

Annual Report 2009-10

(Summer-Fall 2009 & Spring 2010)

I. Mission

ITLAL is a center for faculty development, with the mission of fostering excellence in university teaching and in faculty effectiveness in their professional roles. Above all, ITLAL promotes and supports through its programs greater *engagement of students* and the development of students' *ability to think critically*. Toward this goal, the Institute provides instructional support services and programs of professional enhancement to the faculty and instructional staff, including graduate students in teaching roles. ITLAL also provides programs for professional preparation of graduate students seeking careers in academe.

II. Personnel

ITLAL reports to the Vice-Provost/Dean for Undergraduate Education. Staff members for 2009-10 included

- Bill Roberson, Ph.D., Director
- Steven Doellefeld, Ph.D., Associate Director (& Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Education)
- Billie Franchini, Ph.D., Instructional Consultant
- Ruth Scipione, Instructional Consultant
- Sue Barnes, Technology Coordinator
- Kathy Plunkett, Office Manager
- Kimberly Van Orman, Future Faculty Fellow (Philosophy)
- Susan L. Rogers, Graduate Assistant (Educational Psychology)
- Chris Cunha, Graduate Assistant and Web Developer (Business)

III. Overview of 2009-10

2009-10 saw the completion of the first three-year cycle of ITLAL's planning and development, meeting the 3rd year goal of becoming significantly and measurably embedded in university culture and in faculty professional functions. The year's work focused on outreach to new users and expanding interactions with continuing users. Consequently, **866 individual faculty and professional staff** members took advantage of one or more of ITLAL's services and events during the academic year. **419 GTAs** also participated in ITLAL services and events. Of special significance for the role of ITLAL and how it is perceived by faculty and staff, ITLAL staff took active part in several major campus conversations and committee work: Academic Assessment; Strategic Planning; Classrooms; Technology; Library; Facilities Planning; Leadership Development; and Community Engagement. ITLAL also experienced greater participation at the departmental level, building networks of varying extent in all Colleges and Schools. The Institute is gradually taking on its intended role as an agent and catalyst to support broad change in how the university delivers education. Collaborations with the Office of the Provost on leadership development, new faculty integration, and targeted support efforts for adjunct faculty were also important landmarks for ITLAL.

IV. Milestones for 2009-10

- 866 individual faculty/professional users recorded during the academic year
- 419 individual GTA users recorded during the academic year
- 16% growth in faculty and GTA use of ITLAL consulting
- Growth in demand for ITLAL services (digitizing 28%; mid-term surveys 8%; clickers 42%)
- Inaugural Fall Faculty Retreat (110 participants)
- Expansion of web resources; steady growth in web traffic (2036 average individual monthly visitors, an increase of 43%)
- Launch of Albany Interactive Theater Ensemble (4 performances)
- Expansion of Instructional Leadership and Technology Leadership Academy series (80 participants)
- Participation in 15 different campus-wide councils, committees, task forces, or other working groups
- Launch of Portable Classroom project (10 total participants, 5 each semester)
- Collaboration with KI furniture vendor on donation to support research on classroom design
- Initiation of 'Spotlight on Faculty' video series
- First delivery of "Future Faculty" certificate program courses for graduate students (local certificate)
- Reconfiguration of GTA Orientation as GTA Symposium led by experienced TAs (90+ attendees)
- Creation of Future Faculty Leadership Council to provide guidance for Future Faculty programming

V. Faculty Development Events (Workshops, seminars, etc.)

UAlbany Fall Faculty Retreat (August, 2009)

The Fall Faculty Retreat was conceived as an annual opportunity for faculty and instructional staff to engage in extended conversations on teaching, leadership and continuing enhancement of the university experience for both students and faculty. This first retreat was facilitated by Doug Eder, Ph.D., specialist in learning assessment, who led a series of sessions on improvement of teaching and learning using effective assessment practices. The inaugural retreat attracted 110 faculty members, representing all colleges and schools.

School of Business	14
School of Education	6
School of Criminal Justice	1
School of Social Welfare	7
School of Public Health	14
Rockefeller College	4
College of Arts & Sciences	39
College of Nanoscale Science	5
College of Computing and Information	3
University Libraries	2
ITS	2
Other Administrators	10
Visitors	2

Sampling of participant comments

- This event was great because so many fellow faculty members were here including administrators, members of the P&T committee, etc. Thus, I have the sense that the culture of the university is becoming more supportive of good teaching (as opposed to feeling disadvantaged by putting time and energy into my teaching).
- It was an excellent way to assess what I do, review my goals and objectives. I think this is a useful way to begin the year.
- Doug Eder's presentation was enormously successful. I've learned some key ideas, what I'd like to implement.
- Gave me the energy/motivation to begin the semester with ideas to make student learning visible. Love that I do much of what he's discussed today
- For couple of years I was puzzled why my (graduate) students didn't do well in my course – it is now clear it was because the “bar” was not clear to them as well as the way “questions” were posed to the m.
- Being a professor is very lonely. We are expected to solve problems by ourselves. I like this group approach/process very refreshing.
- The speaker was skilled – this is a big deal. Boring speakers kill even the best content and so it was nice to have someone good.
- Very energizing, key concepts/ideas presented simply and therefore make them feel “do-able.”
- Provided me with ideas as to how to make my expectations clearer and better able to be measurable, stimulated ideas for curriculum assessment.
- Great workshop, I am taking with me a lot of good ideas for my courses and programs
- I came away with very useable techniques to deepen my communication with my students. Stimulating, clear, forceful. Thank you!
- I like the atmosphere of this and other events – open, upbeat.
- The theatre group generated really interesting discussion.
- This is my first experience with an ITLAL workshop, thank you! I want more!
- Very well put together, food, interactive theatre, speaker, schedule – all good

Academies

The Academy format (“boot camp”) has proven to be attractive to UAlbany faculty. These occur at the beginning or end of each semester and are designed to engage faculty more substantially than would be possible through stand-alone workshops. Since the beginning of this initiative in January 2008, 11 Academies have taken place, with a two-year total of 113 faculty members having participated. Academies for the 2009-10 academic year:

Instructional Leadership Academy

May, 2009	Team-Based Learning	9 Faculty Participants
August 2009	Make Your Courses More Rigorous and More Fun	9 Faculty Participants
January, 2010	Designing Courses for Active Learning and Critical Thinking	11 Faculty Participants
May 2010	Team-Based Learning	11 Faculty Participants
Total for 2009-10	4 ILA's	40

Technology Leadership Academy

May 2009	Blended Courses	12 Faculty Participants
August 2009	Web-enhanced Courses	9 Faculty Participants
December 2009	Web-enhanced Courses	10 Faculty Participants
May 2010	Blended Courses	9 Faculty Participants
Total for 2009-10	4 TLA's	40 Participants

Workshops for Faculty and Instructional Staff (for full event descriptions see Appendix)

Date	Title of Event	Attendance
Aug 27	Fall Faculty Retreat	110
Sept 9 & 10	What is Peer Observation and How Can I Make it Matter?	14
Sept 22&24	Increase the Impact of Your Lectures	25
Sept 29&30	Improve Your Students' Reading and Writing	14
Oct 9	Special Guest Presenter, L. Dee Fink: Designing Courses for More Significant Student Learning..	30
Oct 10	Saturday event--Dee Fink: The Joy and Responsibility of Teaching Well	29
Oct 26& 27	Using Simulations to Explore Culture Clash	17
Dec 8	Creating an Interactive Classroom: Are "Clickers" Right for You?	19
Jan 13	Course and Syllabus Design	5
Jan 25-29	Technology Week: Open Consultations	32
Feb 2 & 3	Whatever Do You Mean by "Active Learning"	22
Feb 9 & 10	Make Paper Grading More Efficient – and Help your Students Learn	16
Feb 10	"SIRF's" up! Gain Control of Your Student Evaluations	13
Feb 22	Stop Plagiarism Before it Starts (and what to do if it happens)	16
Mar 17	Community Engaged Scholarship and Teaching (Faculty Panel)	7
Mar 22	Special Guest presenter Meggin McIntosh: What Matters When You Lead (and would anyone notice if you didn't)	31
Total		400

Customized Events for Departments/special groups

August 3	Fulbright Gateway Orientation: Team-Building and Cultural Values	40
August 24	Political Science and Criminal Justice: Improving Writing Assignments	8
November 3	Social Welfare: Embrace the Teacher in You--Field Instructor Institute	30
November 5	IRPE: Mapping your Program to Learning Outcomes (Part One)	35
Nov 19	Computer Science: Designing Courses for Active Learning	8
Dec 2	Political Science: Clarifying Student Learning Objectives	20
Dec 17	• Library: Team-Based Learning	5
Jan 13	CLUE: Leading Through Teaching	10
Feb 18	IRPE: Mapping your Program to Learning Outcomes (Part Two)	28
March 3	Social Welfare: Effective Use of PowerPoint	10
March 4	Public Health (graduate students): Preparing for the Academic Job Market	16
April 12	Informatics (graduate students): Preparing for the Academic Job Market	10
April 16	Biomedical Science: Course and Curriculum Design for Significant Learning	42
Total		262

Presentations/Workshops within faculty courses (2009-2010)

Jan	BaFa BaFa in Journalism course	35
Feb	BaFa BaFa in Africana Studies course	30
March	Using Web 2.0 for creating a teaching portfolio – Education	12
March	Using Web 2. for creating a teaching portfolio – Education	13
April	Using technology in the classroom - Education	33
April	Teaching Portfolios for Future Faculty: Workshop for Teaching Sociology class	10
Total		133

New Initiative: Interactive Theater

During the 2008-09 academic year ITLAL piloted the *Albany Interactive Theatre Ensemble (AITE)*, modeled after the Cornell Interactive Theater Ensemble and the CRLT Players (University of Michigan). The purpose of this project is to develop ways to more intensively and authentically engage faculty and graduate students, on a wide range of university and professional issues (diversity, civility, teaching, professional preparation, etc.). During the 2009-2010 academic year the Ensemble developed three new scenarios and staged four performances:

“The Academic Job Interview” performed for the GTA Symposium and for a Future Faculty workshop

“The Mid-Term Surprise” performed for the Fall Faculty Retreat

“The Annoyed Student” parts 1 and 2 for the CLUE Seminar hosted by the Provost’s office.

Tenure Trek (Collaboration with the Office of the Provost)

Although ITLAL was an original partner in development of Tenure Trek in 2008-09, for this program’s second year it has been more closely integrated into broader new faculty support and leadership development efforts within the Office of the Provost. ITLAL staffers continue to offer sessions within the current structure, as appropriate, including one on evaluation of teaching.

CLUE (Career Leadership and University Excellence)

ITLAL contributed two sessions to this new program, including a workshop on “Leading through Teaching” and a two-part interactive theater event designed to set up a role play for CLUE participants.

VI. Future Faculty and GTA Programming (PFF; GTAs; ITAs)

GTA and ITA Symposium

ITLAL continues movement toward a TA orientation process that features current, experienced TAs in leadership roles, and no longer focuses narrowly on new Task Instead, we now provide ongoing opportunities for all graduate students in teaching positions, with special efforts to ensure that new TAs are encouraged to participate. The Fall 2009 International TA Reception and GTA Symposium (its new name) featured for the first time 18 experienced graduate students in workshop facilitation roles.

Workshops for GTAs & Preparing Future Faculty

Aug 26	GTA Symposium	90
Aug 26	ITA Reception and Workshop	30
Sept 17	Demystifying the Academic Job Market	15
Sept 23	Effective CV and Cover Letters	16
Oct 13	Teaching Portfolios for Future Faculty	16
Nov 9	Preparing for the Academic Job Interview	10
Feb 4	How to Find the Right Academic Job for You	23
Total		200

Preparing Future Faculty Certificate Program

ITLAL’s Preparing Future Faculty program is suite of activities to prepare graduate students for their careers in academe. The program consists of three courses: Seminar in College Teaching; Preparing for the Professoriate, and Reflective Teaching (including the preparation of a teaching portfolio). In the Fall semester 14 students from Anthropology, Atmospheric Science, Biology, Educational Psychology, Philosophy, Physics, Psychology, and Social Welfare participated in the Seminar on College Teaching and in a pilot version of the Reflective Teaching course. In the spring 11 students participated in Preparing for the Professoriate.

PFF Outreach

ITLAL also initiated a traveling workshop on the “Academic Job Search” and delivered a pilot version to the School of Public Health graduate student organization and to students in the Informatics program. ITLAL also elected a steering committee charged with formation of a campus-wide council to help meet graduate students’ needs as they prepare for faculty positions. 9 students from various schools and colleges met several times over the course of the semester to devise a mission statement, a vision statement a plan for the following year, and to pick the members for the 2010-2011 school year to serve on the eventual Future Faculty Leadership Council.

Teaching Portfolio Awards for GTAs

In 2008-09 ITLAL launched a contest intended to foster GTA interest in taking a more scholarly approach to their teaching. In 2009-10 11 graduate students completed an “intent to submit” form, and each of these individuals consulted with an ITLAL staff member for coaching and feedback. 5 of the original applicants submitted a completed portfolio for the award. A committee of three faculty members judged the finalists. One award and two honorable mentions were given and teaching philosophy statements from each of these three winners were featured on the ITLAL webpage.

VII. Consulting and Assessment Services

Individual Consultations

ITLAL consultations with faculty, GTAs and staff in teaching roles increased by 16% in 2009-10. Consultations range over a wide array of topics, including course design and management, increasing student engagement, use of instructional technology, assessing student learning, departmental culture, scholarship of teaching, and academic career development.

Consultations by School or College

College or School	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Arts and Sciences	164	218	272
Business	31	23	18
Computing and Information	9	22	35
Criminal Justice	2	26	22
Education	11	21	18
Library	1	3	11
Nanoscale Science and Eng.	1	6	10
Rockefeller	16	39	51
Public Health	28	20	44
Social Welfare	47	70	38
Totals	333	448	519
Annual Growth rate:	Baseline	+34%	+16%

Mid-term student surveys

This service is now in full production and its use is growing steadily. Faculty members make their request for surveys online and the forms are delivered in time to be administered on the appointed day. Once the forms are returned to ITLAL, the reports are generated within 2-3 days, and the results returned to the faculty in complete confidentiality. In Fall of 2009 we introduced the option of a customized survey of which 9 faculty took advantage during the academic year. A pilot was also run to test out the feasibility of doing these midterm surveys online using Blackboard Learning System. Two faculty members and one graduate TA used the online version of these surveys in their classes.

Semester	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Summer	0	3	2
Fall	14	58	73
Spring	21	48	88
Total	34 (pilot)	136	163
Growth	Baseline	300%	8%

Classroom observations

ITLAL conducted 24 classroom observations during the academic year, and another 12 online visitations of blended courses. Because of limited staff capacity for a large-scale effort to provide classroom observations, we are currently offering this service in conjunction with the Instructional and Technology Leadership Academies only.

VIII. Instructional Media and Technology Services

Faculty Lab and Workshop Area (ITLAL Underground)

The new space (LI B-69) into which ITLAL moved in 2008-09 has had a revolutionary effect on the work of staff, and on the experience of faculty and staff visitors. The lab/workshop area has made possible spontaneous demonstrations and technology trainings, which occur daily, and which include one-on-one sessions for those with specific needs or goals. Faculty and instructional staff drop by frequently for conversations or to pick up resources and order services. The new space has also allowed ITLAL to support time-intensive activities such as 2 and 3-day academies, or extended hands-on trainings for learning BlackBoard or the digitizing technologies. The hosting of Technology Week and numerous workshops was made possible by having the designated space. ITLAL has not yet established a process to collect data on client use of the new space, but will incorporate those processes into future annual reports.

Clickers

ITLAL, in collaboration with ITS, continues to promote effective use of classroom clickers through workshops and individual consultations, and provides extensive ongoing support for any instructors seeking to adopt the technology. In 2009-10 there were **18 new users** (42% increase), bringing to a total of **65 total** the number of instructors who have taken advantage of this service since its inception in 2007-08.

Streaming Media Production

ITLAL provides digitization services for faculty, transferring nearly any kind of media source into formats usable in web-based applications. Items are converted to a stream-able format and made available on a secure server to faculty and their students.

Year	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Total new requests	173	345	275
Total items (cumulative) processed and stored for streaming	6,494	8,804	10,296
Total number of instructors using streaming media	129	160	205
Annual increase in number of users	Baseline	24%	28%

LUNA Project (Digital Archives)

In collaboration with Art, ITS and the Library, ITLAL continues to work toward roll-out of a new service for faculty who wish to make high resolution image collections to store and manage using LUNA software. ITLAL will become one of 3 primary points of service for faculty members seeking to use this resource.

iTunes U Pilot

Based on the experience of the iTunes U pilot, the team has recommended that the iTunes U service for UAlbany be discontinued. All existing Course Pages would be removed after notifying the instructors and providing them with sufficient time to download their media files. All credentials except the administrator account would be terminated. The UAlbany iTunes U site would remain activated and accessible to the administrator account only. In the event that interest in the service increases, we could reconsider options for providing iTunes U service at UAlbany.

IX. Classroom Support Initiatives

New Initiative: Classroom Furniture Research Study

ITLAL facilitated a grant from KI Furniture in support of original classroom design research. The purpose of this research is to evaluate effects of classroom design on student (N=527) and instructor (N=27) perceptions and attitudes. Several classrooms were structured in three different formats: 1) Highly Flexible 2) Moderately flexible and 3) Traditional. Classroom observations (n=20) were conducted over the course of the semester, and student and instructor perceptions were measured using Burgess and Kaya's (2007) Classroom Attitude Scale. Initial analyses indicate that the classroom conditions did not impact student comfort, however student perceptions of collaboration were greater in the flexible classrooms than in traditional classrooms. Further analyses of this data are underway, as well as plans to continue and expand this study in the 2010-2011 academic year.

Portable Classroom Pilot

In the Fall of 2009 ITLAL rolled out a portable classroom pilot. This pilot is to allow faculty to have access to portable technology for their class when they are teaching in a classroom that has little or no technology. The equipment is loaned for a full semester. The technologies available are Netbooks, portable projectors, speakers and extension cords. The equipment is bundled into a small size carrying case. In the Fall of 2009 5 faculty members took advantage of the service, and 5 more in Spring of 2010. As more classrooms come on line with full digital service, the portable classroom project will focus on providing technology to faculty teaching small seminar rooms.

Comment from a faculty member about the pilot: "I really appreciate having this technology available, otherwise I would have had to completely restructure the way I teach my classes (i.e. no PowerPoint lectures, no video clips, no downloading information from the web at appropriate times during lecture, no multimedia student presentations) ... I am most thankful to ITLAL for providing this equipment! It is an essential service in light of the dearth of fully equipped classrooms in some of the buildings".

X Print and Web Resources

ITLAL's extensive web-based resources are the result of three years of focused effort. These resources are now visited frequently by faculty and faculty development specialists world-wide. For 2010 we added several significant content areas and new functionalities.

- Online registration for all events
- Expansion of On-line Library Catalogue
- Online Handbook for Faculty
 - Launch of the Faculty Spotlight Series
 - Writing resource area for faculty using writing assignments
 - (drafted new section for Adjunct Faculty, to go live in 2010-11)

Website Traffic (statistics exclude ITLAL staff visits)

Month	Page Loads	Unique Visitors	First Time Visitors	Returning Visitors
July 2009	5,131	1,629	995	634
August 2009	5,903	1,979	1,251	728
September 2009	6,607	2,494	1,667	827
October 2009	6,459	2,498	1,726	772
November 2009	6,792	2,069	1,389	680
December 2009	3,994	1,390	871	519
January 2010	5,774	2,088	1,352	736
February 2010	6,506	2,063	1,317	746
March 2010	6,810	2,773	1,845	928
April 2010	6,745	2,381	1,678	703
May 2010	4,674	1,869	1,332	537
June 2010	3,145	1,204	783	421
Yearly Total	68,540	24,437	16,206	8,231
Monthly Average	5,711	2,036	1,350	686

Comparative chart

Year	07-08	08-09	09-10
Monthly average page loads	1,951	3,587	5,711
Monthly average individual visitors	843	1,424	2,036
Annual Increase in monthly average of individual visitors	baseline	45%	43%

ITLAL Publications

Teaching at Albany (distributed to 2200 readers)

November 2009, *Designing Group Assignments that Work*

March, 2010, *Helping Students Manage Technology in the Classroom*

Graduate Teaching at Albany (distributed to 2200 readers)

February 2010, *Oh The Places You'll Go! Taking Charge of your Career in Academia Now & Later*

XI. ITLAL Service and Scholarship

Committee work and service

- Council on Academic Assessment; GEAC Subcommittee;
- Strategic Planning Task Forces: Undergraduate Education and Campus Infrastructure
- Classroom Advisory Committee
- Husted Classroom Committee
- Technology Coordinators Forum
- Center for Language and International Communication (CLIC) steering committee
- Community and Public Service Program Advisory Board
- CLUE Committee: Quality of Life
- Community Engagement : Sub-Committee on Community Engaged Learning
- Faculty Committee, Middle States Self Study
- Library Visioning Group
- Future Faculty Leadership Council Steering Committee
- LISC
- ROTC
- IPTV Planning Group
- Committee on Centers, Institutes, and Specialized Research Labs

Scholarship

- Bill Roberson (with Christine Reimers), “*Why Do Students Struggle with Abstractions? (And what can we do about it?)*” POD (Professional and Organizational Development Network) Conference 2009:
- Susan Rogers, ‘*Why and How Instructors Grade Participation in Undergraduate Courses,*’ Rocky Hill, CT. [http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/Northeast Educational Research Association](http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/Northeast_Educational_Research_Association), 2009

XII. Ongoing Assessment and Quality Enhancement

Survey of Faculty

ITLAL conducted a survey of all faculty to gather data both on user satisfaction and user needs.

Findings from Spring 2010 user survey (432 respondents)

The ITLAL User Survey was administered in spring 2010 to instructors teaching at the University at Albany. The results suggest that ITLAL offers high-quality programming which consistently meets the needs of program participants, however there are a good deal of services which respondents have not yet made use of. ***It is recommended that ITLAL make greater efforts to publicize programs, events, and services to a wider audience.***

The majority of users and non-users alike indicated that email was the preferred method of advertising ITLAL events, however approximately 50% of users reported that the print newsletters published by ITLAL are useful, ***suggesting that newsletter or newsletter-type documents may also be leveraged to publicize services.***

Overall, respondents indicated that they had a strong interest in attending events designed to support teaching in five main areas: *Active Learning, Collaborative Learning, Critical Thinking, Evaluating Student Learning, and Teaching with Technology*. These preferences varied slightly with time preferences, and the following recommendations are made based on these variations: ***Events on the five major areas may be held at any time during weekdays; events focused on case-based teaching methods may be better-received if they are offered in the late afternoon; events focused on test and assignment design may be better received if they are offered in the evening.***

XIII. Unsolicited Comments from participants in ITLAL events or users of ITLAL services

On Workshops, Academies and the Fall Faculty Retreat

- Thank you SO MUCH for the presentation on Friday!!! I think it was THE key to helping the rest of the day go so smoothly. Only one person was against the changes we were proposing (and she had missed your talk!)
- Thanks again for hosting the workshop last week on active learning. Attached you will find a revised syllabus for [my course]. The most important element I took from the workshop was the strategies to encourage active engagement within class periods, particularly by posing puzzles or questions to activate student thinking before they read and utilizing warm-ups or framing questions to help them have a better filter as they approach the reading. Since this is something I'll be carrying out during class, the changes to the syllabus are not dramatic.
- I enjoyed the McIntosh Seminar – it was really interesting to think that way, that was new for me... It does help me think more constructively about the situation at Albany.
- Your comments are most helpful. I will incorporate the ideas into the course, as well as the fall course that I am using BlackBoard as a component. So far, in the fall course the students are really enjoying the experience. Thanks so much for all of your help. Great academy!
- I just wanted to thank [you]...I really got a lot out of the active learning workshop earlier today, and I appreciate the work you folks do!
- The ITLAL presentation got me thinking that we should apply the scientific method to our teaching strategies. That is what they are doing in trying to understand how students learn and retain knowledge, and learn to think.
- I thought [the] presentation was fantastic, because it presented the simple concept that curriculum should be designed to meet our goals for training our students. Reminding everyone of this kept us from going down fruitless paths, such as discussing what the creators of the curriculum had in mind 25 years ago.
- I enjoyed the ITLAL presentation because it reaffirmed/reinforced some previous workshop type experiences I've had with "active learning... One of the most useful points... made, to my mind, was that it's not necessary to start off trying to teach the basics or making sure everyone's up to speed, that you may be better off beginning with a problem or challenge, and then using that as a method to help establish the basics.
- I... want to thank you very much for an eye-opening and interesting session. I learned a great deal, and found it very refreshing (and validating) to be part of a forum where so much commitment was given to student- and learning-centered approaches to college instruction.
- I would also like you to know that I really appreciate the topics offered by ITLAL. I work a second job and as such am rarely if ever available to attend the seminars. That said, the topics do inspire me to think about how I approach teaching and grading.
- My web enhanced course is going swimmingly—the students really enjoy the format and they are doing well. They are very engaged....
- Thanks very much [for the workshop]...the feedback I heard was positive, and folks appreciated the specific tips and humor. I will relay the tips page to attendees, thanks for forwarding...
- That was an outstanding Fall Faculty Retreat! Not only well-planned, nicely orchestrated, and efficiently delivered, but also INCREDIBLY well-attended, TERRIFICALLY well-received, and gave an INVALUABLE lift to the beginning of the year, not to mention our teaching.

On Consultations and Services

- I gave my final on Tuesday, and I had 13 undergraduate students eagerly discussing economics concepts as they applied to the movie...for 1.5 hours. I wish you could have taped it. They didn't always get things right, but the discussions were excellent, both in terms of the understanding and the level of effort.
- Thanks...this is awesome. I really appreciate your help with the new conversion system. It's great to be able to do these things myself!
- Thanks for digitizing all of my films. This is such a great service! And the turnaround time was impressive.
- I can't tell you how much I appreciate this service! And I really appreciate the quick turnaround. Now absent students can no longer use that as an excuse for not viewing in-class content!
- Many thanks for this speedy report! And thanks also to ITLAL in general for making this service available. The report has actually cheered me up enormously because I am getting some feedback FROM my students instead of just giving feedback TO them. This helps me understand them collectively much better, and also to take into account their suggestions. I was actually worried about this because I have been giving a lot of C's and low quiz grades, but apparently the students aren't just "in it for the grade," which is a false notion faculty often have about their students. I certainly won't have this attitude about these students. Their responses increase the respect I feel for them.
- Thank you for the results of the mid-term survey. It is an **excellent** assessment tool. The data are presented in an efficient format, and the opportunity for students to provide written comments is also superb. I will use the data to improve the course.

General Comments

- ITLAL has really helped improve my class and my enjoyment of teaching. These are the best reviews [evaluations] I've ever received, and I'm sure most of it is due to changes I've made to student learning experiences and evaluation based on ITLAL seminars
- Your group has been a big help for me, and [is] one of my favorite parts of UAlbany.
- Just a quick note, I finally got to watch this [faculty spotlight video], very nice and engaging job, and a resource I can link folks up to who are wondering. Nice job. Thank you.
- Just a quick note to let you know that [ITLAL staff member] has been a big help with the writing in the undergraduate class. I was fully convinced that I had very good writing assignments and she subtly let me know that I was probably not asking the right kinds of questions. (The first two assignments have been much better - they are easier to grade, and I get much better differentiation. (It is easier to tell what a good paper is, and who understands the material.) She has also been very helpful with the grading rubric and very responsive when I ask her a question about an assignment.
- We held our faculty retreat on reforming the undergraduate curriculum last Friday and it was quite successful. Starting the day with the slides on learning objectives that you provided set just the right tone. You were very generous in your support and I greatly appreciate it.
- (From a graduate student) This might be a record...I emailed my paperwork to Bard this morning at 8:30, and they called at 11:30... the director of the program called. He was very enthusiastic about my application and put me through to his secretary to provide dates for an interview. So I guess we have our answer, that cover letter worked! He even said on the phone something like, "...I haven't even finished reading your materials but I know enough already to want to meet you in person..." THANK YOU!
- I was talking to... professors at a couple lunches yesterday and today. Several were very complimentary about ... the program you have built – noting that they have found the guidance received from ITLAL to be useful and focused on the issues that they were concerned about. [One of them] mentioned today that, right before the beginning of the semester, he had almost decided not to try the new strategy of individual and then group quizzes, but you were able to talk him through it all and give him the confidence to give it a try (he thinks that it is terrific, now that he is using it).
- You and your many offerings have had a significant impact on my teaching.
- You should...note the following changes reflective of your influence: First, I've incorporated quizzes to assure student preparation for debates. Second, I've sharpened wording of the final paper assignment to foreground argument. Finally, I've changed my attendance/late work policies to reflect suggestions about how to keep out of policing mode. Thanks again for your insights.
- ITLAL is only in its 3rd year? I guess I got lucky that you got started right when I needed you... Thanks for all your help.

APPENDIX: WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

A Two-Part Series on Documenting Your Teaching

Part I: What is Peer Observation and How Can I Make it Matter:

Peer observations are a part of any tenure and promotion file. How can you make them useful—both to you in your teaching and to readers of your file? In this interactive session we'll discuss how to set up effective peer observations, clarify several myths about peer observation, and take the role of peer observers of an example of classroom teaching. Participants will come away with a clear idea of the pitfalls of peer observation, how to avoid them, and the potential benefits to the department and to faculty members when it is done well.

Part II: Teaching Portfolios for Faculty

Showing that you are an effective teacher is crucial to your success as a faculty member, especially if you are preparing for tenure review. A teaching portfolio gives you the chance to showcase your teaching, to explain why you do what you do in the classroom, and to demonstrate how your methods work. This workshop will give you tips for collecting and displaying materials that will help you articulate your philosophy of teaching and demonstrate your strengths as a teacher.

Increase the Impact of your Lectures

Whether you have a “performer” personality or not, or whether you lecture a lot or a little, it's useful from time to time to re-visit “best practices” for making your lectures engaging, interesting, and effective learning tools for students. How can you ensure that (a) the lecture's content and delivery serve the purpose you intended it to, and (b) that the context and set-up for each lecture lead to maximum impact on student learning? In this “lecture-lecture” (or “demo-workshop”) participants will experience a variety of techniques for engaging students via lecture format, and reflect upon ways that their current lectures can be tweaked, supplemented, contextualized or revised for heightened effect.

Improve your Students' Reading and Writing

One of the frustrations of teaching undergraduate classes is dealing with students who are ill-prepared for college-level reading and writing assignments. The good news is that there are ways to move beyond that frustration and enhance students' skills. This workshop will give you some ways to think about the development of reading and writing skills, and we will demonstrate some strategies for improving reading and writing skills without sacrificing course content. We will also help you consider how you might use these techniques in your own classes.

ITLAL Special Event

Dee Fink: Designing Courses for More Significant Student Learning

This is a rare opportunity for UAlbany faculty to spend a day with the pre-eminent authority on course design for university professors. A provocative, engaging and entertaining workshop facilitator, Dr. Fink works with faculty participants to examine the role of course design in the overall act of teaching, and then leads participants through a new way of designing courses for maximum impact on student learning and motivation.

Using Simulations to Explore Culture Clash

We make judgments about the world around us based on our basic assumptions about how the world works. When we are faced with diversity, these same assumptions can create clashes and break down communication. Participants in the game experience firsthand the shock of realizing that despite their good intentions and the many similarities amongst themselves, people interpret things differently from one another and often in profound ways.

Creating an Interactive Classroom: Are "Clickers" Right for You?

It's time to transform those quiet, sleepy classrooms into places of student participation, active learning and critical thinking. The tool that makes this possible is the "clicker," a small TV-remote-like handset that students purchase like a book and bring to class each day. Using this tool the instructor can survey classes instantaneously in order to promote students' reflection and assess their thought processes, knowledge, and attitudes. University faculty member Vince LaBella (Nanoscale Science and Engineering) will offer advice on effective use of clickers, and on how to write effective clicker questions. Other UAlbany faculty members will also be on hand to share data that show how clickers improve student performance. Afterwards, staff members will be available to guide you through the process of implementing clickers in your own classes.

Technology Week: Open Consultations

ITLAL and ITS are taking a week to focus on some of the technologies most often used in the classroom. Just go to www.albany.edu/teachingandlearning to reserve a 20-30 minute time slot and a staff member will sit down and work with you on your specific needs.

Wikis for Class Collaboration, Communication & More
No More Death by Power Point
Blackboard Learning System
Options for Digitizing and Streaming Media
Set Up an Electronic Grade Book Now & Save Time Later

Whatever Do You Mean by “Active Learning”

You've heard that today's students need to learn actively, and that you should incorporate active learning strategies into your teaching, but how, exactly, does that translate into what you will do in the classroom tomorrow? Is this some kind of entertainment designed to undermine the intellectual rigor of your courses? Using active learning strategies essentially means putting students into the role of thinking and discovering in the discipline, and developing a sense of responsibility for building their own structures of understanding. It's a strategy that also includes holding them accountable for what they've learned. This workshop will give participants the chance to experience and design exercises that engage and challenge students intellectually, and will also clarify the research on and rationale for active learning in the classroom.

Make Paper Grading More Efficient—and Help your Students Learn

There's nothing more disheartening than staring at a stack of student papers waiting to be graded, especially when you aren't convinced that your grading and comments will affect student learning. The good news is you can streamline the process **and** offer feedback that is meaningful to your students. This interactive workshop will offer strategies for making paper grading less painful for you while making the grades you assign more transparent to your students. We will also discuss the types of feedback that lead to effective student learning.

Stop Plagiarism Before it Starts (and what to do if it happens)

We have all seen a mediocre paper with a sudden glowing paragraph or the student who miraculously turns in an A paper when he or she was making C's all semester. Students plagiarize for a variety of reasons like lack of preparation, poor time management, and academic anxiety. But it is possible to create conditions that will make plagiarism less attractive or even virtually impossible. In this workshop we will take a closer look at WHY students plagiarize and offer strategies for preventing it with effective assignment design. We will also discuss how to handle plagiarism when it does happen.

Community Engaged Scholarship and Teaching (Faculty Panel)

Community engaged scholarship at UAlbany has many faces: e.g., a class that researched untouched archives in a local museum to create a web-based exhibit; or departments who partner with local organizations to research local problems like minority health disparities and violence against women. In this panel discussion you will learn about the experiences of UAlbany professors who are at the forefront of Community Engaged Scholarship and Teaching. Come learn about the types of community engaged teaching and research that are happening at UAlbany and what resources are available for getting started in this rewarding area of teaching and research.

Course and Syllabus Design

How do you want students to be different at the end of the semester from how they were at the beginning? What kinds of learning experiences in your course are likely to induce those changes? How will you know if the targeted changes actually occur? In this session participants will zero in on factors that contribute to development of student thinking, knowledge, and know-how. Workshop activities and discussion will address issues such as shaping goals in order to motivate students; coordinating design of assignments with an effective evaluation strategy; and expressing policies to simplify course and classroom management. By the end of the workshop participants will have a plan that allows them to revise an existing course in ways that promote stronger student engagement with the materials, as well as greater student mastery of disciplinary thinking.

ITLAL Special Event

Meggin McIntosh: What Matters When You Lead? (And Would Anyone Notice If You Didn't?)

We offer this guarantee: your investment of these four hours will pay off immediately and many times over in your career and professional relationships. Regardless of your job title or position within the University, you are either a leader or a follower – and it's your choice. Leaders not only put forth ideas but also support their ideas with productive actions. They effect change, and know that they have been positive, productive forces. In these workshops participants will 1) identify the strengths they have as leaders and how to bring those strengths to bear in the academic community; 2) bring forth the resources they need to lead from any and all roles served; and 3) learn specific ways to communicate clearly, concisely, and cogently. Moreover, you will be ready to employ what you've learned even if you have not felt “brave” enough to do so and even if the culture of your department has not welcomed true and positive leadership in the past.

"SIRF's up! Gain Control of Your Student Evaluations"

There is a lot of lore about student evaluations that is not backed up by extensive research about them. Come and find out what really affects student ratings, how you can raise your SIRF scores without 'dumbing down' your course, and how you can improve your students' learning in the process. Bill Roberson, Director of ITLAL, will present this workshop, and will answer your questions about student ratings and help you plan for better documentation of your teaching.

Spring 2010 Assessment Workshop

Toward our goal of continually improving teaching and learning, and in collaboration with the Council on Academic Assessment, we are asking programs to reflect on a particular component of their assessment plans each spring. In Spring 2010, we are asking each program to consider two further aspects of their assessment plans: where does assessment occur (e.g., in specific courses, capstone courses,

research projects, entrance exams, etc.) and by what means. As we discussed in PEAC, choosing appropriate places for assessment to occur and appropriate assessment tools ensures that subsequent assessment activities are efficient and generate useful results.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS FOR GTA and FUTURE FACULTY Events

Demystifying the Academic Job Market

There's a light at the end of the dissertation tunnel, and you've decided it's time to start looking for a job. But where do you even start? In this session graduate students considering a life in academe will learn from UAlbany faculty members who have recently entered the professorate. Join us in this discussion, which will consider issues as wide-ranging as application strategies, CV's, and on-campus interviews, including some do's and don'ts.

Writing Effective CV's and Cover Letters

A well-organized CV and cover letter are crucial for landing the academic job you have been working toward as a graduate student. While separately they address different aspects of your preparation and experience, together they can be a powerful tool to convince a prospective academic institution that you have the skills necessary for the job AND that you are a fit for their institution. This workshop will help you develop a clear plan for how best to organize your credentials into a CV and gain techniques for putting together a cover letter that brings you one step closer to that perfect academic position.

Teaching Portfolios for Future Faculty

You know that you are a great teacher—all your students and colleagues say you are. But how can you *show* it? One great way is by developing a strong teaching statement and assembling a portfolio that showcases your accomplishments and development as a teacher. This workshop will provide examples and give you tips for collecting and displaying materials that will help you articulate your philosophy of teaching and demonstrate your strengths as a teacher.

Preparing for the Academic Job Interview

So you've landed an interview...and the panic is setting in! This workshop will walk you through the "typical" faculty interview, and give you an idea of what to expect. Learn the ins and outs of interviewing for faculty positions. We will discuss the proper preparation and potential pitfalls of the most common interviewing scenarios: phone, conference and on-campus.

How to find the right academic job for you (and compete for it!)

In this job market it's hard to think about choosing the type of institution where you would like to work, but knowing what you want from a career and knowing how to sell that will make you a stronger candidate. Many assume that their dream job will be at a research institution (like UAlbany) but only 20% of the jobs can be found there. Whether your dream job focuses on teaching or on research, there are institutions that will support your interests. Join us for a panel discussion with faculty members from local institutions (including liberal arts and community colleges) to learn what their faculty life is like so that you can target your job search to the type of institution that will best fit your career interests. We will also discuss how to tailor your application package so that it will be attractive to a search committee at a non-research institution.