



BRIEFLY NOTED

Preparing Course Syllabi for Improved Communication, by Malcolm A. Lowther, Joan S. Stark and Gretchen G. Martens. NCRIP TAL, Suite 2400, SEB, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1259.

Students are seldom if ever aware of the time faculty spend preparing a course. Still, one of the most often-expressed student expectations of a good teacher is that s/he be "well-prepared." The course syllabus provides the first impression of preparedness; but too often it is a poor indicator of just how much planning and organization has taken place before the students even register for the course. Also, according to the authors, most syllabi

fail to communicate much information students need in their initial encounter with the course. Research has shown that students learn more effectively when they understand the instructor's intentions. In short, the syllabus should communicate far more than when assignments are due, a testing schedule and grading procedures.

The authors list ten items which, without being proscriptive, might be included in a typical syllabus: 1) Basic Information on the Instructor and the Course, 2) Course Purpose, Goals and Objectives, 3) Educational Beliefs, 4) Content Outline, 5) Assignments and Course Calendar, 6) Textbooks, 7) Supplementary Readings, 8) Methods of Instruction, 9) Student Feedback and Grading Procedures and 10) Learning Facilities and Resources for Students. Lest the reader be frightened away, all of this is covered in 24 pages, and many of the suggestions are presented in a "checklist" format. 🍎

(Team continued from page 9)

pleasing to me for the students to develop an attitude of ownership toward the project.

One example of the team research concept in action occurred during the Sapelo trip. Originally, we had divided the class into three teams of two students, with each team performing the chemical analysis on the samples for one day. After the first day, we met to discuss procedures and results. The team that analyzed the first samples reported many ways to carry out the procedures more efficiently. For example, they suggested that the others work together as one team of four students instead of two teams of two students each. The others used the suggestions and were able to complete their work more easily and in less time.

There were many opportunities to discuss their work with scientists and other students at the Marine Institute and to learn about their research. In particular, there was much interaction between our class and undergraduates participating in the Summer Internship Program at the Institute. In a couple of cases, it almost seemed as if we had "adopted" some new team members, because the interns would discuss their own projects with us and ask for our suggestions. In return, the interns made many helpful suggestions about our ideas and methods.

As the instructor, I found that I also gained a great deal from the experience. I discovered that the team research concept can be an effective and exciting way to integrate teaching and research. It is also a good way to launch a new research project. During the previous year, I had worked to begin a project on sulfate-reducing bacteria in coastal marshes. The data gathered by the team research class provided important background information and data for this project. The team research class also generated interest among students in the department for this research effort. Several of the students from the class, as well as other students, returned with me to Sapelo later in the year to gather more samples for the project.

I definitely recommend the team research concept for any instructor interested in student research. It represents an effective use of time and resources, and it brings the added dimension of cooperative student interaction into the student research experience. 🍎



REACHING THROUGH TEACHING

Please share with us your ideas about teaching and the exciting strategies you use for making your classrooms successful. Please send all articles, typed double-spaced, to Don Forrester in THE CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING.

Giving guidance and vision to CETL is a Faculty Development Committee including the following:

Bowman Davis, Ph.D.	– Professor of Biology
Lynn Fedeli, Ph.D.	– Assistant Professor of Spanish
Jackie Givens, B.A.	– Coordinator of Sponsored Programs
Ben Golden, Ph.D.	– Professor of Biology
Nataline Matthews, M.A.	– Instructor of Reading – Developmental Studies
Jo Allen Bradham, Ph.D.	– Associate Professor of English
Ed Rugg, Ph.D.	– Vice President for Academic Affairs
Donald Sabbarese, Ph.D.	– Assistant Professor of Economics
Howard Shealy, Ph.D.	– Associate Professor of History
Alan Schlact, J.D.	– Associate Professor of Business Law

Don Forrester, Ed.D.	– Editor
Lorraine V. Murray, Ph.D.	– Assistant Editor
Lynn Moss	– Secretary
M. Lynch Allison	– Designer
Shiela Powderly	– Production



Kennesaw State College, a senior college of the University System of Georgia, is an affirmative action/equal educational and employment opportunity institution. Kennesaw State College, P.O. Box 444 Marietta, GA 30061 (404) 423-6410