

FCPE Newsletter – Issue No. 13 – Fall 2008

Differentiated Instruction – Including Diverse Learners

by Valerie Karr

As Professors, we know that not all students are alike. Our classes are filled with students for whom English is not their first language, who have different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, and generally speaking, have a divergent range of experiences that affects how they learn. The sheer diversity of students in America today requires that we provide opportunities for them to learn in ways that they are comfortable and can identify with, and that inspire a life-long love of learning. A key strategy for creating these opportunities is known as differentiated instruction.

At its most basic level, differentiated instruction is teaching that embraces student diversity. It is an approach that takes as its starting point the biological, environmental, learning and cultural differences of our students rather than adopting a standardized approach to teaching that presumes all things are equal for learners of a given age or grade. Differentiated instruction responds to students rather than shoehorns them into ready-made content, processes and structures.

There is some resistance to differentiated instruction, and old methods die hard, especially at the University level. Take our continued reliance on direct instruction. Yes, I am guilty of using this method too. Direct instruction is easy. Our students demonstrate mastery of content through standardized and multiple choice tests and we promote rote memorization of data. But will this help our students become professionals? While I don't want to wade into the debate over the merits of standardized testing, it begs the question—at all education levels—of whether we teach for exposure or true understanding. Standardized teaching approaches do not take into account the fact that students are different and that they learn in different ways. It does not help them identify their interests and their strengths that can be used in their field. It does not develop critical thinking, nor does it foster intellectual curiosity or a desire to learn.

As theorists such as Karen Tomlinson have described, student motivation, autonomy, and task persistence improve when instruction is diversified to draw on student backgrounds and interests. Student engagement and interests must be considered key to our teachable moments. A student taught me just that this semester. It was presentation day and we all settled in for the traditional PowerPoint Slides, perhaps with a fun Clipart photo or two. One of the students, a Middle School Teacher, walked into class and owned us. He used handouts, thought diagrams, discussion, role-play, and Smart Board, a technology I have recently been trained on, but just haven't had the time to apply, all in a one hour session. We were up, we were down, we had visuals, we spoke to each other, we laughed and most importantly we put ourselves in someone else's shoes. The students were actively engaged and by letting go of traditional direct instruction we were able to address more learning goals than I had previously thought possible.

So, how do we get there? How do we “do” differentiated instruction at the University? At Adelphi, we seem to be on our way. Several guidelines have been suggested to foster a classroom of diverse learning:

1. **Value:** your school, faculty and administration, must view diversified learning as a positive experience for students. Different means of representing content fosters student engagement!
2. **Belief:** The educational team must believe that students from a variety of educational, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds enhance the learning climate for *all* students. An eclectic student body enhances discussion and debate in the classroom.
3. **Cooperation:** An atmosphere of cooperation must be established for students, faculty, and staff. Information sharing is key. Take advantage of our FCPE trainings on classroom technology from Moodle and Smart Board to iTunes University and Wiki.
4. **Time/Energy:** Faculty must use all available University resources to support learning activities. We can reach all of our students through diversified instruction by arranging the classroom for small-group, large-group, and independent learning and for incorporating visuals, movement, and technology into our instruction.

Socrates, one of history's great teachers, once said "Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel". He could well have been describing the promise and advantage of differentiated instruction.

For additional information please see: <http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/differentiated/bravmann.htm>



Valerie Karr

Assistant Professor

Ruth S. Ammon School of Education

Getting to Know Assistant Professor of Dance Catherine Lawrence

Attitude is the intangible ingredient that defines success and it will always trump natural ability, so with that in mind, I encourage and am always willing to work closely with those who have a positive attitude towards improving and growing as a dance artist.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PlAd1GUTPU>

QUESTIONNAIRE:

What would you like to share about your background, area of expertise, and teaching experiences?

I was born and raised in Paris France. I moved to Germany at 19 years old and began my professional career as a founding member of Pina Bausch's original company at the Folkwang Schule in Essen-Werden. After dancing with Pina Bausch for 6 years, I moved to Cologne Germany where I danced for three years and was a principal dancer at the Cologne Opera House and with Tanz Forum Koln, a modern dance company affiliated with the Buhnen Der Stadt Koln. In 1975 I was invited by Jiri Kylian, who at the time was the new director of Netherland Dance Theatre, to join his company and I was a principal dancer with NDT for 6 years where I was fortunate enough to be able to create roles in many of Jiri's early masterpieces of choreography. I began my pedagogical training with Russian master teacher Vera Volkova and Hungarian master teacher Iren Bartos and while in The Netherlands was a guest teacher at the Rotterdam Conservatory. I immigrated to the US in 1982 and have taught all levels of modern and classical dance throughout Long Island since then. I have taught at USDAN and Nassau BOCES as well as SUNY Stony Brook and continue to train serious young dancers at the Eglevsky School in New Hyde Park. I teach Graham technique and classical technique based on the Vaganova Russian School. I am certified to teach Zena Rommett floor barre technique, which helps rehabilitate injured dancers and allows them to work through injuries and still perform.

What made you choose to come to Adelphi?

I came to Adelphi because of the tremendous potential and local talent pool of dancers here on Long Island and to help raise the standards of dance training and performance at the University level and work with student dancers who are serious about a career in dance performance. Adelphi is a wonderful, nurturing environment and its Performing Arts Center is a phenomenal facility which has unlimited potential. The close proximity to New York and all of its cultural advantages makes Adelphi an ideal place to be able to grow and develop academically and artistically, and I believe that standards of excellence are high here, which is very attractive to me.

What has your experience been like at Adelphi so far?

Everyone has been so wonderful and helpful in getting me up to speed and acclimated to the space of work here. I have already met some great people and I am so impressed by how much of a community it is here. I came from Stony Brook, which is much larger, and I am really enjoying the intimacy and closeness that the University offers.

What do you contribute and what do you feel strongly about with regard to teaching in your specialization?

My main purpose is to help enrich and improve the level of each student dancer to be able to increase their awareness of themselves as dancers and to prepare them for the rigorous demands of a professional career in dance if that is what they desire. I am excited with the challenge of taking the entire department to another level, and am enthusiastic that exposure to world class choreographers will help develop the dancers and give them opportunities to work in idioms that they are not accustomed to. This will broaden their base movement vocabulary and make them more marketable and attractive in the competitive world of professional dance performance. I believe strongly that anyone that shows effort to improve has the potential to evolve into a professional performance artist. Attitude is the intangible ingredient that defines success and it will always trump natural ability, so with that in mind, I encourage and am always willing to work closely with those who have a positive attitude towards improving and growing as a dance artist.

What do you wish to impart to your students?

There is never any substitute for hard work. Being prepared mentally as well as physically will give you the opportunity to work at your highest level. Dance is a very challenging art form that requires discipline, perseverance, mental acuity, physical preparedness, and an insatiable desire to improve technically. All these are necessary ingredients for success in dance, and actually in life as well. Your attitude and how you work in class is just a reflection of how you will perform on stage and actually when you really think about it, how successful you will be in life.

Getting to Know Assistant Professor of Psychology Katherine Fiori

...things I've always dreamed of doing as a professor – to integrate technology seamlessly into the classroom, to engage students in active learning, to invite experts to inspire curiosity, and to continue my investigation of healthy aging.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2dRaCJpR6XY>

QUESTIONNAIRE:

What would you like to share about your background, area of expertise, and teaching experiences?

Being a developmental psychologist, for me, means understanding what helps people to age “successfully,” and it’s taken me all over the world. My passion for aging started when I spent a year at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin, Germany as a Fulbright scholar. While there, I investigated some of the resources that I believe help people to cope with the aging process (e.g., religiosity, social relationships), and best of all, got to meet some of the older participants in the study and converse with them in my father’s native language of German.

Graduate school then took me to Japan. I studied at the University of Michigan, and decided to conduct a cross-cultural comparison for my dissertation, comparing the United States, Germany, and Japan. I spent two months in Tokyo, where I learned about social relationships among older adults in Japan, and how similar, yet different from those in Germany and the United States.

Then I came to New York, where I learned about diversity from a different point a view. Two years of postdoctoral research at the Intercultural Institute of Aging and Human Development at Long Island University and a year as a professor at the New York City College of Technology in Brooklyn taught me a lot about conducting research with immigrant populations and teaching a diverse population of urban students.

What made you choose to come to Adelphi?

I came to Adelphi because I want to continue my exploration of aging with a collaborative, passionate group of faculty, and want to share my experiences with an enthusiastic, inquisitive student body. These are some of what makes being a professor at Adelphi so unique and exciting. Even in a short time, this rich environment has encouraged me to be more flexible and creative in my teaching style. For example,

for my Adult Development and Gerontology class, I conducted an “aging simulation” with my students, in which they used materials like ace bandages, goggles with Vaseline, ear plugs, and cotton balls to simulate some of the physical changes that occur with age (e.g., changes in hearing, joint movement, smell, sight). I borrowed several flipcams from the Faculty Center for Professional Excellence, and had the students go around campus in groups and record their experiences as “older adults.” The students described the exercise as being as educational as it was entertaining.

As the new faculty advisor to the Adelphi chapter of the Psi Chi International Psychology Honor Society, I have also had the opportunity to work more closely with undergraduates and to encourage them in academic pursuits related to psychology. I recently invited a renowned geropsychiatrist, Dr. Gregory Hinrichsen, to speak on the topic of ageism. Much to my delight, not only was the turn-out impressive, but the students also seemed engaged in a topic seldom fully appreciated by undergraduates.

What has your experience been like at Adelphi so far?

Being at Adelphi has given me the structure and support to do all of the things I’ve always dreamed of doing as a professor – to integrate technology seamlessly into the classroom, to engage students in active learning, to invite experts to inspire curiosity, and to continue my investigation of healthy aging.

What do you wish to impart to your students?

For those students who are going into clinical psychology or pursuing other advanced degrees in psychology, I hope to teach them the applied skills necessary for a thorough understanding of research and human development, and for those students who are going into other fields, or who are undecided about their career, I want to help them develop an appreciation for how important psychology and human development is in the world around them as it applies to their career decisions, their family decisions, and their social relationships.

Powerful New Web Meeting Software Available to Adelphi Faculty



This semester, Adelphi has begun offering the use of Adobe Acrobat Connect. Connect is a Web-based video-conferencing system that offers faculty the ability to present and collaborate over distances, in real time. Online meetings and seminars using Connect can incorporate rich multimedia content such as Powerpoint slides, live and recorded video, Flash animations, live screen-sharing, audio, and text chat. And because Connect uses Adobe Flash Player, an application installed on most Web browsers, audiences can join virtual classroom sessions and online conferences immediately, with no software installation required.

How can it enrich teaching and learning in my classroom?

- Connect can be used for distance learning, webinars, collaboration, and professional development.
- Instructors can offer lectures from a distance when teaching an online course, when out of town, or in the event of an unexpected University closing.
- Guest speakers can be invited to give presentations from a distance using a headset with microphone and a webcam.
- Faculty can offer their students virtual office hours using Connect.
- Classes recorded using Connect’s session archiving function can make the recordings available to students who were absent from the original lecture or to students who simply wish to review the material.
- Connect offers a rich multi-media environment that helps enliven and humanize distance education.

Who can I contact when I want to use Connect?

As of now, interested faculty members can contact Ann Tabert at the FCPE to schedule a one-to-one consultation with an instructional technologist. Ann's contact information is below.

Ann Tabert
Administrative Assistant
Faculty Center For Professional Excellence
Alumnae Hall – Room 123
p – 516-877-4221
e – tabert@adelphi.edu

What other kinds of support are available?

The FCPE has developed an Adobe Acrobat Connect Support Page with useful tutorials on how to use Connect. See http://fcpe.web-dev.adelphi.edu/adobe_connect/.

Preparing Adelphi's Students for Careers in New Media

by Mark Grabowski

All of the gloomy reports about newspaper circulation rapidly dropping, network news ratings declining and reporters being laid off might lead some to believe that journalism itself is dying. But journalism is alive and well. It is just that the way reporters do their job is changing.

According to a June poll by Zogby International, 56 percent of Americans view the Web as the best source of information. With the growing popularity of the Internet, gone are the days of print-only or TV-only newsrooms. Media companies no longer have to wait for the evening broadcast or tomorrow's edition to report the news. Almost all media outlets are breaking stories on their Web sites, and the news cycle has become 24-7.

Journalism programs in higher education need to change, as well. Instead of training students to be print journalists or broadcast journalists, we need to train them to be multimedia journalists who can report the news in publication, online and in front of a microphone.

In order to help our students land jobs after graduation, we need to provide the training that employers want. Being a good writer alone is not enough. Newspapers are laying off Pulitzer Prize winners. If students want to get a journalism job, they're going to need to be able to offer skills that editors, producers and station managers want—namely, multimedia skills. All reporters now entering the profession will have to do online work.

Most schools are woefully behind on the times. But Adelphi University is on the cutting edge. This year, the Communication Department opened a new half-million-dollar Mac computer lab and brought me in to teach Web Journalism. My students are blogging, podcasting, shooting news videos, taking digital photos and building websites.

Most importantly, my students are still learning the fundamentals. The basic tenets haven't changed and remain as pertinent as ever. Journalists today, as always, need to be able to gather information and tell a story. They also need to be able to think.

A journalist's most important tool is not a notepad, tape recorder, digital camcorder, computer or even the ability to write a story. A journalist's most important tool is her brain. As a writer for the masses, journalists have to cut through the flab of all the information around. They need to question, question, question. What happened? Who does this affect? Why is this important? Critical thinking precedes good writing.

Future journalists also need to learn how to learn.

The media isn't the only thing changing. The world of work is changing. More and more, people are becoming multi-skilled workers who must manage various projects and priorities and develop new skills.

A graduate today can expect to still be in the world of work in 2050. Consider how much things have changed in the past 15 years—cell phones and the Internet, for example, weren't a fabric of society. Imagine how different the world will be in 15 years. In 50 years. The one thing that students can be certain of is that they will be applying skills that haven't even been thought of today. They will have to relearn and relearn and relearn.

So, the more things change, the more they stay the same. Adelphi's Mission Statement of preparing students to be "life long learners, and contributors to knowledge and service in ever changing world" is apt now more than ever. Especially in our journalism program.



Mark Grabowski
Assistant Professor
Department of Communications

Research and Grants Highlights

by Mary Cortina

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) provides a wide array of services to the Adelphi community, including identifying funding sources, preparing, editing and submitting proposals, drafting budgets, one-on-one consultation and educational and professional workshops. Each semester we will highlight faculty who have received external funding for their research and scholarship. Congratulations to all!

Creating networks of schools, universities and science museums

Investigator(s): Sean Bentley, physics, Elizabeth deFreitas, education, Lee Stemkoski, mathematics & computer science

Date of award: December, 2009

Amount of award: \$299,012 over two years

Agency: National Science Foundation

Sean Bentley and his colleagues received a grant from the National Science Foundation to fund project SMART – Science and Math Applied Real-problem Teaching. SMART will continue the collaboration with the Westbury Union Free School District and the Cradle of Aviation Museum to develop integrated high school science and math curriculum, enhance student problem-solving and applied mathematical skills and comprehensive provide professional development for teachers.

Imaging the Mere Exposure Effect

Investigator(s): Robert Bornstein, psychology

Date of award: September, 2008

Amount of award: \$135,712 for one year

Agency: National Science Foundation

Robert Bornstein, Derner Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies, was awarded a grant from the National Science Foundation to conduct a series of experiments using fMRI to explore the cognitive and affective underlying processes of being exposed to repeated unreinforced stimuli.

Educating mathematics teachers for urban and other high needs schools

Investigator(s): Robert Bradley, mathematics, Gary Schechter, A&S, Dante Tawfeeq, education

Date of award: September, 2009

Amount of award: \$895,000 over five years

Agency: National Science Foundation

Robert Bradley, department of mathematics and computer science, Gary Schechter, Math/Science Education Coordinator and Dante Tawfeeq, Ammon School of Education received a grant from the National Science Foundation to recruit, train and support mathematics majors pursuing careers in teaching. Selected students will receive academic and financial supports throughout their three years at Adelphi (junior, senior and Master years), these students will have committed to teaching in high needs school districts for approximately six years after receiving their Adelphi graduate degree. Their program of study at Adelphi is designed to enhance students' understanding and experiences working in high needs schools.

Talking Math

Investigator(s): Elizabeth deFreitas, education

Date of award: September, 2008

Amount of award: \$439,747 over three years

Agency: National Science Foundation

Elizabeth deFreitas, Ammon School of Education, received a grant from the National Science Foundation to conduct a qualitative case study of novice mathematics teachers in an inner-city middle school. This project is guided by a model which examines the links between language and mathematics learning. Dr. deFreitas and her colleague, Dr. Betina Zolkower, Brooklyn College, will analyze how students and teachers use language to discuss math concepts in the classroom. Teachers will then meet with the PIs on a regular basis to study the classroom environment and make necessary adjustments to improve the math achievement of their students.

Summer Stipends; Alternative Energy

Investigator(s): Justyna Widera

Date of award: June, 2009

Amount of award: \$21,000 for summer program

Agency: National Science Foundation and Petroleum Research Fund

Investigators: Justyna Widera

Date of award: June, 2009

Amount of award: \$50,000 over two years

Agency: American Chemical Society's Petroleum Research Fund

National Science Foundation that supported her and two students to participate in cutting-edge summer research at Brookhaven National Laboratories, and the other from the American Chemical Society's Petroleum Research Fund to further her research in solar cells as an alternative energy source.



Mary Cortina

Director

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs



<http://adelphifcpe.wordpress.com/>

Keeping up with latest trends

Do you wish there were a way to keep up with technology innovations in higher education that didn't involve spending hours sifting through journals or the web? This edition of The News introduces you to The FCPE Instructional Technology Blog: a place to get the latest news and information on instructional technology—distilled and presented by the professionals at the FCPE and geared to the teaching goals and needs of Adelphi's faculty members.

The blog offers brief, incisive features on a range of topics, along with helpful teaching tips, and where to go for additional information.

Some topics the blog covers:

- Adelphi Moodle News and Progress
- News and Trends in Instructional Technology
- Distance Learning
- Multimedia in the Classroom
- Using Web 2.0 Applications for Teaching and Learning (Google Docs, Twitter, Facebook, and VoiceThread)

The Blog as Virtual “Café”: A place to meet the people who can help support your teaching goals

When you visit the blog, you'll not only be able to read about the latest buzz on teaching with technology, you'll also have an opportunity to exchange ideas with FCPE professionals and your faculty peers about what makes for effective teaching with technology. You'll also be able comment on and reply to the postings you see there. Think of the blog as a kind of virtual “café”—a friendly place to learn and share about technology while benefitting from the collective expertise and knowledge in your community.

An Invitation to the blog

The FCPE welcomes you to participate in this public forum on instructional technology. By hosting the blog, the FCPE seeks to encourage collaboration, feedback, and a dynamic exchange of ideas and insights. Please feel invited to check the blog often, make comments, ask questions, or make suggestions about what you would like to see covered in the blog.

To view the FCPE Instructional Technology Blog, go to: <http://adelphifcpe.wordpress.com/>

For more information, contact the FCPE at fcpe@adelphi.edu.