FROM THE INTERIM DIRECTOR
Eileen Barrett, English

Welcome back. We’re determined that budgetary blues won’t keep us from an active and productive spring quarter in the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching. Bernie Salvador will offer his popular workshops on Blackboard and other technologies, and Eric Suess (Statistics) will conduct his quarterly workshop on SPSS. We invite all to join the bimonthly meetings of our writing and teaching circles. The writing circle provides structure for your writing projects, feedback on your works-in-progress, and a chance to learn about the writing projects of your colleagues. The teaching circle will continue to foster a fruitful exchange of teaching ideas among those of us in different disciplines. (See BARRETT, page 2.)

THOUGHTS ON TEACHING
John Hammerback, Speech Communication

The best teaching, I believe, takes place when professor and students together establish a classroom (or online) culture that values learning and respects everyone in class. In some of my classes, this culture has taken hold easily; in others, not so easily. A few suggestions that may be useful: explain early in the quarter just why learning what we're studying is so valuable; treat students and course topics with respect from beginning to end of the term. Once the classroom culture is its most conducive for learning, we need the widely recognized skills and knowledge so helpful in the craft and art of teaching. First, we must know well our subject matter—and therefore must keep current in our academic areas. Once we know what we're talking about, we apply the tools of our profession such as organizing information and ideas into clear lectures, using effective techniques of collaborative learning, and managing classroom time efficiently.

A small group of my teachers gave me something that I see as even more valuable than the assorted facts, concepts, and skills advertised in catalog descriptions of their courses. These professors all demonstrated a deep commitment to the ideas they taught and a powerful passion for the enterprise of scholarship (by scholarship I mean advancing knowledge through our research, writing, art). In short, they were the people whom they asked their students to be. As we professors embody our ideas through our lives as scholars and artists, through the implicit and explicit means in the texts of our communication with students, and through our very manner in the classroom, we forge an identification with students that can reorder the hierarchy of qualities by which they define themselves. Through this rhetorical process, which I explore in much of my recent scholarship, we can liberate in our students the qualities that reflect central values of the University and democracy—such qualities as love of learning; respect for thinking rigorously, researching industriously, and communicating clearly; and honoring free inquiry and the open competition of the marketplace of ideas. By incarnating our ideas, then, we may be able to extend our pedagogical reach through our students to make our world just a bit more enlightened, fair, beautiful. If I’m correct here, that’s quite an opportunity and responsibility.
Once again, we’re collaborating with the Student Center for Academic Achievement, the Library, General Education, and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. Emily Nye (SCAA) will assist us with student writing through a workshop with Jessica Weis (History) and Mike Rovasio (English) on designing effective writing assignments. Aline Soules (Library) will share her expertise on the application of copyright issues to the classroom and to our research. Ilene Rockman (Library) and Peggy Lant (English) will team for a workshop on information literacy learning objectives (English) will team for a workshop on education and teaching strategies. Drawing on her information literacy learning objectives Rockman (Library) and Peggy Lant (English) will team for a workshop on information literacy learning objectives (English) will team for a workshop on information literacy learning objectives (English) will team for a workshop on information literacy learning objectives (English) will team for a workshop on information literacy learning objectives.

Our workshops will also explore the role that diversity plays in our lives, on our campus, and in our classrooms. Michael Kass (Educational Leadership), Kyzyl Fenno-Smith (Library), and Rita Liberti (Kinesiology and Physical Education) will facilitate an interactive workshop and conversation about race and racism. To celebrate the tenth anniversary of the publication of their book Confronting Diversity Issues on Campus, we’ve invited Ben Bowser (Sociology and Social Services), Terry Jones (Sociology and Social Services), and Gale Young (Communication) to discuss their collaboration on this project, the reception of the book, and the ongoing issues it raises about diversity on our and other campuses.

Our newsletter includes our calls for 2003-04 Faculty in Residence and for our new 2003-04 Teacher/Scholar Program. The two faculty in residence will assist with the ongoing work of the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching. The Teacher/Scholar Program will bring together a group of faculty to engage in ongoing discussion of teaching, learning, and the scholarship of teaching. Throughout the year, we’ll meet once a month for two-hour seminar sessions to discuss how to create, for our students and ourselves, classes that challenge, excite, and inspire a passion for learning. In the process, we hope this program will create a supportive community of reflective teachers. We’ve also included the announcement for the CSU Teacher-Scholar Summer Institute workshops. If you are interested, contact our office about possible financial support. Finally, don’t forget about our annual end-of-the-year barbecue bash.

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Throughout the quarter we’ll highlight the scholarship of teaching and professional development. In a workshop focused on the scholarship of teaching, Barbara Storms (Educational Leadership) will model how our classrooms can become sites for our research. Eric Suess (Statistics) will chair a panel discussion among new faculty—Scott Hopkins (Art), Meiling Wu (Modern Languages), David Bowen (Engineering), Levent Ertaul (Computer Science), Jessica Goodkind (Human Development) and Mitchell Craig (Geology)—about the connections between their research and their teaching. Rita Liberti (Kinesiology and Physical Education) and Ann Meyer (Human Development) will facilitate a discussion among Lynn Comerford (Human Development), Maxine Craig (Sociology and Social Services), and Laurie Price (Anthropology) about the challenges facing qualitative researchers. Sue Schaefer (Business Administration) will offer a hands-on workshop for lecturers who plan to apply for range elevation.

Ten years have passed since we opened our doors here, and we are pleased that our enrollment is over 1,500 and growing. At CCC, we have 33 classrooms, two distance-learning rooms, four state-of-the-art computer labs, and two biology labs. We offer upper-division and graduate curriculum as well as eight undergraduate majors, four graduate programs, three credential programs, and six certificate programs.

During the day, local community colleges—Diablo Valley and Los Medanos—hold classes on our campus and use our classrooms for lower-division offerings. This arrangement presents a great recruiting opportunity for our advisers because they can encourage community-college students to transfer to CSUH upon completion of their community college courses.

My position as the Faculty-Services Coordinator is a new one. My responsibilities are quite varied and include working closely with faculty at Contra Costa in an effort to enhance their teaching experience while on our campus. I have developed faculty orientations for both CSU faculty and community college faculty. Workshops have been added to better serve faculty who teach at CCC as well. I am continuing to develop programs to improve and streamline services to faculty and students.

We welcome returning faculty who teach at CCC, and we look forward to meeting new faculty. Please visit our campus, stop by, and ask questions!

SERVICE LEARNING
Mary D’Alleva, Director of Community Service Learning

In February I attended the seventh CSU Colloquium on Community Service Learning. On the second day, we joined small discussion groups focused either on student leadership, community partnerships, or faculty issues. Since encouraging the student voice is high on my priority list for next year, I joined this
My colleagues and I, as civic-minded individuals, began our discussion looking at all the challenges to fostering and creating student leaders on our campuses. As you can guess, the list was long. But I came away with a sense of possibility, a sense that we are at the right time politically and historically to engage our students in real contextual learning—in-service learning. With the prevailing economic climate, never has it been more important for each individual to gain a sense of community, a sense of responsibility beyond our individual lives. And while we don’t want to politicize education—how can we ignore the real domestic issues our communities are facing as a result of international politics and economics?

As the Director of the Service Learning Program for two years now, I have worked to expose faculty to service as a learning tool, to support faculty who engage their students in service opportunities, and to build a program that meets true community needs. When students go out into the community for learning experiences, as their teachers we do lose a bit of curriculum control. In a ten-week quarter, we also might have to sacrifice readings. But now it’s time for us to consider all that we have to gain, which we can discover only when we have a clear idea of our learning objectives. Whenever we make curricular choices, we measure the potential texts or assignments against these objectives. How will this reading meet my objectives for this class? When our classroom materials/tools intersect with our goals—that’s when student learning can take place. The pedagogy of service learning offers the opportunity not only to reinforce course content but also to develop the meta-objectives built into all disciplines: critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork.

How we make service learning happen will look different in every classroom, but learning outcomes are generally the same. When we offer our students a real context for the content or their courses, then we facilitate understanding. When we reflect upon these individual experiences in the classroom, place their experiences in a theoretical perspective, we enable our students to enter the dialogue that exists in every discipline. And then we are truly creating student leaders.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND LEARNING
Ann Meyer, Faculty in Residence

Three relatively new technologies will have an increasing effect on student learning over the next several years: course management software (for example, Blackboard), smart classrooms, and wireless networks. Each can enhance interaction through putting new collaborative tools in the hands of students. As we move to create supportive learning environments that promote problem solving (such as case studies and project-based learning), access to communication, feedback, and information become critical.

Version 6 of Blackboard (due to be installed on campus this summer) promises a completely re-structured environment for online collaboration, student submission of assignments directly to related course content area, and entirely new functionality for collection, storage, and organization of student assignments and teacher feedback. Groups can be either assigned or self-selected. The virtual classroom has been completely redesigned to provide a dynamic environment for interaction among all course participants, small groups, or on a one-to-one basis.

However, most improvements in Blackboard 6 still focus on faculty presentation of content and on grading. This version promises more pedagogical control for the faculty through the following features such as new navigational and file-naming protocols, easier to manage linking capabilities, and a science-equation editor.
The assessment manager will allow faculty to develop assessments through intuitive, step-by-step workflow and be able to include images, attached files/documents, and URL's in assessment questions and answer options. Offline authoring of questions in common spreadsheet application for upload of question sets into assessment. Blackboard is very slowly being transformed from a faculty-centered tool to present and organize material to a supportive learning environment for students.

Smart classrooms provide the opportunity for students to present their collaborative work using PowerPoint, and other presentation software/media as well as the Internet. The ability to author/create and receive feedback from their peers promises to enhance the learning process as well as their skill to perform in organizations outside the classroom.

Wireless networks have already proved immensely popular in the library where students can both search for information, communicate and write their papers at the same time. But this technology is at an early stage. In the future, one can envision students able to collaborate, using laptops, at many points on the campus and even in the parking lot. With increasing bandwidth and storage, search tools (bots) to roam the semantic Web, students will need to be hyper-literate, lifelong active learners, creators and problem solvers. We need to focus on those new technologies that will facilitate student learning through enhancing interaction such as simulations and collaborative workspace.

MORE ON TEACHING
ROBERT PHELPS, HISTORY

I think one of the things good teachers do is ask the question, “what will my students remember about this course ten years from now?” Because we have our students for only a short time, good teachers try to convey their passion in the classroom and therefore foster a life-long curiosity about their subjects. Enthusiasm is contagious, and the most cherished compliments I have received are from students who took a course or two from me some time ago, but who take the time to visit or write to say “I really disliked history before I took your class, but now I make it a point to check the History Channel and PBS or to look for good books in the history section of book stores because I love history so much now.”

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