

## 2010-2011 Marian Wright Teaching Circles

***The Thompson Center for Learning and Teaching is pleased to announce that 10 teaching circles***

***have formed for the 2010-2011 academic year. It is not too late to join a circle if you see one***

***that interests you – just contact the facilitator directly, at the email provided.***

**Academic Integrity Issues** ~ Facilitator: Kelly Brown, Public Health and Health Sciences, [brownkel@umflint.edu](mailto:brownkel@umflint.edu)

The evaluation of the millennial generation's written work has posed new challenges to us as educators. Their sense of instant gratification, in regards to technology and information, often makes them believe the idea was their own, when it was merely a "cut and paste." We want to discuss this phenomenon and hope to develop a plan to help us better educate our students on the subject of academic integrity. We also plan to address the following:

- Are we, as faculty, doing enough to ensure students understanding of Academic Integrity?

- How do we "police" the issue?

- Example: U of M AA – College of Engineering Honor Council

- Sharing anecdotes of dealing with the issue

- Solutions for faculty that encounter students that cheat

- Should Academic Integrity be covered in UNV 100?

- Development of policies for departments to have a course of action

**Assessment of Teaching as Scholarship** ~ Facilitators: Linda Pickett, Early Childhood Education, [lpickett@umflint.edu](mailto:lpickett@umflint.edu), and Bonnie Heckard, Assistant Provost, [bheckard@umflint.edu](mailto:bheckard@umflint.edu)

We all know that assessment is an essential, informative aspect of teaching, and yet it sometimes seems to take time that we think we should be spending on actually teaching or working on our scholarship. In this teaching circle, we intend to explore ways that we can more fully integrate assessment with our teaching and research responsibilities in ways that support us as professionals while also improving our teaching for our students. In this way, we hope to reenvision

assessment as scholarship. We intend to look at presentation and publication venues for sharing our assessment successes so that our colleagues on campus and beyond can also benefit from these successes in their own teaching. We welcome members from across campus to join us.

**Crucial Conversations** ~ Facilitator: Carol Daly, Physical Therapy, [cardaly@umflint.edu](mailto:cardaly@umflint.edu)

Effective communication is critical for every organization. While the foundation of academic relationships is built on the concept of dialogue, the actual behaviors and skills that support the open exchange of ideas is often missing. *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When the Stakes are High* is a book and training program widely used in business that helps to define the skill set needed for effective dialogue. While our teaching circle will not encompass actual training program, we will be able to set an agenda that includes reading the book, discussing and reflecting on the concepts that are presented, and participating in analysis of crucial conversation scenarios. The objectives of this teaching circle are to improve awareness of the barriers to dialogue, to develop skills in self reflection and self knowledge that lead to conditions of safety in dialogue, and to foster improved communication between faculty and students.

**Library Instruction in First Year Experience Courses** ~ Facilitators: Mickey Doyle, [mdoyle@umflint.edu](mailto:mdoyle@umflint.edu) and Laura Friesen, Library, [lflynn@umflint.edu](mailto:lflynn@umflint.edu)

The new General Education plan calls for students to gain skills in library research, and there is some consensus that students could begin working on these skills in first year experience courses. This teaching circle's discussion will focus on the best way to use time within any first

year experience course to begin the process of teaching students the concepts and skills involved in doing appropriate library research.

**Games, Play, and Interconnectedness in a Global Society** ~ Facilitator: Sharman Siebenthal Adams, Education, [sharmans@umflint.edu](mailto:sharmans@umflint.edu)

This teaching circle explores project-based game learning by looking at the role that games (both traditional and electronic [including online games]) play within our society. In particular, the group continues to examine how games have and continue to influence teaching and learning communities. Further, we examine how both young students and adults use games to create a better understanding of the world in which they live, play, and interact with others.

**Social Intelligence: What Does It Mean to My Classroom?** ~ Facilitator: Amy Yorke, Physical Therapy, [amyorke@umflint.edu](mailto:amyorke@umflint.edu)

This teaching circle will focus on the concept of social intelligence. Social intelligence is made up of social awareness (empathy, attunement, empathic accuracy, and social cognition) and social facility (synchrony, self-presentation, influence, and concern). The concept of how social intelligence impacts classroom management, teaching, and other relationships at the university will be discussed. Members will be encouraged to visit other member's classrooms which will provide the opportunity for further discussion and sharing. After participating in this teaching circle, participants will increase their awareness of the use of social intelligence in order to effectively manage themselves and their students in their classrooms in order to positively influence the learning that occurs.

**Suite Development in General Education – linking FYE, distribution requirements and capstone courses** ~ Facilitator: Tracy Wacker, Biology, [twacker@umflint.edu](mailto:twacker@umflint.edu)

When UM-Flint set out to change its general education program, one of the problems that we sought to rectify was that our students were not receiving enough depth in their non-major courses. The GE proposal that we voted for offered a remedy to this problem by proposing 1) suites of courses that were linked thematically at least in part, and 2) a service-learning requirement in distribution courses. Currently we have more distribution categories than originally proposed (potentially increasing breadth and reducing depth within GE) and the suite component of general education has yet to be pursued. Offering suites of courses is one of the best ways to ensure depth of learning and acquisition of knowledge in general education programs.

One way that we can make our GE program stronger and aligned more with the original proposal would be to link courses thematically to the FYE experience. For example, there are two FYEs about food, which could be linked to BIO, ANT, BUS, ECN, HIS, etc. with perhaps a CAS capstone relevant to the topic. There is great opportunity to incorporate community engagement and service learning into the sequence. Hopefully, some (if not all) of the courses would fulfill a distribution credit for GE as well. Another FYE (not offered yet) is about energy and it would be easy enough to find suites of courses that would align with this FYE. There are possibilities for just about all of the approved FYEs. The teaching circle would need to discuss the feasibility, advantages, etc. of all suite ideas, as well as determine which established courses already fit the bill for suite consideration.

**The Mathematical Knowledge Needed by Secondary Mathematics Teachers** ~ Facilitator: Laura McLeman, Mathematics, [lauramcl@umflint.edu](mailto:lauramcl@umflint.edu)

This teaching circle will utilize readings and discussions to challenge one another's ideas and beliefs regarding the following questions:

What mathematical content is necessary in order to be a successful secondary mathematics teacher?

- a. How, if at all, is this knowledge different than the knowledge needed for a traditional mathematics degree?
- b. What can we as instructors do to assure our PSMTs are presented multiple

opportunities to acquire the mathematical knowledge they need for teaching?

c. How can we reframe the PSMTs' capstone course through this lens?

**Christianity and Socialism** ~ Facilitator: Tristin Hassell, Philosophy, [thassell@umflint.edu](mailto:thassell@umflint.edu)

Last year this circle met to discuss several major texts currently contributing to the dialogue between Christianity and Socialism. Of interest to many of us was the theoretical turn in continental philosophy and political science toward both heterodox and orthodox versions of Christian theology. This year we hope to reveal the genealogy of that turn and question its necessity and value for our respective disciplines. The books that we will be looking at are: Zizek, S., Davis, C. and J. Milbank. 2010. *Paul's New Moment: Continental Philosophy and the Future of Christian Theology*. Brazos Press.

Zizek, S., Davis, C. and J. Milbank (eds.). 2005. *Theology and the Political: The New Debate*. Duke University Press.

Agamben, G. 2005. *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*. Stanford University Press.

Harink, D. 2010. *Paul, Philosophy, and the Theopolitical Vision: Critical Engagements with Agamben, Badiou, Zizek and others*. Cascade Books.

**Music and Movement** ~ Facilitator: Della Becker-Cornell, Early Childhood Development Center, [dellac@umflint.edu](mailto:dellac@umflint.edu)

Obesity in early childhood continues to be a concern. General health and fitness through eating right and participating in physical activity are vital components of the daily structure at the ECDC. The full-time staff is interested in exploring innovative and exciting techniques to enhance the basic music and movement activities done on a daily basis. Through researching new possibilities, enhancing our music selection, and working with the MUS 185 class with Sheri Jaffurs, the ECDC staff will develop an extensive resource of music and movement ideas to make everyone want to get up and dance.

### 2009-2010 Marian Wright Teaching Circles

*The Thompson Center for Learning and Teaching is pleased to announce that 9 teaching circles have formed for the 2009-2010 academic year.*

**Christianity and Socialism** ~ Facilitator: Tristin Hassell, Philosophy, [thassell@umflint.edu](mailto:thassell@umflint.edu)

This circle will address the question of paradox versus parallax. That is, how faculties cope with the teaching/training of students whose ideology/ practices are entirely different to that of the faculty. In this relationship, how is one to distinguish honestly between accommodation and collaboration? This circle will look at these broad questions through the lens of the complex relationship (in both theory and practice) between Christianity and Socialism. This will require an in depth analysis of thinkers including Zizek, Milbank, Hegel, and Heidegger, and also an enquiry as to how this dubious relationship is dealt with politically and economically on the ground. The specific case studies are likely to focus on America, Britain, Chile, and Nicaragua.

**Teaching and Learning Opportunities for a Healthy Policy Institute** ~ Facilitator: Suzanne Selig, Health Sciences & Administration, [sselig@umflint.edu](mailto:sselig@umflint.edu)

Health Policy is a broad field which encompasses an understanding of the policy development process at all levels of government. Health policies impact every aspect of health promotion, disease prevention, and disease treatment that comprises the health care "system." This is a

timely topic with discussions of health care “reform” underway. There is an interest among the members to investigate further development and understanding of the multiple facets of health policy for learning and research. The topic to be addressed is: What is the value of developing a Health Policy Institute at University of Michigan-Flint?

**Teaching Capital(ism)** ~ Facilitator: Adam Lutzker, Economics, [alutzker@umflint.edu](mailto:alutzker@umflint.edu)

This teaching circle will focus on the history of debates over the concept of “capital” in the political economy tradition. The goal is to help teachers that study capitalism to negotiate the complexities of the concept. While Karl Marx is the central theorist of this tradition, there exist both prior tradition of classical political economy (Smith, Ricardo, etc) and a continuing series of debates among later theorists over the meaning, significance, and essential features of capital. The teaching circle will focus on the emergence of the capital concept, its relation to the labor theory of value, and the new manifestations in popular, academic, and bureaucratic discourses as metaphor (cultural capital, human capital, and social capital).

**Bridging Disciplines: History and the Social Sciences** ~ Facilitator: Derwin Munroe, Political Science, [dmunroe@umflint.edu](mailto:dmunroe@umflint.edu)

The social sciences are traditionally divided by different topical interests, methodologies, and research practices. Interdisciplinary research sought to systematically integrate temporal analysis, interpretation of meanings and symbols, and causal analysis. The objective of this Teaching Circle is to survey the assumptions, logics, epistemologies, and research practices that define the social sciences, and those that lie at the intersections of disciplines. The exercise is critical for enhanced research and teaching within the disciplines, but also to build a shared understanding of how teaching in the social sciences may be integrated and to develop a common language that may aid in the assessment of tradition of the philosophy of history and of the social sciences to explore the problems and prospects of an integrated understanding of the social sciences.

**Integration of Scholarly Activity with Teaching and Learning: Boyer’s Model at Work** ~ Facilitator: Jennifer Blackwood, Physical Therapy, [jblackwo@umflint.edu](mailto:jblackwo@umflint.edu)

Most members of this teaching circle are early in their academic careers at the University of Michigan-Flint and are interested in incorporating the areas of scholarship of application, integration, and teaching into their instruction. This circle seeks to foster peer support to assist new colleagues as they develop into productive faculty members and scholars of teaching in the university setting. Potential topics of discussion include:

- The use of Boyer’s model of scholarship and how it applies to our teaching methodologies.
- Active engagement techniques: are the students listening, processing, or sleeping with eyes open? How can we improve upon this?
- Reflective teaching and learning: Not just good for the student.
- How do we as faculty integrate community service or civic engagement with our students to enhance learning?
- Peer reviewed assessment: tell me what I am saying and how effective am I?
- How can we develop the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning to enhance our educating skills?

**Using Technology in Early Childhood Education** ~ Facilitator: Della Becker-Cornell, Early Childhood Development Center, [dellac@umflint.edu](mailto:dellac@umflint.edu)

Even though the Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) is an accredited program, we have a long way to go when it comes to adapting to a paperless department and becoming a technology based program. One of our goals is to problem solve ways to implement a new green outlook in our center. The construction of classroom websites for the distribution of family, staff and classroom news is underway but still needs discussion, collaboration, and feedback from fellow staff members and families. In addition to allowing families to view information online and fill out paperwork/forms online will allow us to move towards a technology based center. Documentation of our children's learning is very important and can easily be managed through the use of technology. Collaboration is necessary to distinguish other technology needs of the staff and families as we move our program forward. This Teaching Circle will allow each classroom to stay connected with the other's vision, thus keeping ECDC ahead of all its competitors.

**Project Based International Teaching and Learning Opportunities** ~ Facilitator: Sharman Siebenthal Adams, Education, [sharamans@umflint.edu](mailto:sharamans@umflint.edu)

Helping students expand their understanding about topics related to International Education is a complex process. In forming this teaching circle, members plan to focus on finite areas of teaching and learning related to International Project Based learning opportunities. Within our discussions and analysis we examine past and current experiences with multimedia, project based learning, and international travel with students.

**Film Studies – Past, Present, and Future** ~ Facilitator: Darryl Baird, Communication & Visual Arts, [dbaird@umflint.edu](mailto:dbaird@umflint.edu)

A discussion and potential planning phase to bring together faculty and coursework based on cinema, film history, philosophy, production, and criticism into a minor or major at UM-Flint.

**Inquiry Based Learning** ~ Facilitator: Kristina Hansen & Matt Wyneken, Mathematics & Education, [khansen@umflint.edu](mailto:khansen@umflint.edu) & [mwyneken@umflint.edu](mailto:mwyneken@umflint.edu)

The co-facilitators, Krista Hansen (mathematics) and Matt Wyneken (elementary education mathematics), had the opportunity to attend the “12<sup>th</sup> Annual Legacy of R.L. Moore Conference” this past summer. Moore was a University of Texas mathematician renowned for both his research and the many and high caliber PhD students he produced. Over these many years “modified Moore methods” of teaching, otherwise known as inquiry based learning (IBL) have been developed by many of Moore's academic descendants and others. The purpose of this teaching circle is to investigate these methods of teaching. While the book we will be reading has collegiate mathematics as its intent, the book is mostly about teaching and the method applies to all disciplines. For example, the final session of the conference we attended was a panel of Berry College faculty including representatives of the departments of physics, chemistry, and philosophy, as well as mathematics. The title of their session was “IBL Across the Curriculum.”

“The Moore Method: A Pathway to Learner-Centered Instruction,” by Charles A. Coppin, W. Ted Mahavier, E. Lee May, G. Edgar Parker. The Mathematical Association of America, MAA Notes # 75, 2009.

Link to The Legacy of R.L. Moore Project: <http://www.discovery.utexas.edu/rlm/>

Link to “The Moore Method” book:

<https://www.maa.org/EbusPPRO/DynamicSearch/ProductDetailsAdvancedSearch/tabid/176/ProductId/2230/Default.aspx>

## **2008-2009 Marian Wright Teaching Circles**

***The Thompson Center for Learning and Teaching is pleased to announce that 6 teaching circles have formed for the 2008-2009 academic year. It is not too late to join a circle if you see one that interests you – just contact the facilitator directly, at the email provided.***

***Early Childhood Leadership: Assessment, Documentation and Evaluation*** ~ Facilitator: Aviva Dorfman, Assistant Professor, Early Childhood Education, [adorfman@umflint.edu](mailto:adorfman@umflint.edu)

As educators in the field of early childhood education, we share a common aspect of our work: assessing student and children as they learn. We plan to read together about assessment and in particular to work on developing skills in portfolio collection. We intend to share focus as colleagues and develop our relationships with one another through discussing texts and examining documentation and portfolio process and their implication for our work.

***Environment as the Third Teacher*** ~ Facilitator: Della Becker-Cornell, Director, Early Childhood Development Center, [dellac@umflint.edu](mailto:dellac@umflint.edu)

The full-time staff of ECDC is committed to providing an optimal learning environment for the children it serves from the campus and local community including providing an exceptional training facility for practicum students completing their internship in preparation for their careers. This teaching circle will research how to design early childhood classroom environments that provide a variety of sensory experiences in an aesthetically pleasing manner, using both indoors and outdoors as learning spaces. Our goal will be to provide an enriched environment that nourishes each child’s development.

**Community Building in Teacher Preparation** ~ Facilitator: Barbara Cherem, Assistant Professor, Education, [bcherem@umflint.edu](mailto:bcherem@umflint.edu)

As an outgrowth of the SEHS fall retreat, the Education Department planned on establishing a monthly time to forge relationships through shared professional interests. Therefore, this teaching circle would serve as the forum to facilitate this, with the following goals in mind:

Community-building through increased time together and shared interests: research, subject matter innovations, professional reading or lectures. A book study focused along the lines of shared visions and a professional community such as: Dufour's Professional Learning Community; Wheatley's Turning to One Another; Danielson's Enhancing Professional Practice or Darling-Hammond's Power Teacher Preparation.

**Critical Political Economy of the Current Global Crisis** ~ Facilitator: Derwin Munroe, Lecturer, Political Science, [dmunroe@umflint.edu](mailto:dmunroe@umflint.edu)

The faculty involved in this teaching circle is interested in learning about and teaching our students about different dimensions of the current global crisis. Recent contributions to the academic literatures from economics, political science, global studies and sociology that address a range of topics will be explored. Since these are issues that our students confront on a daily basis, either personally or via the mass media, we believe this will be an important set of pedagogical topics to address.

**Peer Review of Teaching** ~ Facilitator: Tom Ruediger, Instructor cum Assistant Professor, Physical Therapy, [ruediger@umflint.edu](mailto:ruediger@umflint.edu)

This teaching circle will work to examine the barriers and opportunities as they pertain to implementing peer review of teaching in the School of Health Professions and Studies. Anticipated sub-components for discussion include:

- Why should we do peer review? Why shouldn't we do peer-review?
- Should peer-review be part of the tenure decision?
- What is the evidence that peer-review is useful?
- How can I get assistance in my teaching before I am "graded"?
- Can we quantify effective teaching?
- Sounds like a lot of work/time. Who would do all this peer-review?

**Exploring the Political Writings of Tariq Ali** ~ Facilitator: Ananth Aiyer, Associate Professor, Anthropology, [aaiyer@umflint.edu](mailto:aaiyer@umflint.edu)

This group of faculty is interested in engaging in critical discussions of the political writings of Tariq Ali, the Winegarden Visiting Professor for 2008-09. Tariq Ali has written on a variety of topics on issues from around the world, past and present, in literary, journalistic, and social scientific articles and books. His recent “political” works, though, focus on the unfolding turmoil in Latin America and South Asia, including the changing roles of U.S. policies and imperial politics, and explores their impact on citizens in Latin America, Pakistan/Afghanistan, and the U.S. This Circle is thus geared towards learning about and exploring the pedagogical relevance of Tariq Ali’s writings, and using it as a forum to facilitate faculty/student engagement and involvement during Ali’s visit in 2009.

### **2007-2008 Marian Wright Teaching Circles**

**Models of Management in Academia** ~ **Facilitators:** Donna Fry, Associate Professor and Director; and Laura LoVasco, Associate Director for Clinical Education, Physical Therapy Department ~ Number of Participants: 9

*The purpose of the teaching circle was to facilitate department meetings where faculty and staff could discuss and clearly define the collegial model of management and how the model could be adapted to address the needs of the department. Many of the teaching circle meetings focused on the use of effective communication within the collegial model. The teaching circle helped members of the department begin serious discussions about their relationships, communication and decision making within the department. Two books were purchased to help facilitate discussions: “Our Iceberg is Melting” by John Kottor and “Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Field Guide” by Patrick Lencioni.*

*It is hoped that the teaching circle will continue its work next year; members identified the following as potential areas to address:*

- *Role delineations*
- *Decision making model*
- *Being a team member*
- *How to keep department work flowing smoothly*

**Reggio, UM-Flint Style: Balancing Philosophy and Best Practice** ~ **Facilitator:** Beverly Schumer, Associate Professor, Education ~ Number of Participants: 11

*This teaching circle was a continuation of a circle formed last year entitled, “Early Childhood Leadership: Mentoring and Facilitating Professional Development.” However, the purpose of this year’s teaching circle was to build a collective understanding about the Reggio Emilia philosophy and curriculum among the Early Childhood Education faculty and staff, and explore how the UM-Flint program was demonstrating best practice within the Reggio framework. The DVDs listed*

*below were purchased and used to support the understanding of the Reggio practices and philosophy throughout the teaching circle meeting discussions.*

*Beverly Schumer, Associate Professor and Aviva Dorfman, Assistant Professor, presented a scholarly paper, "Building Departmental Community Through Teaching Circles: Year Two," at the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters at Western Michigan University this past March.*

*DVDs purchased:*

- *An Amusement Park for Birds*
- *The Hubley Collection: Everybody Rides the Carousel*
- *Focused Observations*
- *Supporting Children in Resolving Conflict*

**TCP Capstone Development Project** ~ **Facilitator:** Kirk Weller, Assistant Professor, Mathematics ~ Number of Participants: 6

*The Mathematics Department is in the process of revising its Teaching Certificate Program and developing a capstone course is vital to the program's revision and success. The teaching circle provided a forum where faculty could identify, read, and discuss various position papers, research articles and recommendations that deal with the capstone course development and implementation. The teaching circle facilitator, Dr. Kirk Weller, team-taught a capstone course at MSU during the winter 2008 semester as part of a grant from the National Science Foundation. Due to the demands of teaching the course however, the teaching circle did not meet during the winter semester. Dr. Weller plans to share his experience with UM-Flint faculty and guide them as they work towards developing the course.*

*The teaching circle featured Dr. Richard Hill, Professor of Mathematics from Michigan State University, who presented his work, research and experience with capstone courses to teaching circle members.*

**Children's Mathematical Thinking** ~ **Facilitator:** Matt Wyneken, Associate Professor, Education ~ Number of Participants: 10

*Members of the teaching circle studied the book, "Young Mathematicians at Work: Constructing Number Sense, Addition and Subtraction" by Catherine Twomey Fosnot and Maarten Dolk. By studying this text, faculty developed a better understanding of children's mathematical thinking (CMT) which will help them develop learning experiences aimed at assisting children to construct their own knowledge and make sense of foundational mathematics.*

**Higher Education Across Disciplines, Country and Culture** ~ **Facilitators:** Jie Song, Assistant Professor, Chemistry and Jacob Peng, Assistant Professor, School of Management ~ Number of Participants: 9

*A group of Chinese-speaking faculty formed this teaching circle in order to better understand the challenges caused by conflicts between cultures and disciplines and how to address these differences in order to be more effective in educating UM-Flint students. Members discussed the differences between the culture and education at UM-Flint as it compares to the education they received in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. They used the ideas shared to develop teaching strategies that would be effective on our campus. The teaching circle also held a student forum with approximately 20 international students from various parts of Asia in which the students shared their learning experiences. Members felt that this session provided invaluable*

*information and will help them better serve our students. Dr. Zongde Wang, Visiting Scholar in Chemistry and Biochemistry, also participated with the teaching circle and was able to provide insight to the current changes in higher education in mainland China.*

**Taking Learning to the Streets ~ Facilitator:** Susan Gano-Phillips, Associate Professor, Psychology

The group is planning to print a resource guide for faculty regarding civic engagement projects.

**2006-2007**

***Exploring Strategies for Teaching Diversity Courses***

Exploring Strategies for Teaching Diversity Courses

Facilitator: Wei Cao, Education Department

This teaching circle is designed to form a supporting environment for faculties who are teaching or interested in teaching diversity courses. We will share, identify, and explore a variety of strategies to address the challenges many of us encounter in classrooms as well as ways to engage students in the learning process. We also hope this teaching circle will serve as a platform for building a community of scholars who are teaching diversity courses on campus.

***Broadening our Visions: Examining the authorities of the global energies on the SEHS***

Facilitator: Susanne Chandler, SEHS

We are a school of mostly junior and untenured faculty, with few long-term tenured/senior faculty to help mentor/model processes, vision, etc. In an effort to grow together toward the visioning and broad perspectives needed to lead our unit/s and university in healthy and productive considerations, we have agreed as an entirety to host at the minimum a year-long brown-bag lunch discussion series. Our focus will be on learning to understand the influences of the larger global events on our particularized areas so as to strengthen our directions. We have agreed to proceed with this through an agreed upon set of readings, and focused discussions.

***Ethics in Public Life: Opportunities for Interdisciplinary Study***

Facilitator: Susan Gano-Phillips, Psychology Department

This teaching circle will discuss how ethics is conceived of and taught within members' individual disciplines as well as how interdisciplinary studies of ethics focusing on "real world" challenges might be organized. The group will consider how classroom discussion might be combined with community engagement projects to highlight important ethical issues. Ethics will be used as an organizing theme as the teaching circle works to develop a model for an interdisciplinary course.

***Early Childhood Leadership: Mentoring and Facilitating Professional Development***

Facilitator: Beverly Schumer, Education Department

As educators in the field of Early Childhood, classroom teachers and director of the Early Childhood Developmental Center and the Early Childhood Department faculty, we share a common aspect of our work: assisting UM-Flint students and other adults in developing their abilities as early childhood educators. We plan to read together about mentoring student teachers and other professionals in the context of classroom practice and teacher preparation programs. We intend to share a focus as colleagues and develop our relationships with one another through reading and discussing texts and their implications for our work.

***Understanding Social Activism in Islamic Feminist Literature: A Focus on Nawal El Saadawi's Woman At Point Zero***

Facilitator: Ernest Emenyonu, Africana Studies Department

Woman writers in predominantly Islamic countries are becoming increasingly irrepresible activists in their commitments to the feminist ideology of women's liberation. Nawal El Saadawi, a Physician-turned-versatile Egyptian writer (novelist, playwright etc) is currently described as the "spokesperson of women's struggles in the Arab world." Her novel, *Woman at Point Zero* says it all! She will be visiting UM-Flint for one week in March 2007. The Teaching Circle will study and discuss this novel and excerpts of her writings prior to her visit.

***Exploring a Film & Video Studies Minor***

Facilitator: Fred Svoboda, English Department

The nine of us listed above began emailing last spring, meeting once in June, to explore possible directions for a Film and Video Studies (or Media Studies) minor. UM-Flint already teaches very similar courses to those that make up such a program at Ann Arbor, Michigan State and Central Michigan, so this should not be an onerous task. We have been discussing what courses would be appropriate for such a minor, whether any new courses should be added, who else we should consult, what administrative structure would be needed, how we would coordinate course offerings/schedules, etc., what would be the strengths of such a minor and its appeal to students, and whether there are particular pitfalls we should avoid.

***Tailoring Science Education for Education Students***

Facilitators: Li-hsuan Yang, Education, and Marian Aanerud, CSESP Department

This is a teaching circle that includes faculty members who are teaching or are interested in teaching science courses to prospective K-12 teachers to discuss challenges and exchange ideas related to our teaching and the science learning experiences of our students.

***Promoting Strong Teaching and Learning Experiences Through Online Courses***

Facilitator: Sharman Siebenthal Adams, Education Department

Nationwide online University course offerings have increased. This trend has also been seen here at UMF. While the growing demand pushes faculty and administrators to meet students' increased needs related to online course offerings, many questions still abound with regard to the manner and mechanisms faculty should use in successfully meeting those needs. The purpose of this teaching circle is to collaborate with members across campus in order to further investigate not only what steps are being taken at UMF but also at other universities. Members of this teaching circle are interested in pursuing investigation of both the successes and challenges related to online teaching.

### ***Scientific Writing: Grading and Teaching***

Facilitator: Jessica Tischler, Chemistry and Biochemistry Department.

We would like to explore the differences in scientific writing vs. the standard curriculum. We hope to develop specific teaching points that can be used to help students write better research papers and literature reviews than what we currently see. We also hope to develop rubrics that we can use to emphasize these ideas and help grading be quicker and less subjective. We have several books that will form the basis of our discussions: *The Craft of Scientific Writing* by Michael Alley and *A Field Guide for Science Writers* by D. Blum, M. Knudson, and R. M. Henig (Eds).

## **2005-2006**

### **Standardizing Laboratory Communication at UMF**

Facilitator: Jessica Tischler

We wish to discuss the potential standardization of writing requirements in the laboratory sciences. There are many instances where courses have different requirements or even instructors within the same course may have different requirements for the same type of assignment (lab notebooks for example). We believe that integration of specific criteria for writing across the science curriculum will benefit both students and instructors; alleviating student confusion and anxiety and allowing for the development of a standard grading rubric as well.

### **Teaching & Learning Issues: The American Democracy Project**

Facilitator: Heather Laube

The University is a member of the American Democracy Project (ADP) and is working to determine just what the project will look like on our campus. One important component of this process is a careful consideration of the meaning of civic engagement and citizenship and how these differ from community service. Additionally, teaching and learning for citizenship can take a variety of forms including classroom analytic work, engagement and reflection with the community, and non-classroom learning experiences on campus. This teaching circle is concerned with the accurate and appropriate use of the above mentioned analytic categories.

### **Considerations in Math Education**

Facilitators: Mehrdad Simkani and Rose Casement

Teaching content and pedagogy to Elementary Education pre-service teachers will be studied in order that we may stay current with best practices in math education and demonstrate them with the pre-service teachers in our own classes.

### **Towards A New Purpose-driven, Student-centered and Intellectually Relevant Curricula**

Facilitator: Ernest N. Emenyonu

The issue of reforming the UM-Flint General Education Program is topical at this time, but of greater significance is the need to design a curriculum that will achieve a triangular function: purpose-driven, student-centered and intellectually relevant. The members of this Teaching Circle are coming together from various disciplines in an effort to come up with a curriculum model that focuses on purposeful relevance and a proper sense of direction for our students and the university.

### **Teaching Circle for 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> year Faculty**

Facilitator: Michael Farmer

Teaching full-time is probably the greatest challenge facing new faculty. The success of their teaching during the first 1-3 years can determine the long-term success of their entire career in academia. We will focus on the issues and concerns of new faculty during this critical first 1-3 years at U of M- Flint. All of the members are faculty within this time period, and all are tenure track assistant professors with the goal of being highly effective educators. We will address issues such as syllabus and course development, maximizing student engagement, balancing teaching and research, and involving students in new faculty research.

### **Information Literacy Across the Curriculum**

Facilitator: Laura Friesen-Lynn

Information literacy should be an integral part of UM-Flint's newly designed core curriculum. Incorporating information literacy into this design will require the collaboration of librarians, faculty and administration. The skills and knowledge involved in true information literacy will not be gained in one class session, but rather must be built over the course of an academic career. This teaching circle will focus on what an information literacy program will look like, including, potentially, the design of online tutorials and for-credit courses on information literacy.

### **Promoting a Culture of Student Success**

Facilitator: Jack Kay

Promoting a culture of student success is integral to the outcome of several key University initiatives including Enrollment Growth, General Education Reform, and Strategic Planning. For us to adequately address any one of these initiatives, student success must be at the core of all discussions, decisions, and actions. This Teaching Circle will focus on answering the following question: What strategies should the University of Michigan-Flint adopt to promote a culture of student success? The answers to this question will ultimately impact everything from recruitment and retention to graduation rates. In fact, identifying strategies to promote a culture of student success may partially define the very fabric and ethos of our university.

### **2004-2005**

#### ***Flint Linguistics Group***

Facilitator: Kazuko Hiramatsu, English Department

The purpose of this teaching circle is to continue to look at how we can teach students about different aspects of language. This group is hosting the Michigan Linguists Society Meeting on campus in October, where Dr. Lisa Green will be presenting her research on African American English. They will discuss the use of dialects in Flint at some of the teaching circle meetings, to prepare for her talk.

#### ***Common Challenges in Health Care and Social Work:***

Facilitator: Dr. Suzanne Selig, Health Sciences and Administration

The goal of this teaching circle is to explore ways to advance collaboration among health care and social work professionals. At the meetings, members discuss the best practices within their respective fields and discuss ways to collaborate and/or strengthen the work that is done in the classroom and in the field.

## ***Teaching and Learning with Technology***

Facilitator: Sharman Siebenthal, Education Department

The purpose of this teaching circle is to explore issues related to teaching and learning with technology and expand upon the group's concerns over the balance between providing students with applicable skills and their sense of understanding related to technology. In sharing ideas over the use of technology, members have expressed interest in the growing demand and consequences of online coursework, ethics involved in teaching and using technology, the long-term development of hypermedia across subject matter, and the use of simulations within the classroom.