

FCPE Newsletter – Issue No. 10 – Spring 2007

Andrea Ward – Assistant Professor, Department of Biology



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Please give us a brief overview of your background, area of expertise, research and teaching.

My general research interests are in the fields of evolutionary morphology, functional morphology, and developmental biology. My interest in these fields began as an undergraduate at Wake Forest University where I worked with Dr. Peter Weigl on the anatomy and function of the raptor hind limb.

Upon receiving my degree, I opted to attend graduate school so that I could continue research in anatomy and locomotion, although I was looking to work on fish. I went to the University of Massachusetts Amherst to work with Dr. Elizabeth Brainerd. During graduate school, I began to be interested in not only the effect of changes in anatomy to locomotion, but also the molecular and developmental changes that resulted in anatomical change.

This new curiosity, led me to the field of evolutionary developmental biology. Since I had a strong background in functional morphology and evolutionary biology from undergraduate and graduate research, I opted to focus my time as a postdoctoral scholar on learning developmental biology. I was a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Chicago with Dr. Victoria Prince, where I worked on pancreatic development in zebrafish. While there, I gained many new skills associated with studying molecular developmental biology in model systems. I plan to bring the skills that I developed in my postdoctoral and graduate research to study body shape evolution in fishes.

What made you choose to come to Adelphi?

I decided early on in my graduate career that I wanted to work at a small liberal arts school where I could focus on working one-on-one with students in the laboratory. I also think that students should have training in a number of different disciplines, not just the sciences. I liked the character of Adelphi and the opportunities available to students. I also liked that I could continue my research and incorporate it into my teaching. Adelphi is also in an ideal location, as it's close to the city and the American Museum of Natural History as well as to other institutions in the Northeast. When I visited the campus, I was extremely impressed the positive interaction between the faculty and students.

What has been your experience so far?

I have been extremely pleased with my experience at Adelphi. The students are inquisitive and eager to learn, and I look forward to days when I teach classes. My colleagues have also been extremely supportive and helpful. I feel that there is a real camaraderie among faculty here.

What do you wish to impart to your students?

When I was a freshman in college, one of my professors told me that learning is a lot more fun and useful than memorizing. At the time, I didn't really understand what he meant, but in the

years since I have come to realize just how correct he was. I encourage my students to look for connections between topics and not just memorize the facts. Instead, they should use the facts to learn how topics fit together. In the fall, I will teach an upper level vertebrate anatomy class. Many people think that anatomy is all memorization. Instead, I want students to know how the parts of the body work together. There is a bit of memorization, but more of the learning involves understanding how the different bones and muscles work together so that an animal can walk or perform some other movement.

Blended Class: A Win-Win Situation for Faculty and Students

by Ganesh Pandit

Since the fall of 2005, I have been teaching ACC601, a graduate business course titled "Financial Statements Analysis" in the blended live and online format. I first taught this course in the traditional on-site format in the fall of 2004. The same year, because we had several snow storms, two of my class meetings were cancelled and had to be made up near the end of the semester. This experience made me wonder whether there might be a way around this problem, and I found a solution in the form of the blended course design.

In this format, 50 percent of the class meetings take place on campus and the remaining 50 percent are held online. The entire class is divided into seven bi-weekly modules wherein I meet face-to-face with the students during the first week of each module to introduce the topics in the module. I then follow up that discussion using the online discussion board in the second week.

The online discussion lasts for the entire length of the second week, in which I participate almost every day. I begin the discussion with a "starter question" and let the students continue the discussion by stretching it in different directions while staying within the boundaries of the weekly topics. The students are required to post at least four value-added responses to the discussion on at least two non-consecutive days during the week.

Needless to say, some students post almost every day, which is not surprising since even in an on-site class, some students like to answer every question being asked. One benefit of the online discussions is that every student gets the opportunity to contribute his/her thoughts to the discussion. Each student gets some time to think about what he or she would like to say before actually posting a response. This format works very well for those members of my class who are shy and would not usually participate actively in the on-site class discussions unless expressly called upon to do so. My class consists of a significant number of international students who are more self-conscious about their language skills and accents. Such students welcome the opportunity to participate in the online discussion where they are not being "watched" by their fellow classmates. Also, a majority of the students in this class work during the day; so they like the idea of having the extra time to read the notes before participating in the online discussions at their own pace instead of being rushed into the face-to-face discussions one night every week.

I post my lecture notes and PowerPoint slides in the online modules and students can refer to them as needed as they read the online discussions and frame their own responses. At the end of the second week of each bi-weekly module, the students are responsible for an online quiz based on the topics of the module. This system enables me to give them sufficient time to answer the quiz, and allows me the opportunity to give challenging questions to match the time available. The students have to finish each quiz within the assigned time. The students are able to refer to legitimate sources of information, in print or electronic form, to help them perform better on the quizzes.

Of course, a student who is not motivated in an on-site class may similarly lack motivation in the online class, but overall, I am very pleased with this mode of instruction. As the online discussion moderator, I have to be alert and keep the discourse on track every day, and I enjoy doing that. If conducted appropriately, the benefits of using online discussions outweigh the time and effort involved in conducting online discussions.



Ganesh Pandit

Associate Professor

Department of Accounting, School of Business

Grant Awards and Update

New Internal Faculty Grants, 2007–2008

Every year the Office of the Provost funds grants (up to \$5,000) for faculty research, scholarship, and creative works. This year, we received 31 outstanding proposals, and the committee was able to make the following grants:

Diane Caracciolo, Ruth S. Ammon School of Education, *Partnering for Cultural Competency: An Educational Collaboration with Educators and Artists from the Shenandoah Nation Cultural Center and Museum*

Tandra Chakraborty, College of Arts and Sciences, Biology, *Estrogen Receptors (ER) in Obesity and their Signaling Pathways*

Xiaomei Cong, School of Nursing, *Effects of Kangaroo Care for Reducing Heel Stick Pain in Preterm Infants*

Jonna Coombs, College of Arts and Sciences, Biology, *Characterization of the Structural Determinants of PIB-type ATPases*

Elizabeth DeFreitas, Ruth S. Ammon School of Education, *The Role of Representation in Learning Mathematics*

Anton Dudley, College of Arts and Sciences, English, *Tina Girlstar*

Douglas Kamen, College of Arts and Sciences, Chemistry, *Folding and Stability of Parallel beta-helix Proteins, Models for Amyloid Fibril Formation*

Jacqueline LaMon, College of Arts and Sciences, English Department, *The Elsewhere Chronicles*

Trebien Pollard, College of Arts and Sciences, Performing Arts, *Color Codes: A Point of Hue*

Fran Redstone, Ruth S. Ammon School of Education, *The Influence of Balance on Oral-motor Control for Speech*

Simon Sheng, School of Business, *Investigation of the Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Salesforce Performance*

Christine Stakidis, Ruth S. Ammon School of Education, *Mayan Mentorship Curriculum Book Project*

Justyna Widera, College of Arts and Sciences, Chemistry, *Iridium Oxide (IrOx) Based Fuel Acidity Sensor*

Frederick Bettelheim Research Award for junior faculty in the Natural Sciences

Dr. Frederick Bettelheim was a distinguished research professor in the natural sciences and *emeritus* professor of chemistry. In 2004, the Bettelheim family made a generous gift to the University to provide funds towards the research of a junior faculty member in the sciences and mathematics. The second annual grant was awarded to Dr. Tandra Chakraborty, biology, for her work, *Regulation of Feeding Circuits by Hormones and Neuropeptides*.

Agency Deadlines

The deadline for the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (**FIPSE**) is tentatively scheduled for the end of June. FIPSE, a program of the U.S. Department of Education, funds innovative projects with high impact and solid evaluation and dissemination plans. This year there are several priority areas: projects that encourage higher levels of access, persistence and completion; projects that are multi-state; projects that improve the math and science proficiency of postsecondary students, including preservice math and science teachers; projects that enable postsecondary students including preservice teachers to achieve proficiency or advanced proficiency in the less commonly taught languages—Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Russian, Indic, Iranian and Turkic languages or for institutions to develop programs in these languages

Course, Curriculum and Laboratory Improvement (**CCLI**), National Science Foundation, is due **May 8, 2007**. CCLI seeks to improve the quality of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education for all undergraduate students. The program supports efforts to create new learning materials and teaching strategies, develop faculty expertise, implement educational innovations, assess learning and evaluate innovations, and conduct research on STEM teaching and learning.

Broadening Participation in Computing (**BPC**), National Science Foundation, is due **June 3, 2007**. The program aims to significantly increase the number of U.S. citizens and permanent residents receiving post secondary degrees in the computing disciplines, with an emphasis on students from communities with longstanding underrepresentation in computing: women, persons with disabilities, and minorities (*i.e.*, African Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians). The BPC program seeks to engage the computing community in developing and implementing innovative methods to improve recruitment and retention of these students at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

There are other opportunities for chemistry and the social sciences in late June and July.



Mary Cortina

Director

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

Mobile Wireless Cart

by Office of Information Technology and Resources

What do you do when you have an occasional need for a computer classroom for teaching or testing purposes, but you haven't reserved a computer classroom? You can reserve the mobile wireless laptop cart — complete with 24 high performance laptops and a DVD/CD-write player.

These computers are self-contained units capable of running universal software programs and provide wireless access to the Internet. The cart can only be used in the Science building.

Advance notice of at least three working days is required to reserve the use of the portable lab. To use this cart, you need to reserve a room with the Registrar and then contact Customer Services at 516.877.3340 or customerservices@adelphi.edu for more information on how to access and use the cart and the applicable rooms.

Questions to Consider About Online Learning

by Shabana Figueroa

Without a clear and deliberate strategy for distance learning courses there is no guarantee of success. Let's explore some questions about online learning.

Can Face-to-Face courses be easily transferred to an online environment?

Strategies used in online and face-to-face settings may produce different effects and consequences. For example, when an issue arises in face-to-face setting, instructors tend to find and solve the problem quickly but in an online setting, it is not so easy for instructors to identify problem areas. According to Li and Akins (2005), instructors need to provide as many tools as possible to facilitate online interaction and collaboration. These tools include various types of collaboration aides such as virtual chat, email, threaded discussion, and so forth.

How does the quality of an online course compare to that of a face-to-face course?

According to the Sloan Consortium, online learning is equivalent to or better than learning through the institution's other delivery modes, in particular in its traditional face-to-face, classroom-based instruction. If there is no comparable face-to-face course, then the institution's normative benchmark applies. To ensure quality, online courses should receive the same benefits of preparation, development, and review that the institution applies to face-to-face courses.

How are distance learning courses organized?

Distance learning requires more preparation than simply putting a training manual online (Carvotta, 2003). The success of one form of instruction does not guarantee similar success in the online environment. The organization of a course is critical to its success. When organizing a course, the instructor must decide how the course content is to be divided, how many units there will be, and what information will be covered (Price, 2005). Every instructor has his/her own style of teaching and learning. The suggested model is just one approach. A course unit should be divided into six sections: Introduction, Unit Objectives, Directions, Interactive Activities, and Assessment. Although the organization of course content is important, the overall

design is essential. Text-based content is visually unappealing. One approach would be to include multimedia elements such as graphics, tables, and audio and video components to reinforce the materials presented.

What about social integration?

Interactivity is the heart and soul of effective asynchronous learning. (Pelz, 2004) In order to establish a sense of community, one has to create an environment that would allow social integration. This can only occur if the students feel a sense of belonging, and are able to establish a rapport with other students in the class and the instructor. To establish a safe environment for participants to engage in, instructors need to set up defined course expectations at the beginning of each course, and monitor the flow and content of discussion to ensure students are on point with the course goals and objectives. Sharing responsibility for facilitation with students promotes and even warrants active learning (Palloff & Pratt, 1999). The experience is very rewarding for the students because they appreciate the opportunity to experience the instructor's side of the distance learning equation.

Do you have to be tech savvy?

If you are not familiar with online teaching and learning, the idea of using technology may be discouraging. Technology is required for online communication, but it does not control teaching and learning. The amount of technology required for a course will vary from course to course and from instructor to instructor. Understanding of basic skills such as keyboarding and the Internet is sufficient for many online courses (Li and Akins 2005).

Will technology replace the instructor?

Willis (1993) makes the point that although technology is paving the way for online learning, the technology of distance education should remain transparent. The reality is that a live instructor is needed to plan, design, and facilitate the learning process and experience. Technology is just an enhancement to the learners' experience.

Is online learning for everyone?

Learners need to be highly motivated and self disciplined to be successful online. It is reported that online learning has very high attrition rates. Rochester Institute of Technology reported that for more than than five years, the course withdrawal rate has been less than 5 percent. The first year attrition rate for distance students is just over 10 percent. The key to deciding whether online learning is right for any student is being clear about his/her needs.

How do I monitor student involvement?

In an online environment there is a lack of visual cues that makes it nearly impossible for instructors to monitor students' involvement in the course. A student's involvement in an online course can be measured by taking note of attendance. For instance, a common method of checking attendance in online asynchronous discussions is based on the duration and frequency of course access and activity.

Is online assessment difficult?

In an online setting, the role of the instructor changes to that of a facilitator and hence the function of the assessment techniques must correspond. Learning management systems such as Blackboard provide a set of tools to create online assessments, including quizzes, tests, self tests, and surveys. These tools facilitate teaching and learning in an online setting.

Is it easy for students to cheat?

The Internet has made plagiarism much easier than before, and the nature of online learning in particular has made people wonder what can be done to prevent digital plagiarism (Lathrop & Foss, 2000). However, there are options available to authenticate student work. First, online courses are password protected; students need to be registered in order to participate. Second, instructors become familiar with students' dispositions through class discussion and assignments, so it becomes easy for an instructor to determine the originality of a student's work. Third, there is an increasing amount of software available such as [Turnitin](#) that can be used to authenticate students' work.

Conclusion

Online learning and teaching is challenging, but utilizing technology outside the traditional classroom can be a rewarding experience for all users.

Recommendations

1. Review all assessment tools to ensure compatibility and ease of use.
2. Align assessment activities with learning goals.
3. Set course expectations for learners.
4. Review all course materials from the learner's perspective.
5. Continuously review and fine tune course content to "ensure appropriateness of content and materials" (Coyner, and McCann, 2004).
6. Encourage student participation, and teamwork.
7. Utilize available technologies.

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Shabana Figueroa

The New FCPE Web Site

by Astrid Palm



After careful planning and testing, we are about to release the completely re-designed Web site for your faculty center. The strategy: easy and quick access to essential information that help Adelphi faculty with their daily tasks. A comprehensive menu highlights FCPE services and resources while applying the successful design of the AU Web site. We have added many resources about teaching and instructional technology at Adelphi. Online forms simplify equipment requests and workshop sign-ups. Our own blog, called FCPEdia will keep you up to date with initiatives and opportunities to enhance the teaching experience in higher education.

Our goal is to expand the online presence of the FCPE, providing on-demand learning opportunities for faculty. Video and audio podcasts on current workshop topics as well as synchronous and asynchronous distance learning sessions will soon be part of ongoing FCPE online offerings.

This first release in May will highlight existing support for faculty. A second release planned for the fall 2007 semester will add information and resources about teaching trends that might be of interest to try for Adelphi faculty.

Don't hesitate to send us an email to fcpe@adelphi.edu with ideas on anything you would like to see included in the new FCPE Web site.



Astrid Palm

Director

Faculty Center for Professional Excellence

Using Clickers to Create a Safer Learning Environment

by David Parkin

To ask or not to ask: that is the question. Using the Audience Response System (Clickers) to Create a Safe Learning Environment for Both the Student and the Professor.

Carl Rogers, the renowned clinical psychologist, proposed that professors need to create "safe" learning environments just as psychologists need to create safe therapy environments. Just ask

yourself this question: “Did Lance Armstrong growing up get punished every time he fell off his bike?”

My hypothesis is that meaningfully learning in chemistry is proportional to how safe students feel in making mistakes in front of their professor and peers. Both the faculty and students occupy the same learning environment, only their roles differ. Students bring into every learning environment a preconceived notion about almost every learning/teaching activity which more than likely differs from the professor’s perception. Take for example the teaching/learning activity of just “asking” a question in class.

An essential tool used in an active learning environment is the ability to ask questions and obtain answers from students. As cognitive psychologist David P. Ausubel states:

The most important single factor influencing learning is what the learner already knows. Ascertain this and teach him accordingly.

So in the fluidity of an active learning environment, arguably, the most effective way to ascertain a student’s level of understanding is to “ask a question and get an answer”.

The problem arises from the different perceptions of the rules of engagement. Questioning allows us to set the pace of the learning/teaching activities. However, students view this learning/teaching activity completely differently. We professors have violated an important peer rule which states “don’t get noticed and don’t ever consider giving a wrong answer in front of your peers or teacher.” In some cases, students don’t even want to give a correct answer because after leaving the classroom they will be accused of trying to impress someone.

I propose that the audience response “clicker system” should create a safer learning environment, independent of personalities. This technological advancement is a convenient way of asking tough questions, obtaining a higher level of response, and even more encompassing coverage of the whole class’s level of knowledge. Instead of asking one student, as a sampling of the whole class’s understanding, I can ask the whole class immediately a question at any level of difficulty. I can obtain responses from the whole class without singling out any particular student. Therefore, I have not violated any peer pressure rules. And when we don’t break the rules, a safer learning environment is created.

We will be using data from Student Assessment of Learning Goals (SALG), Chemistry Self-Concept Inventory (CSCI), and faculty surveys to evaluate if the clickers help to create a safer chemistry learning environment. My hypothesis is that this small non-intrusive technological device will allow both the students and chemistry professors to enjoy the freedom and safety of our learning environment.



David Parkin
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What’s (and Who’s) New at Adelphi University Archives and Special Collection (UASC)

by Mary Manning

with contributions from Elayne Gardstein and Eugene Neely

[University Archives and Special Collections \(UASC\)](#), a department of the Adelphi University Libraries, is located in the Lower level of New Hall and is composed of two distinct collections: University Archives and Special Collections. Both collections hold research and primary resource materials and include materials in various formats, including manuscripts, books, graphic materials, audio-visual materials, photographs, electronic records, and artifacts, which are separately housed in a secure environment to protect and preserve rare, valuable, or fragile materials.

What's New?



We are very excited about two new collections that we are developing in [Special Collections](#) . The Friends of the Adelphi University Library recently and generously donated the money to start the Children's Illustrated Literature Collection, which will not only focus on the Golden Age of Children's Book Illustration (generally considered to be from the 1860 to the 1930s) but will also include fine examples of illustrated literature from other periods. In order to present a focused yet comprehensive collection, we will collect original editions, high-quality facsimiles, and reference books.



The Donald V. L. Kelly Small Press Collection gathers limited edition and letterpress publications, facsimile editions, related examples of fine printing, and secondary sources to support research. Over 30 English language presses, primarily from the 20th century, are included. Many of these works were previously in our Rare Book Collection. This collection is named in honor of Professor Donald V. L. Kelly (1929–2006), who served the University Libraries for 53 years, made our rare materials into a true Special Collection, and had a

particular admiration for the small press. Both collections will be important resources for faculty and students interested in fine printing and illustration and literature, and we plan on working closely with the English and Art Departments and the School of Education and to promote these collections.

In addition to the two new collections, UASC recently received approval to build a digital library as a way to share electronic facsimiles of their holdings via the World Wide Web to the Adelphi community and the world at large. The digital library will contain diverse digital content, such as digitized photographs, books, pamphlets, newspapers, handwritten documents (originals scanned and transcribed), realia (objects, souvenirs, models, etc.), posters, prints, broadsides, musical scores, blueprints, drawings, and eventually, Encoded Archival Description (EAD) finding aids, audio and video clips, and born-digital documents. This will help Adelphi meet what Clifford Lynch, executive director of the Coalition for Networked Information, calls “a growing and persistent demand for more and more digital content” as well as support Adelphi’s research and teaching mission (http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue7_5/lynch/index.html). Additionally, digital objects will be catalogued in ALICAT, Adelphi’s online catalogue, and linked from the catalogue records.

Using the Collections

Not so new is UASC’s goal of sharing our resources with Adelphi faculty and students. UASC regularly presents exhibitions from its varied collections. It also welcomes opportunities to give customized presentations to classes, organizations, and other groups, and encourages university faculty to incorporate our resources into their instruction plans.

Past classroom use of special collections materials includes a journalism class’s viewing of the extensive [William Hone Collection](#) Web site to introduce them to journalism of two centuries ago. Journalism classes also study alternative voices in e-zines and compare them to radical writers of 200 years ago, such as those represented in our [Cobbett](#) and Hone collections. Students in the history department’s senior research seminar are longtime users. The McMillan Panama Canal Collection is a wonderful resource for studying Latin American and Caribbean history, and students have been using rare materials published at the time the canal was built a century ago. Additionally, English literature students are assigned nineteenth century publications to learn about and analyze the culture of Victorian times, and art students study commentary and folders of color theory illustrations contained in Josef Albers’s book, *The Interaction of Color*, which was published 40 years ago.

University Archives serves as the primary repository for records and information relating to the history, development, organization, and operations of Adelphi University and any of its offices, divisions, schools, or departments. In addition to official records, the collection includes many other materials published or created by the University and its employees, including Adelphi newspapers (such as the *The Delphian*) and *The Oracle* (the Adelphi yearbook). Adelphi newspapers, from 1921 to 2003, are available to the Adelphi community through the University intranet (<http://dtsearch/>). We receive numerous inquiries each week, by telephone, e-mail, letter, and in person. While most inquiries are from people on campus, we regularly have individuals from elsewhere using our archival resources. Aside from a variety of unanticipated questions relating to the history of Adelphi, the most frequent requests are for photographs, information on past special events on campus, and biographical information on former faculty members and students.

One Final Word about UASC

UASC acquires much of its materials by gift and could not exist without the generous support of donors. Adelphi faculty, administrators, and alumni are encouraged to contribute to UASC copies of books and articles they have written for deposit in the Adelphi Authors Collection, as well as any archival or special collections items they might have within our collecting scope.

Faculty librarians Mary Manning (3818 or manning@adelphi.edu), Elayne Gardstein (3563 or gardstein@adelphi.edu), and Eugene Neely (3543 or neely@adelphi.edu) are available for suggestions on how special collections and archival materials may be used in your classes.



Mary Manning
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