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An Academic Work–Life Balance Ride

Michele L. Vancour, *Public Health*

The intersection of work and family led to the development of the work–family field. Combining the roles associated with two spheres that often do not integrate well, like work and family provided a good foundation for examining the effect of trying to “have it all” on employees, families, and the workplace. Eventually, the field progressed into its current state of “work–life.” Work–life balance, the precarious act of men’s and women’s balancing acts of their multiple roles and responsibilities associated with engagement in paid work and activities (such as

family care, community service, professional development, and self-care) is often unachievable.

I believe this is the result of three commonly held, but inadequate ways, to consider work–life. The first approach involves picturing a pie and, after assigning the different pieces of pie to various roles, acknowledging that most adults primarily engage in paid and unpaid work. Then, realizing that there isn’t much time (or pie) left for life. In contrast, the second perspective considers that life starts at birth and ends at death, and questions how it can be separated from work since work is such a large propor-

tion of life. The final idea portrays work–life balance as if each is a weight on a scale; however, it fails to acknowledge the true experiences that everyone endures on his/her path. To simplify our passage through life as a balancing act neglects to acknowledge the sacrifice and servitude we so gallantly provide at home and at work. Regardless of the method, the sentiment behind the idea of work–life balance is a good one: live a life that allows for fulfillment in and across the various roles in which we engage.

I have a “just do it” approach in tackling my various roles and responsibilities, which has led to

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From the Editor

Happy Spring ! It often seems as though this is the busiest time within the academic year with award and grant proposal cycles, preparations for the Teaching Academy and so much more. We in Faculty Development could not do what we do without the help received from colleagues who lend their talents and ears in the midst of workloads and

outside commitments. To us, they model the delicate art and science of work–life balance.

As a part-time instructor in addition to a full-time Faculty Development professional, I understand and appreciate the challenges of balancing work and life in academe and beyond. It is not easy, but

sometimes we need to take a moment out, plant a seed for well-being and tend to that seed if it is to grow.

I hope the views shared in this special issue will help your own work–life balance goals flower this Spring.

All best wishes,
Jennifer A. Hudson, Editor

SOUTHERN DIALOGUE GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSIONS AND EDITORIAL POLICIES

Southern Dialogue gladly considers:

- Short reports from different disciplines on college classroom practices
- Articles that focus on practical ideas related to teaching and learning in higher education and explorations of issues and challenges facing university faculty today.
- Announcements of work-in-progress and requests for collaborators
- Announcements of conference presentations, publications, community outreach and creative projects
- Scholarship of teaching and learning/pedagogical book and website reviews
- Images in JPEG format with a minimum resolution of 300 dpi.

Submissions must be in electronic format (as a MS Word file). Send to Jennifer A. Hudson, Editor, at HUDSONJ1@southernct.edu.

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When the Going Gets Tough, the Tough Get...Organized?

Allison Bass, *English Department & Women's Center*

As a single mother obtaining an associate's, bachelor's, and, most recently, a master's degree with her daughter in tow the past 12 years, I have acquired many interesting skills to carry out my life responsibilities from both a mothering and a career perspective. Within the last year or so I have finished my schooling and joined the English faculty part-time, in addition to working part-time as a University Assistant in the Women's Center. My daughter is 12, and with that comes dance, choir, Girl Scouts (I'm the leader of the troop), peer mediation club, swimming, volunteering, and entertaining friends in abundance! Then come (often secondarily) my own slew of physical, emotional, and mental needs: my monthly book club, my dance class, my yoga class, my desire to keep up with my academic interests: grief theory, work/life balance, composition, and feminist/LGBT rights. Add onto all of this the normal, everyday tasks of keeping a household functioning—cleaning, cooking, laundry, shopping—and my mind begins to swim. Sometimes if I gaze too long at the whole picture of my ever-increasing to-do list (when do I even have time to write that?) I begin to feel

overwhelmed, short of breath, and down-right beaten. I start to panic: my pulse increases and I have visions of creeping into my bed, locking the door, and never coming out again. What do I do when this happens? I remember the importance of community, and I put time with friends at the top of my list.

Along with the many other skills I have obtained from being a single mother, the one I consider by far the most important and essential to my success is the development and continuous nurturing of a community or set of communities, in which my daughter and I can both thrive. With this community, I am able to share my burdens, joys, and anxieties about mothering, my career, and my personal life. I am careful to surround myself with positive people and good friends. Often, I am so busy that the thought of time with friends seems laughable. Between helping Ashleigh with her homework and grading students' papers, I barely have time for sleep, much less a relaxing night with friends. Yet after years of feeling isolated, I have learned the power and effectiveness of community.

After moving to Connecticut from North Carolina in 2007, I hardly knew anyone. My family remained down south, and I often felt like

an isolated island with no support, save the sole relationship of my best friend. I got used to being alone, to doing things alone, and felt that letting others into my life would only make it more complicated and busier, a thought I could not bear at the time. Yet, I soon begin to see that developing a community could work in my favor. I strategically joined alliances where I thought I might be able to share similar goals and ambitions. I sought out people who presumably shared the same life values, interests, and passions. I worked very hard to nurture these relationships. I realized that building this community is essential for leading a healthy lifestyle. But the logistics of developing this community often held me back from thriving in it.

I began to develop a plan on how to keep myself involved in these communities I desired to develop. I realized there are many virtues my daughter can pick up from others: many attributes that I do not possess that other people can teach her. I began to see this community building as a crucial skill in my parenting. I decided that I alone cannot raise a fully well-rounded individual, but with the benefit of other personalities, a diverse upbringing would emerge. I began to become super-
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ganized with my community development. I tried to combine as many tasks as possible around this group of friends. As a graduate student, I would invite other cohorts over to discuss readings or future presentations. I would cook a meal (I had to cook for Ashleigh and me anyway), and invite them over to engage in meaningful conversation, while our kids played together in my small apartment. I felt that I was achieving many goals at once: I was doing the daily living activity of feeding myself and my daughter; knowing people were coming over inspired me to be more diligent about my weekly housecleaning; my daughter was exposed to a diverse group of men and women who valued education, and I was developing communities that would (hopefully) grow into dear friendships.

As these communities grew, I began to develop strategic steps towards sustainability. I knew I had to put forth effort into cultivating these friendships and communities. I began to be very deliberate about this process. I introduced friends from various groups to one another, when I thought a strong match was natural. I would write four or five friends' names on the side of my calendar and every month I made sure that I planned quality time with each of them. We were all busy, so sometimes this could prove difficult. But having their names on the side of my calendar kept me accountable. I reached out to them, and soon a miraculous thing happened. I began to see that they too were supportive of

me. I learned that it is okay to ask for help. Whether that is in my personal life or my professional community, I have learned that asking for help is a vital part of growing. We can all learn from one another. My community is a wonderful arrangement and one that I realize I needed very badly in my life.

Nowadays, this development of community has grown and expanded so much in my life that my community is swelling at the seams. I have parties throughout the year, and am always inspired at how many wonderful people are teaching me new ways to see life, keeping me fresh in my career and in my quest to be a great mother. It is no longer difficult to allow people in my life; now it can be difficult to find enough time to see every member of my glorious community. In response to this, I strive to combine my multiple communities, so that I am constantly surrounded by beautiful individuals that I can learn much from. I strive to find little ways to nurture my community. I have laundry parties with my friends, where they bring over their laundry and we socialize while getting the job done. Often I make a huge pot of soup and invite friends over to partake in the warmth of friendship and food. Around the holidays, we have wrapping parties. I try to find ways to turn mundane tasks into amazing time to spend with my community. I still use my calendar as a way to hold myself accountable in nurturing the ever-growing list of friends: my own set of community resources. By making this community devel-

opment a priority, it stays at the top of my list as a means for survival.

Last week, I attended a family team building night at my daughter's school. The agenda for the night was to bring (often seemingly unreachable) middle-schoolers and their (seemingly uncool) parents together. One task we participated in involved giving lots of compliments to one other. One of Ashleigh's compliments, though not directly pointed at me, meant so much. She said, "I love all your friends." When she said this, I was reminded that the communities I have developed have not only immensely benefited my own life, but have also enriched hers. The diversity in race, ethnic groups, religion, and lifestyles has impacted her ability to love, accept, and foster friendships with all types of people. She has learned the value of friendship and the importance of community. I believe this is one of the greatest values I have taught both her and myself. With this skill one can develop communities that fit the needs of her or his own life. One can learn to grow, evolve, and develop in one's own personal life, as well as in her or his career goals. I know that Ashleigh and I can truly thrive amongst our communities and this helps me to achieve success in my many areas of life management.

Below are some tips, originally published in the newsletter *Single IS Enough!: Embracing, Loving, and Thriving as*

a *Single Mother*, of which Allison is author and editor, that have helped her balance her role as an educator, advocate, and mother:

- Allow yourself to make mistakes. No one can be perfect. If you accept the fact that mistakes will happen, you spend less time worrying about the mistakes and more time getting on with life!
- Invest in a slow cooker (Crock Pot). These appliances are fairly inexpensive (small ones can be purchased for about \$25), and are easy to use. One can find a multitude of recipes for the slow cooker on the internet.
- Make out a detailed weekly schedule, including time for dinners, making school lunches, homework, and time with your children. Though it is practically impossible to stick to this schedule completely, it will help to keep you from getting sidetracked. If you miss something, don't fret!
- Be flexible and patient with yourself! Life is constantly changing. Try to reframe your thinking to remember when ever obstacles present themselves, it is a wonderful chance to grow as a mother (or father) and evolve as a woman (or man)!
- Get your children involved! Whether it's going to school or cleaning the house, kids love to be involved in

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An Academic Work–Life Balance Ride (cont'd from p. 1)

many people believing I am an expert in the application of work–life balance. The truth is that I am more of a “do as I say” person, rather than leader by example in this area. I struggle daily with the combination of paid work and unpaid work, and most days are just filled with work. Leisure or any non-work “life” is so slight that I usually have to schedule it in for it to exist.

For me, work–life balance is a bit more like riding a roller coaster. In actuality, my life has been more like a wild rollercoaster ride for the last ten years, and despite the occasional side effects (e.g., breathlessness, exhaustion, nausea, and overwhelm), it’s been surreal albeit arduous. I guess I’ve always been a bit unbalanced. I started my Southern teaching career on the same day that I started my doctoral program in New York. I worked all day and slept little, so I was in good practice when my first son was born three years later (pre-tenure).

The daily regime of trying to “do it all” in order to “have it all” has been challenging, despite rewards at home and at work—two thriving, healthy boys, tenure, and two promotions—that made it worth my efforts. The decade of twists and

turns, uphill journeys, and downhill exhilarations have left their marks—wrinkles, graying hairs, occasional memory loss—behind in evidence of a whirlwind life. But life is good.

I am completing my 14th year at Southern. I am a professor of public health and president of the College and University Work–family Association. Combining demanding work, such as academia, with the societal pressures to achieve and maintain a successful, happy home is an onerous endeavor, often met with little appreciation or recognition. Despite this inherent flaw in acknowledgment, most of us persevere. While struggling to find the right words and positive encouragement for this article, I consulted with my oldest son, now ten years old. I asked Nathan what he thought I should tell people about balancing their work–life . With more wisdom than I expected, he replied, “Mom, just tell them to be present in the things that they do. Don’t try to do too many things at once. And, always remember that they are really doing things that matter to others. For example, when cooking dinner for their families, they should remember that providing a meal nourishes their family

through the food and time together. All of these things should add value to their work.” Wow! I guess I am doing a better job than I thought!

Nate’s unassuming assistance led me to consider Richard Carlson’s simple, but sage advice, *don’t sweat the small stuff*. It is often the little things, the unpredictable things, and the minutia that tries to sabotage our daily equilibrium. Since controlling everything is impossible, it’s often better to practice living life in the present, and focusing our efforts on what really matters. Combining the demands of work with other aspects of our highly structured lives isn’t simple, but we just do it, even when balance is unattainable. Employing flexibility helps, especially with our academic work and our students.

The regime of teaching four courses, conducting research and performing service often is hard to manage regularly due in part to the limited number of hours in a day. Although more time cannot be added, more time may be found within each day by making conscious choices, goal-setting, advanced planning, and placing restric-

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Balance Ride (cont'd from p. 4)

tions on the things that make it to our to-do lists. Luckily, support is available on campus. The Office of Human Resources and Labor Relations maintains resources and services on work-life balance at Southern. Information about Human Resources' role in creating an environment through which employees can be more effective in their multiple roles can be found at (<http://www.southernct.edu/employment/worklifebalance/>). Although work-life balance may escape some of us most of the time, it doesn't mean that we should not strive to find balance in our lives. It is in trying that we realize the potential to achieve. Just keep focused on what truly matters and what you hope to gain from your hard work. Remember, life is good and most of us are doing better than we think. *SD*

Minority Recruitment and Retention Grants

Fall 2011

Ilene Crawford, *English*, "Minority Recruitment Campus Institute"

Sobeira Latorre, *World Languages and Literatures*, "Annual Joint Conference of USACLALS"

Tricia Lin, *Women's Studies*, "Funding for Keynote Speaker Dolores Huerta for the 20th Annual Women's Studies Conference"

Carlos Torre, *Education*, "Second Annual SCSU Latino Film Festival"

The High Cost of Textbooks: Options and Alternatives

Jess L. Gregory, *Educational Leadership* and **Winnie Shyam**, *Library Services*

The rising cost of textbooks over the last few years is a much-discussed issue and has drawn national attention. Students cited financial resources as the greatest factor impacting attrition (tied with preparation for college-level work). In addition to soaring college tuitions, sky-high textbook prices are making higher education further beyond the reach of some students. How can we at Southern help our students and faculty cope with this problem?

According to an article published in *USA Today*, February 8, 2012, the College Board states that the average cost of textbooks per student per year is \$1,168.00. That the material in textbooks is more specialized and cannot be found easily in other sources contributes to such high costs. Additionally, book publishers market texts as packages with ancillary materials that are not available without the purchase of the package. As the cost of new books rise, the cost of the used book market also rises proportionately. To reduce the market share lost to the resale market, textbook publishers frequently print revised editions, with new and updated content that reduces the value of earlier editions. One result of the high cost of texts is that students try to get by without purchasing them.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) that came into effect July 1, 2010, brought about three major

changes in textbook publishing: publishers must now disclose prices and any information regarding revisions when they try to market books to professors; all bundled material must be sold separately instead of at a fixed cost; and universities must provide a list of books to students before they register so they can shop around for the lowest price.

What can professors do to alleviate the problem?

Beyond the Connecticut State Ethics Code our faculty can do more to help students. Since faculty control the textbooks assigned for the class, they can look for textbooks that are more affordable and of high quality. Publishers like Cengage offer a wide variety of options for reducing student cost for accessing text material. They offer alternatives to purchasing hard copies such as purchasing individual chapters, rentals of varying durations (with free return shipping), and eBooks that are equipped with annotation features. Cengage is not alone. Other publishers are offering professors options to reduce costs for students by selecting chapters from a variety of texts and charging based on relevant content.

Faculty can also work closely with the campus bookstore to order books early. During the start of the semester, students often clamor to the library looking for textbooks since the book store is out of new or used copies. If the selection of textbooks is done ahead of time the bookstore can perhaps com-

pete with any of the online stores that attract students by stocking low-cost used textbooks. By providing a list of texts and reading materials to the students well in advance professors can help them hunt for good bargains. A rule of thumb is to provide the course readings a month in advance of the class to permit students the greatest chance of finding low-cost versions.

Another option is to place personal or review copies on reserve at the library so they are available to all students in the class. The library already has a fairly active reserve system as many faculty place instructional materials on reserve each semester. If a faculty member is planning on using only a part of the textbook for the class that section could be scanned for electronic reserves so students can access them 24/7.

Newer editions of textbooks are generally more expensive than the older editions. If there is little change in content from one edition to the other faculty can prescribe the older version for class and make the new content available through library reserves.

Finally, professors may want to opt to not assign a formal textbook. Buley Library has extensive access to journal articles and other resources that may make a text redundant. Professors can use the library's reserves services or the classroom management system (BlackBoard) to provide

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Geographic Field Study in South Africa

C. Patrick Heidkamp,
Geography

The field-based course “Land Use & Sustainable Development in South Africa’s Western Cape Province” was taught during Winter Session 2011/12 and provided students with a geographical perspective of contemporary land use and sustainable development issues in South Africa’s Western Cape Province. Students took part in field lectures, seminar style discussions, and community based service-learning activities.



Dr. Heidkamp lecturing about the use of innovative ground cover and composting techniques in vineyard management



Students sightseeing at Cape Agulhas—Africa’s Southernmost point where the Indian and Atlantic Oceans Converge



Student Alicia Gray & pre-schoolers at the Lynedoch Ecovillage creche



A traditional Braai at the Stellenbosch Sustainability Institute



Wine Country, Stellenbosch



One of many loooooong road trips—traversing the Little Karoo



Enjoying the Moonrise (not sunset), Struisbay



Sanddunes near Struisbay

When the Going Gets Tough (cont'd from p. 3)

Mommy's (or Daddy's) lives. Even starting at a very young age (2), your children can be given small chores and "homework." Include them in these daily monotonous tasks. It's helpful to you, and good for them!

- Break an overwhelming goal into smaller steps! Sometimes looking at the big picture can be daunting! Break your large goals into smaller steps that feel more manageable.
- Celebrate the small stuff! Take time to celebrate your own or your child's successes. Celebrating the small steps will give you energy to focus on the next task. Make a favorite dinner, play a game, or create a themed movie night. Whatever you choose, make it fun and celebrate all of your family's hard work!
- Enjoy the Process! Often we only think of our lives as a road to a destination. Instead of constantly seeking the end results, slow down and learn from the process.

For more tips, visit Allison's *Single IS Enough!* newsletter online at: <http://www.southernct.edu/womenscenter/worklifebalanceconference/newsletter2012singleisenough/>.
SD



Academic Work–Life Balance: Small Changes Can Make Big Difference

Bonnie Farley-Lucas, *Communication*

We have only 24 hours per day and 7 days in a week, yet there are always pressures in balancing professional and personal demands. For most of us, "free time" is just as laughable as "expendable income." Conceptualizing work–family balance from a time management perspective means attending to how we choose to use our time. The more time we save, the more we have to invest in satisfying personal and professional pursuits. Here are some of my well-lived suggestions:

Time-Taming Teaching Strategies

- Use grading rubrics to reduce grading time.
- Give students clear guidelines for projects; provide samples.
- Avoid lengthy comments on students' work.
- State on your syllabus when you will be available and when you will reply to e-mail.
- E-mail at select times during the day, as opposed to continually checking.
- Use office hours effectively, since most students use e-mail more than face-to-face.

Refreshing Creative Activity

- Plan for the cyclical deadlines of professional conferences and performances. Collaborate on research to pool differing strengths and enjoy socialization.
- Form a writer's group. Meet monthly to share resources, drafts and feedback.
- Read journals while waiting at the bus, doctor's office, or

other appointments.

- Write every day.
- Keep a notebook just for creative activity (notes, links, citations, etc.).

At Home

- Delegate and share responsibilities.
- Hire professionals for assistance with cleaning, accounting, home repairs, etc.
- Use weekends to cook double batches of healthy meals that freeze well.
- Don't cook? Frequent local restaurants featuring healthy take-out meals.
- Find your creative time and protect it. Do house chores when you are less alert.
- Sleep is not an option. Protect your six to eight hours of sleep every night.
- Shed the superman/superwoman model and ask for help when needed.

On Campus

- Bring in nutritious meals (left-overs). Keep energizing, healthy snacks on hand.
- Take stretch and walk breaks. Keep walking shoes at the office.
- Aim for people and committees that are energizing, use your special skills and provide positive socializing.
- Know when to say "no" and respect colleagues' choices.
- Since most people are motivated by honest praise for a job well done, express thanks and appreciation whenever possible.
- Make choices that will be healthy for you without negatively impacting others. SD

10 Lessons Learned in Becoming a Better Professor

Misty Ginicola, *Counseling and School Psychology*

In preparation for an outstanding teaching panel hosted by Faculty Development, I reflected on what I had learned in my time as an Assistant and now Associate Professor that have worked in and out of the classroom. Below are the 10 most important lessons I have learned about teaching:

- **Be Prepared for Every Class.** This sounds simple, but it is really not. Being prepared for class means that you have your lecture in order, your PowerPoint is well put together with lots of color and images/cartoons. All of your activities are planned out and you are ready for any questions that may arise during the class. It also means you are in a positive emotional state and ready to teach. Believe me, students not only notice all of the work you put forward in being prepared, they greatly appreciate it.
- **Embrace Your Rubrics.** I have a rubric for every assignment located within the syllabi. This is so helpful for you as the instructor, but even more for the students as it clearly delineates what you expect of them, something that is very important for students from other cultures or those who have not acclimated to the academic culture yet. Additionally, it helps to prevent those “I don’t understand why I got this grade on my paper” discussions that can be really frustrating for both the student and instructor.
- **Have High Expectations for Yourself and Your Students.** I always demand excellence from my students, but it must be met with an equal demand for excellence for myself as a teacher. If I haven’t met expectations, I always model what I would want students to do; I own up to it, I apologize, I fix it and I move on, learning from the experience.
- **Be Flexible.** As important as it is to have high expectations, you must also be flexible with yourself and with your students. You never know when illness, tragedy, accidents or being purely overwhelmed will strike. You will never be perfect; you will forget things, have typos on your PowerPoint and say the wrong thing sometimes. Additionally, you will be thrust into circumstances beyond your control that will be far from perfect, whether it is malfunctioning technology or a stressed-out class. Be able to adapt everything and anything at any given moment.
- **Be Yourself.** Know who you are and own it in your teaching style. At heart, I am a psychologist, counselor, nerd and comedian from a Native American background. I use all of these aspects in my teaching style (humor, empathy, storytelling, technology, etc.) to stay authentic and true to myself, which shows to students.
- **Know Your Students.** Know who your audience is. What do they already know and what are their struggles? Tailor your teaching to meet these needs. Additionally, address different learning styles by incorporating visual, physical, experiential and group activities to meet divergent learning styles.
- **Be Careful with GIG’s and Student Presentations.** The “get-in-groups” and student presentation method of learning certainly has its place and can be very helpful with learning. However, it can be overused and some students identify it as a way for the instructor to get out of teaching. Only use group activities and student presentations when it makes sense for the course or the content. In essence, make sure there is a rationale for every teaching strategy you use.
- **Multi-task.** Working at a teaching college and trying to perform creative activity can sometimes feel like squeezing water from a stone. As a teacher for 4 graduate level courses, most of which have 25 students within them, I find that I have very little time to devote to research and still have a semblance of a life. I have learned to multi-task and collaborate with students and colleagues in everything that I do. For example, in preparing for our recent national accreditation, we learned that we needed to do more in understanding diversity and developing multicultural competence in our students. Along with other faculty, I led a CSU Assessment

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10 Lessons Learned (cont'd from p. 9)

- Grant-funded research project evaluating our students' multicultural competence, developed a nationally-recognized training model for counselor educator programs, presented on it and published about it in newsletters and a peer-reviewed journal. And, of course, it did not hurt to meet our accreditation guidelines when we had our site visit.
- Love and Learn eLearning VISTA.** The functions that VISTA has, specifically assessments and online assignments *will* make your life easier. You can do exams (that grade themselves!),
 - keep an online grade book, have online journals, blogs, set up groups, among many other neat goodies. Learn it, love it, live it. Students enjoy it and ultimately, you will too, as will the environment since you will no longer have a giant stack of papers in your office.
 - Find Strength in Your Colleagues.** When I have had a bad day, I find that my colleagues can always provide the “just-right” level of support that I need. They get what you are going through like no one else can. It is crucial to find like-minded peers that allow you to be
- honest, complain and cry. It also helps when they can, in addition, give you great input on your teaching, research, student issues, etc. These individuals will be your saving grace.
- As I reflect back on my years at Southern, I realize that, despite all the frustrations, conflicts and “surprises” I have had, the students, the faculty, the University and the constant evolution of who I am as a teacher in this setting are exactly why I look forward to many more years at SCSU. *SD*

Greetings from the Disability Resource Center

Goldie Adele J.D., Disability Resource Center

On behalf of the Disability Resource Center (DRC), welcome back to another great semester at Southern. Let me start by introducing myself. My name is Goldie Adele and I am the new Director of the DRC. During my interview, it was nice to hear the kind words and praise everyone had in regard to the ways in which faculty members work with our students with disabilities. The relationship between the faculty and the DRC staff was also praised. Since May, I have met with various faculty members and observed their passion for student success in and out of the classroom. I hope to continue to build on this great and critical relationship so our students continue to succeed.

As you may be aware, the DRC has a new and improved website, included special information for faculty. I invite you to visit www.southernct.edu/drc. We also have revised our student manual. We hope to use the webpage as a primary way to keep you updated on current disability issues, trends and practices, and also hope the articles there will help you in your work with students.

As our student population grows and we see new diagnoses, we invite you to contact us if you have any questions or need some guidance relating to a specific student or issue. Our staff continues to monitor trends in disability services in higher education and will provide guidance and support.

When in Engleman Hall, please feel free to stop by room C 105 A and say hello. *SD*

Yale Library Cards

Fall 2011 Awardees

Marie-Dominique Boyce, World Languages and Literatures

Corinne Blackmer, English

Scott Ellis, English

Steven Judd, History

Annette Madlock Gatison, Communication

Kenneth McGill, Anthropology

Troy Paddock, History

Pina Palma, World Languages and Literatures

Troy Rondinone, History

The High Cost of Textbooks: Options and Alternatives (cont'd from p. 5)

easy and free access to materials. Using a variety of sources as references for class readings models the behaviors expected of students when preparing their own work. Encouraging students to read content from a variety of authors also facilitates discussion of the author's perspective and serves to support Southern's commitments to academic excellence, access, and social justice.

What can the library do to help students? Because of the tendency to be replaced by new editions and the high relative cost, Buley Library, like many other university libraries, does not routinely purchase college textbooks. It is a good idea to check the library's catalog just in case the book a professor is using is already a part of the collection. If the book is available the student will be able to check the book out for 28 days and will have the option to renew it if no one has requested the book. If the book is not available at Buley the student may be able to borrow the book for a short period of time through interlibrary loan at no charge.

The library can promote its reserves services more aggressively through campus communication channels so faculty and students can benefit from this service. Working with professors to facilitate student use of the reserve system can save students money and build opportunities for collaborations. The attitude a faculty member takes regarding the different ways students access information greatly impacts student attitudes.

Another free way that students can access textbook style infor-

mation is open access resources. The Open Access Research Guide by librarian Rebecca Hedreen (<http://libguides.southernct.edu/openaccess>) provides free web collections of teaching materials, textbooks, and other resources. Many of the open access resources were created specifically for educational purposes. Open textbooks are a great money saver; they can be freely accessed and can be duplicated at low cost. These are textbooks that are offered online for free either by the authors or through a non-profit or commercial open-licensed publisher. The books can be read online, downloaded, and sometimes even printed at no/low cost. There are several projects developing open textbooks; one of the first is Flat World Knowledge, which permits professors to pull content from their collections and publish it under a Creative Common License.

What can students do to help themselves? Students should try to find out what the required textbooks are early, about a month in advance of the first class meeting, so they can purchase books at the best possible prices. The SCSU bookstore has some used books, but used books sell very fast so it is important to get to the bookstore early. Students can sell back their books to the bookstore when the course is over so they can get at least some money back. This is the same as a rental, so students who routinely sell back books at the end of a class may want to investigate rental options. If a newer edition of the book has just been published, students can find out from their professors if an older edition will suffice.

When shopping online for texts, check multiple sources, including those outside the U.S. Sometimes the assigned textbook may be cheaper in foreign countries but attention must be paid to shipping costs and delivery dates. It may also be cheaper to buy textbooks through an online swap store or eBay. Online swap sites are growing in number and more students are beginning to use them. Some universities have a swap program on campus, which gives students the opportunity to sell their used books and buy books at low prices.

When looking for textbook rentals, the publishers are not the only options. Chegg (www.Chegg.com) is a company that offers online textbook rentals and operates much like Netflix. You can rent books for any period of time, unlike the publishers that ask students to commit to a set time frame, and Chegg also offers purchase options. Campus Book Rentals (www.campusbookrentals.com) is a similar operation that offers a thirty-day risk-free guarantee with free shipping for purchase and return. The only drawback to the rental model is students cannot highlight or make notes on the printed texts.

Students can also rent access to electronic versions of textbooks. Students should respect their learning styles when it comes to choosing a print or electronic version of the textbook. Some students tend to skim e-books more than they would a printed version of the same text. Electronic versions of texts rented from publishers generally include access to enhanced web-content and annota-

Continued on page 13

The Other Side

Joseph N. Vitale, *Professor Emeritus, Computer Science*

When thinking about work-life balance, the split between work and life can happen in more than one way. For most of us, in the ordinary sense, the division line is drawn between the allocation of time that you spend between your preparation and teaching of courses, and all of the associated thinking that goes into that preparation, making it challenging to the students who are taking those courses.

Teaching becomes your primary focus. After all, it is what you want to do. That's most likely why you got into it. You're trying to guide a number of classes, filled with hopefully interested minds, from the beginning of the semester through the end of the semester, hoping that with all the other requirements you are actually making it interesting. In a sense, because that is what you really do, the rest of your professional life becomes a feeder for that element. You never let go of the fact that you are a teacher, whether limited by the textbooks that you use, the classrooms that you meet in and all of the rest of your life. You constantly ask yourself questions like,

"How can I take what's happening in today's world and make it more interesting to those students in my classes? How can I relate the information which I am presenting as we go through this course?"

Much of this is wrapped up with the rest of your job. But it takes more than that to run a university. There is a burning need to become involved, in some aspect or another, with university committees and subcommittees, the external and internal grant applications, the preparation of promotion files, the need to better yourself so that you can ultimately continue to present material to those and future classes that you might teach. You look for new techniques and interesting topics which you might bring up in the classroom. You revisit older problems with newer technologies. You attend various conferences. You acquire new ideas and technology, some of which may help you with your goals.

And, of course, there is the rest of your life—your family, the holidays, the school breaks, the ups and downs as life progresses, the need to help make life happy and comfortable for your family. You sometimes live in the glow of a position

which you're not sure you might fulfill. Somehow as you were growing in your role as a professor, the family and the kids have grown as well. They are now into their own lives, well on their way into their own careers. Some may have become professors themselves.

And then one day, it happens! It is time for you to jump the gap. You know when it is time. You feel it. You retire, moving from the active teacher that you were to the status of "Retired." Parties are given in your honor, and nice words are uttered about you and what a great job you did.

There is a different kind of work-life balance here. The university goes on. The school goes on. The department goes on. But you are not there. You enjoy the rewards for the success you've had but now you're retired. Hopefully, you've contributed and built something into that growth. *SD*



The High Cost of Textbooks (cont'd from p. 11)

tion features. Annotation features permit students to highlight or take margin notes the way they would on a printed text, and in some cases, the comments can be shared with a group. Some publishers offer professors the option of including notations they have made with the rented e-book so that students have access to the professor's comments and can comment to their peers. The solitary act of reading becomes an asynchronous discussion of the textbook.

Authors' Note

The authors are not aware if a systematic study of textbook costs has been undertaken at Southern. It would be a good idea for the university to charge a panel consisting of administrators, faculty, students, bookstore personnel, publishers, and librarians to assess the current textbook situation and make suitable recommendations. *SD*

Reference

Funt, P. (2012, February 8). How to break the college textbook racket. *USA Today*. Retrieved from: <http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/story/2012-02-07/college-textbook-prices-tuition/53001302/1>

Outstanding Teaching and Advising Awards

The Office of Faculty Development invited the University community to nominate SCSU's outstanding professors for three exclusive awards, the J. Philip Smith Award for Outstanding Teaching, the Outstanding Faculty Academic Advisor Award, and Technological Teacher of the Year Award. All nominations were solicited via the SCSU home webpage.

Nominated faculty are asked to submit a portfolio highlighting their achievements to be considered by the Outstanding Teaching Award Committee. Awardees will be announced by April 27. Below are descriptions for each award.

J. Philip Smith Award for Outstanding Teaching

The J. Philip Smith Outstanding Teaching Award is presented each year to one full-time professor and one part time professor for exceptional teaching. Awardees receive \$2,500 and a personalized plaque and are recognized at undergraduate commencement.

Outstanding Faculty Academic Advising Award

The newly established Outstanding Faculty Academic Advising Award rewards faculty who provide exceptional academic advising and mentoring to undergraduate or graduate students. The recipient will receive a \$1,000 award, a personal-

ized plaque, and public recognition for their outstanding effort.

Full-time faculty at all ranks who are currently employed at SCSU are eligible for nomination. Faculty who work collaboratively with students in charting their academic direction, display knowledge of academic programs, degree requirements, and university resources supporting student success, and who provide exemplary guidance to students are especially qualified for nomination.

Technological Teacher of the Year Award

The Technological Teacher of the Year Award recognizes the effective use of technology in the classroom and the faculty who embrace it. Awardees receive a \$1,000 award, a personalized plaque, and public recognition.

Full-time and part-time faculty at all ranks who are currently employed at SCSU are eligible for nomination. Faculty who have created innovative instructional technology, harnessed new and emerging technology in the interest of teaching and learning, developed courses to take advantage of existing resources, improved communication or collaboration using technology, contributed to scholarly research into teaching with technology, and/or mentored colleagues in the effective use of digital teaching resources are especially good candidates.

2012-2013 Faculty Creative Activity Research Grants

We congratulate the following awardees of the 2012-2013 cycle:

Amal Abd El-Raouf, Computer Science

Kelly Bordner, Psychology

Ilene Crawford, English

Margaret Das, Biology

Valerie Dripchak, Social Work

Nicholas Edgington, Biology

Scott Ellis, English

Frank Harris, Journalism

C. Patrick Heidkamp, Geography

Jonathan Irving, Music

Julia Irwin, Psychology

Brian Johnson, English

Steven Judd, History

Heidi Lockwood, Philosophy

Jennifer McCullagh, Communication Disorders

Dina Moore, Psychology

Leslie Neal-Boylan, Nursing

Tim Parrish, English

Paul Petrie, English

David Pettigrew, Philosophy

Luisa Piemontese, World Languages and Literatures

Jonathan Preston, Communication Disorders

Deb Risisky, Public Health

Michael Rogers, Anthropology

Vivian Shipley, English

Rebecca Silady, Biology

Jeff Slomba, Art

Derek Taylor, Communication

Christine Unson, Public Health

Rachael Vaters-Carr, Art

Thuan Vu, Art

Jonathan Weinbaum, Biology

Leon Yacher, Geography

Faculty Activities

Wendy Hardenberg, *Library Services*, translated five poems of Marie-Claire Bancquart from French to English that were published in *TWO LINES Online*: <http://catranslation.org/two-lines-online#jan-2012>.

Jennifer A. Hudson, *Women's Studies*, joined McGraw-Hill's Academic Advisory Board for the forthcoming volume *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Women's Studies* and served as editorial assistant for the inaugural issue of *Goddess Theology: An International Journal for the Study of the Divine Feminine* http://www.thealogyanddeasophy.org/GoddessTheology_1_1_2012.pdf. She also had an article, "Bardic Bytes: Six Simple Steps toward Successful E-Promotion," published in the book *Women on Poetry: Writing, Revising, Publishing and Teaching* (McFarland) and will present "Transforming Dynamics

of Power: Enacting Feminist Thinking in the Classroom and Beyond," at the Northwest Women's Studies Association Conference in Portland, OR, in April.

Julia Irwin, *Psychology*, and **Jonathan Preston**, *Communication Disorders*, are engaged in interdisciplinary collaborative research with Haskins Laboratories, a Yale affiliated research facility (www.haskins.yale.edu). Their current projects involve studying two year olds who are "late talkers" using neurobiological and physiological measures, as well as researching the brain-basis of speech processing differences in 7-10 year old children with autism and speech/language disorders. For more information, contact Dr. Irwin or Dr. Preston.

Jessie Whitehead, *Art*, received the Committee on Multiethnic

Concerns (COMC) J. Eugene Grigsby, Jr. Award from the National Art Education Association. Recipients of the award are recognized for distinguished contributions to the fields of art education in advancing and promoting education, investigation, and celebration of cultural and ethnic heritage within our global community. The award highlights the legacy of Dr. J. Eugene Grigsby, Jr., in bringing to light historical and contemporary accomplishments of people of color in fully advancing NAEA's policies and practices.



Congratulations to **Christine Petto**, *History*, on being named the 2011 recipient of the SCSU Faculty Scholar Award!

Spring 2012 Faculty Development Grants

Vincent Breslin and **Jim Tait**, *Science Education and Environmental Studies*, and **Sean Grace**, *Biology*, "Ninth Annual Long Island Sound Seminar Series"

Margaret Das, *Biology*, and **Valerie Andrushko**, *Anthropology*, "Seminars in Forensic Science"

Patricia DeBarbieri, **Suzanne Carroll**, and **Wendy Davenson**, *Marriage and Family Therapy*, **Denise Zack**, *Counseling Services*, **Sandra Bulmer**, *Public Health*, **Joy Fopiano**, *Counseling and School Psychology*, "A Collaborative Systematic Examination of Eating Disorders"

Stephen Dworkin and **Stephen Monroe Tomczak**, *Social Work*, "Symposium on Social Work and the Law"

Mary Ann Glendon and **Kim Lacey**, *Nursing*, "Challenges of Teaching Accelerated Second Degree Nursing Students"

Judith Hammer and **Elena Schmitt**, *World Languages and Literatures*, "Assessing Curricula in Vietnam"

Shirley Jackson, *Sociology*, and **Winnie Yu**, *Computer Science*, "Bringing Civic Engagement to SCSU"

Tricia Lin, *Women's Studies*, "Ninth Annual 64 Days of Nonviolence Celebration" and "20th Annual Women's Studies Conference"

Armen Marsoobian, *Philosophy*, "Philosophy Department Colloquium Series"

Vivian Shipley, *English*, "Publishing Workshops"

Jeff Slomba, *Art*, "Visiting Artist Lecture Series"

Cesarina Thompson, *Nursing*, "Legal Issues in Higher Education: Implications for Professional Programs"

Esther Howe and **Robert Broce**, *Social Work*, "The Clinical Response to Bullying: Inside the School House Door XIV"

Paul Stepanovich, *Management*, **Robert Forbus**, *Marketing*, **Samuel Andoh** and **James Thorson**, *Economics and Finance*, "Core Curriculum Evaluation and Assessment"

MS in TESOL Internship Program Sends Southern Students to Vietnam

Elena Schmitt, *World Languages and Literatures*, and **Ilene Crawford**, *English*

Two years ago a group of Southern faculty—Michele Thompson (History), Ilene Crawford (English), Thuan Vu (Art), and Elena Schmitt (World Languages and Literatures), with the support of Interim Provost Marianne Kennedy—received a federally funded grant to develop a study abroad program in Vietnam. Several faculty members at Southern have teaching, research, and personal ties to Vietnam and particularly to Dai Hoc Su Pham University (University of Education) in Ho Chi Minh City. These ties and grant money provided us with tools to help our students experience the dynamic, ever-developing life in Ho Chi Minh City, make contributions to English language education in Vietnam and develop competence in the Vietnamese language.

Faculty, accompanied by Dr. Kennedy, signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the President of Dai Hoc Su Pham University and arranged for Southern students to take classes in Vietnamese. Drs. Schmitt and Hammer visited Dai Hoc Su Pham to set up an internship for Southern's MS in TESOL students designed to give our teacher candidates an opportunity to apply a variety of methods and techniques of teaching English as a foreign language in the university environment in Ho Chi Minh City. Southern faculty also met with colleagues in the English and Russian Departments of Dai Hoc Su Pham as well as with the principal and English program director of the University School. They assessed the needs of Vietnamese students for

English language study and negotiated possibilities for best internship opportunities for Southern graduate students. Two students, David Paulson and Sophia Diamantis, were selected to be Southern's first representatives to teach in Vietnam.

David and Sophia's trip started in January 2011 and lasted for 12 weeks, during which they taught at three departments of Dai Hoc Su Pham, took intensive classes in Vietnamese language and explored the country's rich traditions and culture. They were concurrently enrolled in independent studies and practicum classes at Southern, where they analyzed their experiences and created a handbook for future English teachers in Vietnam.

David and Sophia were hosted by the Dean of the Russian Department of Dai Hoc Su Pham. Living with the Dean's family provided them with an insider look at the life of a Vietnamese academic and her two teenage sons. Their travels with their host family helped them make life-long friends and see Vietnam through the eyes of young people who are excited about economic and social changes that are taking place in their country, who are part of the Vietnamese cultural scene, and who are still products of socialist upbringing.

David is now pursuing a Ph.D. in Linguistic Anthropology at Temple University. He writes: "Throughout the course of my education, I have always sought to understand how language shapes our everyday lives. My undergraduate training in Anthropology and graduate experience in the Bilingual, Multicultural Edu-

cation/TESOL program have largely nurtured this interest. However, after three months teaching in Vietnam, my understanding of education, language and culture has grown tremendously. The students I worked with were among the most respectful and diligent individuals I have ever met, and the experience will stay with me for the rest of my life. I instructed over 500 students at the high school and university levels, and yet leave Southeast Asia feeling it is me who learned the most. Thank you to everyone in our program, without your support and inspiration none of this would be possible."

Sophia graduated in May with an MS in TESOL and recalls: "A day did not pass in which smiling students and helpful staff did not astound me with their enthusiasm and kindness. I imagine being a celebrity feels much like being a foreigner teaching in Vietnam. Upon arriving on campus, students cheered from the balcony, until the start of class and again, at the end. They are motivated and eager to participate, which makes for an enjoyable classroom experience. Asking students in the high school to do a gallery walk the first time was nothing short of sheer pandemonium. The reward over the six-week period was seeing how quickly they became accustomed to and enjoyed communicative activities. Currently, I am an EAL teacher at the International School of Moscow. My future plans are to teach in an English language institute at a university with hopes of returning to teach in Vietnam." *SD*

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The mission of the Office of Faculty Development is to support teaching and learning at all levels and in all contexts in which instruction occurs at Southern. The OFD supports faculty in their roles as teachers, scholars, and members of the university and wider community.

The Office of Faculty Development is committed to promoting a spirit of innovation, collaboration, and love of learning, as well as enhancing a sense of collegiality among faculty as they expand their intellectual, teaching, and scholarly horizons. In pursuing these goals, the OFD works to enhance the intellectual climate and promote open and ongoing dialogue among all members of the university community. It serves as an advocate for academic initiatives and enterprises that relate to teaching and learning through a variety of programs, activities, and resources in achieving the university's mission. The vision of the OFD is to create an environment at Southern that facilitates and promotes effective teaching, professional development, research, university service, and integration of new instructional technologies.



2012 SCSU Teaching Academy

May 23 & 24, 2012

This year's keynote speaker is Dr. Mathew Ouelett, Associate Director of the Center for Teaching and Faculty Development, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Dr. Ouelett will be addressing "Teaching Inclusively." Dr. Dee Fink, President of Dee Fink Consulting, returns to SCSU to support the Curriculum Innovation Program with his day-long workshop on "Curriculum Design for Significant Learning." A variety of workshops and panel discussions related to pedagogy, scholarship, and technology will be presented by SCSU's outstanding faculty and staff. Participants will be awarded with a \$200 stipend, meals and refreshments, and two days of Southern collegiality. On the afternoon of May 24, (4:30 - 6:00) the Teaching Academy concludes with a Celebration of Teaching Excellence, a wine and cheese social sponsored by the SCSU Foundation. This celebration will honor our J. Philip Smith Outstanding Teaching Award recipients, as well as the recipients of the Technological Teacher of the Year award, the Outstanding Academic Advisor Award, and the SCSU - CSU Trustees Award for Outstanding Teaching. The event takes place in the Engleman Hall seminar center and courtyard. [Register Here](#) for the Teaching Academy **by May 20**. Updates on the Teaching Academy schedule will be posted on the Faculty Development website. You can access Dee Fink's excellent guidebook, "[A Self-directed Guide to Designing Courses for Significant Learning](#)," prior to his presentation.

Twenty-five pre-selected faculty will be participating in the Curriculum Innovation Program (CIP) Retreat, which runs concurrently with the Teaching Academy and continues on May 25. [Proposals for the CIP Retreat](#) are due on April 18. The CIP is supported by a grant received from the Davis Educational Foundation.