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# Editorial

**Richard F. Welch, Ph. D.**  
Associate Professor of  
Communication/Interim Director  
of CETL

## A Hard Act to Follow

When I learned that I would be assuming the directorship of CETL (albeit temporarily), my first thought was of Don Forrester. Anyone who has been at KSC any length of time knows Don's omni-presence at campus functions large and small, as well as his willingness to take on ever-expanding duties. I figured I was definitely in trouble.

But then I realized I could never "fill Don's shoes" at the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Don has set a standard of dedication few can match and none surpass. My charge, then, is to hold the line while he helps out in the VPAA's office. (For those who don't know, Don is interim Assistant VPAA while Deborah Wallace assumed temporarily the deanship of the School of Education.) My only hope is that I can continue to support and expand the great development programs he has created.

## Back to Basics

In reflecting on the tasks ahead of me, I begin with the basics. The goal of CETL has been, and will continue to be, to support faculty in creating and enhancing quality education throughout our school. KSC is only one of three University System of Georgia schools that has such a center (along with UGA and Georgia Tech, although DeKalb is in the process of developing one). The fact we have a "CETL" proves to me that KSC views the idea of quality education seriously and systematically.

Teaching, for me, has always seemed a craft and an art. As a craft, teachers apply "tools of the trade" in specific situations for specific outcomes. As an art, teachers use those tools in innovative and creative ways to design uniquely effective learning experiences.

Because of the demands on the KSC faculty, those on the

front lines (in the classroom) may not always have the time to explore all the tools available. And even if we have the time, we usually explore only the terrain in our own backyards (our disciplines).

CETL's role is to be a "scouting party," i.e., going out to find new tools and helping faculty adapt them for their specific classroom needs if the tools seem appropriate.

## A Group Effort

This is not a singular effort. CETL is, and should be, faculty powered. It will take everyone on campus keeping eyes and ears open to discover those new tools. I ask each of you to help the CETL effort by passing along information

whenever and wherever you may find it. If you read an article in one of your disciplinary journals that may have more universal application, please pass it along. If you attend a program or hear a speaker you believe has something to offer us, let me know. Most of all, let me know what you want and expect in CETL support. Any and all suggestions are welcome.

Over the next several months, I hope to talk personally with many of you about CETL. I hope I can count on your honest appraisal of the programs we have offered and your suggestions for the future. Together, we can continue the "Excellence in Teaching and Learning" that is at the heart of Kennesaw State College.

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## Guest Editorial

### Making Connections/Crossing Borders

**Laura Dabundo**

Associate Professor of English/Core Curriculum Coordinator

I am not a mathematician. In fact, I have not darkened the threshold of a math classroom in nearly a quarter of a century. I do not offer this fact to you out of pride but rather to confess an apparent weakness that will certainly bring me to grief in this or the next century, if it has not already, because of the state to which the technological revolution has brought our society and our world. That is to declare, in short, that I have only a bare, rude understanding of the outlines of fractal geometry.

What I know is simply that it is a science or art of fractional dimensions, which describes similar repeating forms and has come to be applied practically not only in mathematics, but in art and film and computer science and medicine, among many other field, with breath-taking, spectacular and otherwise unimaginable results. *Jurassic Park*, for instance, demonstrates the wonders of fractal geometry, uniting the prehistoric with the contemporary, science with art, reason with emotion. What fractal geometry can do, as I understand it, is to translate a mathematical con-

cept to innumerable fields, connecting them, bridging their gaps, expanding their limits, extending their own reach, their own art, their own meanings and truths.

This, in sum, is the kind of collaborative, synergistic approach that I think we at Kennesaw State College need to attempt in our program of general education. We must strive to break down the artificial barriers that separate courses in a curriculum--while still respecting their disciplinary integrity. As subjects these courses might otherwise become locked in independent recesses of students' minds. We hope in so doing that those ultimately artificial divisions and limitations between disciplines would dissolve and that students would practice the learning that draws intellectual connections in integrated, collaborative thinking as part of the growth of knowledge and the development of skills to deal with it. We model learning, in other words, as we conduct it, and our students begin the task of integrating information even as they

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## Integrating Communications and Analysis Skills into the Study of DSS and AI Technology

Martha Myers, Ph. D.,

Assistant Professor of Computer Science, Acting Chair of Computer Science and Information Systems

To emphasize higher levels of learning in upper division Information Systems courses, I introduced the "board meeting concept" in my Decision Support Systems course in Spring 1990.

Board meetings, developed by L.S. Franz, place students on "boards" whose responsibilities include presentation, review and observation. The presentation board is responsible for presenting a manage-

ment memo generated from a problem statement provided by the instructor. This memo includes an orientation to the problem, analysis leading to several viable solutions and a recommendation.

The reviewing board evaluates the recommendation and points out any computational errors in the presentation. The observer board critiques the entire process.

Although students were in favor of the board meeting concept, some found it taxing and too ambiguous. They did note that the concept "stretched" their capabilities—one goal of instruction. In addition, students demonstrated improved analytical and communication skills through the use of board meetings.

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## "A Trio of Instructional Computer Programs in Statistics"

(Presented at Computers on Campus Conference, November 1993)

Penny Verhoeven, Ph. D., Assistant Professor of Decision Science

For many students, statistics represents an uneasy excursion into unknown territory. As most instructors of introductory statistics are required to cover considerable amounts of material, students' difficulties are compounded by a fast pace. For many topic areas, repetitive practice can raise students' knowledge level (and, at the same time, "comfort" level). In this regard, I offer three instructional computer programs, unencumbered by any copyright restrictions, and operable in an MS-DOS environment.

The program VARIABLE provides an exposition of the differences between qualitative, discrete and continuous variables, and incorporates 20 practice problems. Each practice problem presents the student with a variable, asks the student to identify it as qualitative or discrete or continuous, and—in the event of a misdiagnosis by the student—explains why the variable is of a particular type.

The program SAMPDIST defines what is meant by a sampling distribution, and "walks the student through" the construction of three different sampling distributions—of a mean, a proportion, and a variance, respectively.

The program ESTMEAN

describes what is meant by interval estimation of a population mean, provides a table associating particular situations (involving features of the population and sample) with particular interval estimation formulas, and incorporates 20 practice problems. Each practice problem presents the student with a scenario, asks the student to identify which of 10 situations is reflected in what scenario, and—in the event of an incorrect choice—explains why a particular situation is reflected in that scenario.

Each of the programs can serve as a substitute lecture for students who missed the lecture on that topic, or as a homework assignment ("interact" with the program for 20 minutes). Collectively, the programs suggest an approach for incorporating instruction and/or homework exercises into a statistics-textbook-on-disk.

*If you would like a copy of these programs, send a high-density 3 1/2 inch disk to me through campus mail. Reactions to and suggestions regarding the programs are welcomed.*

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## Guest Editorial

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are analyzing and processing it. What we would create, therefore, is some idea of the history of literature, the science of the arts, the humanity of the sciences, the philosophy of society, the economics of living, the religion of the nation, the discipline of thinking, the music of the spheres, the material for life.

Thus, our goal for the education of our students, it seems to me, must always move toward synthesis and away from the limitations and narrowness of analysis, and I believe that is when our pedagogy is at its best because that is when I think we are most able to furnish students with what I think they need, not now particularly, but later on in confronting and dealing with open-ended, contradictory, unfinished life itself.

Consequently, my own sense of education is that we have not succeeded if our students leave

us with tidy little packages labeled history, biology, psychology, French, and music, say, little packages, never to be unwrapped, never to be investigated. I would much rather my students leave class with loose ends, with spillage and overlap, with questions and uncertainties but also with the tools and the confidence to deal with them, the confidence, in short, to provoke and inquire. In a world made radiant, transcendent, but often vexing and recalcitrant by the promise of cross-disciplinary discoveries such as fractal geometry, those citizens of our nascent world community who will prosper and best serve as faithful stewards of its bounty, its resources as well as its responsibilities, are those who are aware of and equal to the challenges of complexity, synthesis, confusion and possibility. We must all become fractal geometers open to innovation, knowledgeable about tradition and the past, seeking to understand, striving to make sense by applying to what we already know and by making whole, making connections, crossing borders into, finally, what Hamlet, in another context, called "that undiscovered country from whose bourn/No traveler returns."

We cannot retreat, but we can only advance by building on what we know, connecting, synthesizing and expanding. Our general education is both the start and the end, then, of our baccalaureate enterprise, the best and the promise of what we seek to do and what we seek to leave after our portion of formal instruction is past. In the minds of our students stands our academic legacy, then.

At Kennesaw, we seek to instill the foundation for our students to lead responsible, committed lives in communities of tolerance, understanding and cooperation—virtues that must prevail against the perils of isolation, separation and conflict born of competitive specialization and mistrust. If we can accomplish this, then the general education our students receive will reflect our humility before the world's riches and problems and the grace to live together in harmony, civility and charity.

## Faculty Development Grant Updates

### **A.G. Adebayo, Ph. D.** **Associate Professor of History**

Last year, I produced four 30-minute documentaries about aspects of African culture in which most of my students have expressed interest, notably the traditional religions; music, dance and drama; art; and women, marriage and family.

My faculty development grant was used to convert videotapes acquired in Nigeria to a format compatible with American tape players. I have written the story line to accompany the tape shot in Nigeria, and will begin editing in the spring quarter. I have also used the tapes "as is" in my history classes.

### **Melanie Angle, M.S.** **Instructor of English**

In the not-too-distant past, it was advantageous for professionals to use personal computers to expedite the flow of information. Today, using and understanding one's own computer is step one. Step two is grasping the potentials of interconnected computers.

Networked computers facilitate research and collegial exchange in many ways, but with the wealth comes the responsibility of learning the constraints and conventions. For my development grant I have been studying Novell networking and researching the benefits of networks for the humanities, specifically English.

My increased understanding of the constraints of networking is assisting in the decisions the English Department is making in the Writing Center. Additionally, I am assisting other department members in using the KSC network to access information worldwide. I have taken three courses and will take two more by the end of the summer. The training materials I have ordered are also being used by other departments on campus.

### **Teresa Joyce Covin, Ph. D.** **Associate Professor of Management** **Acting Chair, Management** **and Entrepreneurship**

My faculty development grant has supported a study of Atlanta-area company-based management training programs. The specific focus of the research is to determine how companies evaluate the effectiveness of these programs. A 12-page survey was developed and sent to 300 randomly selected members of the Society for Human Resources Management (SRM) and the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD).

In addition to a number of questions on specific training program evaluation practices, the survey contained several questions focusing on management training program content and process.

Of the 300 surveys mailed, 36 were non-deliverable and 60 were returned, for a response rate of 22.7 percent. Results from the survey are currently being analyzed and study participants will receive a summary of the findings in March.

### **Deborah Roebuck, Ph. D.** **Assistant Professor of Management**

We have just finished the preliminary analysis of the data received from a national sample of 1,500 management faculty (509 completed surveys were retained for analysis) on perceptions of academic life.

We are currently completing the first of three papers to submit for publication. In addition, we are in the process of completing mailing of the survey to faculty in marketing, finance and accounting. Data will be compared across the different disciplines to determine: 1) relative importance placed on teaching and research; 2) attitudes of faculty toward teaching and research; and 3) pedagogical approaches and teaching techniques utilized in the classroom.