard and from the University of California to CUNY.

#### PFF Participants

- 43 Research institutions
- 21 Doctoral institutions
- 86 Master's degree institutions
- 65 Baccalaureate institutions
- 61 Associate's degree institutions
- 6 Specialized institutions

PFF participants observe and experience academic responsibilities at a variety of schools with varying missions, diverse student bodies and different expectations of faculty. Doctoral students have multiple mentors and are counselled not only on their research, but also for their teaching and service activities.

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## Maurer

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32,000 study-abroad students visiting for a semester or two, according to the British Council. Britain is the top destination for U.S. students studying abroad, and that has risen two percent in one year, reports the Institute of International Education. Italy, Spain, France and Australia round out the top five destinations for U.S. students.

International business, international relations and biology are high on the list of majors for study. Though English history had been a mainstay for recruitment, science and arts majors are growing, according to Donoghue.

### **New visa and enrollment systems make it simpler**

The U.K. has a visa process designed to speed entry decisions, weed out false applications and place increased obligations on U.K. businesses and universities to advance the process for students and immigrant workers. More than 80 existing work and study entry routes have been consolidated in five tiers. A point system is in place to reflect a visa applicant's aptitude, experience, age and need for his or her study major or occupational choice. A system of sponsorship by employers and educational institutions is in place. Categories where there has been previous abuse are flagged to ensure that migrants return home at the end of their stay.

Meanwhile, the Universities & Colleges Admissions Service ([www.UCAS.ac.uk](http://www.UCAS.ac.uk)) is a high tech, non-profit corporation located in Cheltenham Gloucestershire established by a consortium of universities to operate a web-based processing center for applications to any of the 180 universities. Students can designate up to six universities for their admissions request.

Summary statistics displayed on the UCAS web site report that 2.3 million applications were submitted by 522,000 applicants in 2005. Among the applicants, 405,000 (78 percent) received acceptances. UCAS also maintains "a statistical enquiry service to devise your own tables showing summary data by age, sex and region.

"The British Council does a good

job," says David Levin, senior program manager and diversity coordinator for the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. "The major difference between the U.K. and the U.S. is that education is a direct public service for the United Kingdom government, while in the U.S., it is a shared sponsorship among the states, localities and private resources," he explained.

The British are successfully leveraging their "unified, government" approach to international study, putting major resources behind it and growing their international student population by double digit increases. ■

## Robinson

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As good as this program is, it is a drop in the bucket. And according to Kathy Adams, a psychology professor at Guilford College. "The adult learner is only one potential audience; it is not the focus of PFF."

### **Show me the oversight**

Jane Leibbrand, vice president of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), which focuses on K-12 teacher education, says she is unaware of an equivalent organization that accredits college-level instructor programs. "Each college sets its own policies. Where's the oversight?"

Dr. Marsha Rossiter at the University of Wisconsin notes that the key accrediting bodies are slowly beginning to look at outcomes, using metrics like graduation rates and retention to monitor how well institutions are serving their students.

As millions of adult learners enter or re-enter college, will they be lectured in the same way they or their parents were a generation ago? Until universities accept the need to better balance teaching, research and service . . . until the accrediting bodies shift the emphasis from credentials to outcomes . . . and until adult students get "mad as hell," the pedagogical lecture will reign supreme on campus. ■

## Allan

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may be a principal obstacle to the alignment of IT with the institutional mission. So be sure any cultural divide has been taken into account during formulation of the questions.

### **Ask them what?**

Begin with pro forma marketing questions. Are you satisfied with the IT service you receive? Are the IT employees with whom you work technically competent? Add to those examples freely. Then move on to questions which get at whether or not the educational mission is being adequately supported.

Here are some examples. Does IT support our educational mission, or are we engaging in computing for computing's sake? Do our hardware and software practices support the work of the institution? Are we changing our business processes to fit the system? Should IT take down the e-mail system for maintenance during final exams?

Power users possess considerable helpful information and a worthwhile perspective. They should not remain an underutilized source of information for strategic analysis. ■

## Gancarski

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struggling athletes. "What bothers me is the lack of ability to help a really destitute student-athlete. The University of Florida football team got in trouble in the 1980's, because a player was broke. He had a child by his former girlfriend back home and no money to send her child support payments. A coach slipped the player \$100 to send home. It wasn't a recruiting violation—the student was a sophomore already. But illegal."

When one hears about one of those bakery-builders having to scrounge for milk money for his child, it's difficult not to sympathize. But should para-professional athletes be paid to compete as putative amateurs? The discussion of this issue has only just begun. ■