

THE MANTLE

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Real Applications Inspire Students

Dr. Waheed Uddin, Professor of Civil Engineering, approaches students as he approached construction jobs. The raw materials are there; the specifications for success are there; knowledge of the content needed is there; and



Dr. Waheed Uddin

Dr. Uddin is the maestro to make students successful. And making them successful earned him the honor of being the first recipient of the Epps/Dart Award for Teaching Excellence of the Deep South Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers.

Dr. Uddin reveals an abiding love for teaching and working with students as evidenced by comments from former and current students Colby Willis, Lt. Hely Saul Gonzalez, and Marni Kendrick. Willis says, "He is a mentor more than just a teacher; he wants us to do well, he guides us and makes us think about what we are doing and what we will be doing." Kendrick writes, "He has influenced many practicing civil engineers in this state and beyond. We are very appreciative of what we learned and took with us into the real world." Lt. Gonzalez, an active naval officer, writes, "He was a mentor to me when I was in engineering school and continues to be a mentor to me today! It's nice to know that I have reach-back capabilities to Dr. Uddin and the School of Engineering at the University of Mississippi."

The feeling that one gets from Dr. Uddin and his students is that just as he was influenced by

work outside academia, he lets students know that they are influenced by work in the field. From Dr. Uddin's early studies in Pakistan, to work in Saudi Arabia, to work with Gulf Canada and other companies, his research is field-based and his excitement is evident. Dr. Uddin works on materials used in construction of airports, and he has his students involved on site to see results of and issues with the construction. The November, 2006, photo was taken when one runway was closed at the Memphis International Airport to give students a chance to study materials up close.

Dr. Uddin, with co-authors, wrote *Infrastructure: Design, Construction, Maintenance, Rehabilitation, Renovation*, one of the very first books to use "infrastructure" in civil engineering and construction processes. His personal and research experiences have made all the difference in his life and teaching.

continued on Page 4



INSIDE

Calibrated Peer Review	2
Teaching Tips, Resources	3

Book Review	3
Award, Advisory Board	4

Calibrated Peer Review (CPR) from a User's Perspective

T. Keith Hollis, Department of Chemistry

Change is the buzzword in the air; presidential primaries are happening. “New” is the advertising phenomenon—boon even—of the last half century. Yet higher education routinely remains antiquated and anachronistic in its approach to delivering content. For the technologically advanced generation of students walking in our doors, we must adapt. Commendably many professors are. Classroom/Audience response systems, i.e., Clickers, are now routinely used in some schools and many classrooms. Our students love technology, notably, iPods and iPhones, and are visually oriented due to television, video games, and the internet. Yet these same students must learn to express their abundant creativity through writing. How do we do this without sacrificing the time available to deliver the subject content? Enter CALIBRATED PEER REVIEW (CPR)—an internet-based *writing-to-learn* program to revolutionize your classroom.

Disclaimer: I am a chemist, and the program started with chemists. But, it is now being deployed by almost every discipline in the academy.

Do you want a more engaging classroom? To inspire your students to move work outside the classroom? To turn your classroom into a learning community? To incorporate writing into your curriculum, regardless of discipline, without mounds of grading? The greatest challenge in my classroom is helping a student learn when they have actually learned, or mastered, a topic. To help, consider CPR. As a scientist and teacher of chemistry, I was skeptical. I did not have time to grade hundreds of essays. CPR engages the student to grade their peers after suitable “calibration.” Then they perform the all critical self-evaluation. As we all know, grading in our subject requires a new level of understanding. With CPR, a miracle occurs. By requiring students to grade, they begin to achieve understanding, without an overbearing disciple of the subject leaning on them.

We learn through repetition; Tiger Woods knows this. So does Eli Manning. CPR exposes the student to a particular topic on multiple different thoughtful occasions without becoming boring. How does it do this?

Nuts and Bolts

- A CPR assignment starts with content materials delivered over the internet through a normal browser.
- The student reads and digests the content.
- The student must write a paragraph of assigned length routinely from 200 - 600 words.

- This paragraph is submitted to the program through a browser.
- The student then evaluates a series of three calibrations: a poor paragraph, a mediocre paragraph, and a good paragraph.
- The program manages the calibrations and requires the students to grade each accurately.
- After completing the calibrations the student grades three peers.
- Next is the most critical aspect of the process. The student performs a self-evaluation.

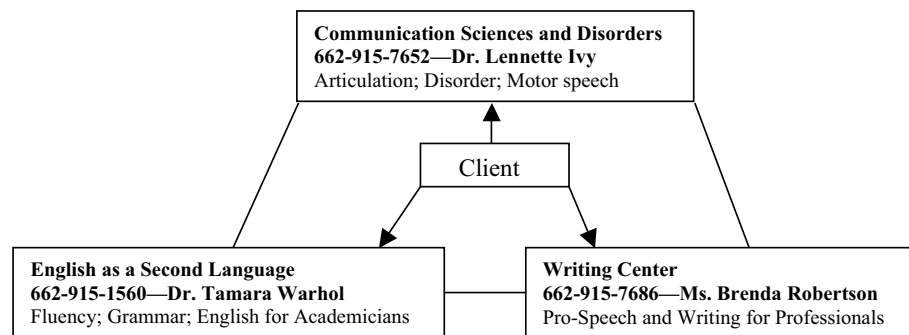
Here is where the fun begins. Have you ever had a student ask you to lower their grade? It happens when their peers have given their essay too high a score. You know the student has learned when they can make this evaluation. All of this is completed outside of the classroom, is managed by the CPR program, and requires minimal input from the instructor after starting the assignment.

CPR assignments can be tailored to critical course content or to bring in topics otherwise outside the scope of a specific course like scientific ethics. Course credit for assignments is a must. Students won't do work that does not directly earn points toward a grade. The number of points is less important and a matter of choice. Content and credit are important but, I emphasize the long term benefit of the learning process the student experiences with CPR. Beginners should not expect to be great writers, but to be good re-writers by improving written drafts and expanding knowledge. That first self-evaluation brings this point home to them. They don't need to be perfect, just improving.

Everyone is busy. CPR requires little time to set-up. New assignments can be made in an hour or two. It is easy to customize. I invite you to begin experimenting with it in your classroom—on just one assignment. The mere mention of being part of a new experiment will engage your students. The idea that they will get to help you shape the content of the assignment for the future will have them salivating on your doorstep. Professor Arlene Russell gave an introduction to CPR last fall in the Provost's Professional Development Workshop Series. If you would like more information please contact me (hollis@olemiss.edu) or Dr. Lott (jlott@olemiss.edu) at the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

Teaching Tips

- **Help for Faculty and Graduate Instructors/Students with Speech Issues:** The three listed areas below can help with different issues of speech and communication.



- **Books on Reserve:** For students without needed books, place books on Library Reserve. See www.olemiss.edu/depts/general_library/files/circ/reserve.html#place . Publishers will frequently send faculty members a free copy of the book to do this.

Thinking Resources

- **Academic Cheating:** From the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Sunday, September 9, 2007, p. 18. See www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2007/09/09/CM59RIBI7.DTL .
- **Faculty discounts are available for selected resources:**
 1. **At Campus And Local Bookstores:**
 - Barnes & Noble: University of Mississippi faculty can receive a 10% discount on all books (both textbooks and trade books) simply by showing their university ID card. No application or periodic renewal is needed. This discount is **not** transferable to other B&N stores in Memphis or elsewhere.
 - Square Books: University of Mississippi faculty do not receive a discount for personal purchases; however they can receive a 20% tax-free discount for University-related purchases.
 2. **Airport Parking Discount:**

University of Mississippi faculty, staff and students can obtain a “Frequent Parker Member” card for use in the Airport Fast Park near the Memphis airport. The membership is free and may be obtained through the www.airportfastpark.com website. The cost of parking is \$7.50 per day including tax. Parking is located at the corner of Airport Boulevard and Winchester with frequent shuttle service running between individual vehicles and the terminal.

Book Review

The Elements of Teaching Writing: A Resource for Instructors in All Disciplines by Katherine Gottschalk and Keith Hjortshoj. Bedford/ St. Martin's, 2004. ISBN: 0312406835. This guidebook for teaching writing will interest the practitioner more than the composition theorist. Replete with classroom tips and suggestions and armed

with a detailed table of contents and index, this book is ideal for instructors wishing to efficiently improve their writing assignments and grading practices. *Stephen Monroe*, Department of English.

For a complete review see www.olemiss.edu/depts/cetl/Elements_of_Teaching_Writing_Stephen_Monroe.pdf .

Real Applications Inspire Students continued from Front Cover

Always ready to use science, physics, chemistry, and economics to solve problems, he wants students to be able to do the same type of work. For example, he takes a group of students in a materials course to the B&B Concrete Plant in Tupelo where they can get their hands dirty, learn about industry technology use on site, and relate the classroom theory to the field.

Professor Uddin describes his UM students as being very disciplined, truthful and trustworthy resulting in him allowing them to help with his research. He describes one student as being given an assignment, setting up the lab to do the work, training others to help do the work, and then asking Dr. Uddin not to micromanage the work itself. This example shows a level of Professor Uddin's trust in the students.

As advice to other faculty, Dr. Uddin, after being strongly influenced both by teachers and people in the field, says:

- Understand the students
- Get to know them
- Keep an open door
- Read your student evaluations and act on what you can change
- Expect class attendance; find ways to discourage absences
- Develop evaluation instruments for more frequent use than the end of the semester only

- Assess early
- Get to know staff as well as other faculty members
- Excite students; let them see theory used
- Continually emphasize good content

Dr. Uddin is a faculty member who deserves a teaching award.

Grants and Awards

Graduate Instructor/Teaching Assistant Award

A \$1000 graduate instructor/teaching assistant award for exemplary instruction will honor a student currently teaching at the University of Mississippi. The award, established by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning with monetary support from the University of Mississippi Foundation, recognizes that these students fill a needed teaching role in an outstanding way. For information about the award and the nomination process, see http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/cetl/GITA_award.html. **The deadline for the 2008 award is March 1, 2008.**

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