

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: SUPPORTING UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AT WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

ADP Initiative

WWU partners with Ivan Franko in western Ukraine

As part of its American Democracy Project (ADP) efforts, Western is partnering with Ivan Franko National University in the city of L'viv in western Ukraine.

The partnership may take several forms, including student and faculty exchanges and emphasis on student leadership, democratic practices, and faculty development.

The partnership is part of a new ADP initiative, University Partnerships for Education and Citizenship (UPEC). It is co-sponsored by the Alliance of Universities for Democracy (AUDEM), which is composed of eastern and central European and

U.S. universities. The goal of UPEC is to link U.S. and central and eastern Europe universities with the purpose of enriching democratic citizenship and civic engagement among university students.



WWU and Ivan Franko partnership: Kris Bulcroft, center, met in October at Ivan Franko with Professor Yaroslav Prytula, left, and Ivan Franko's vice rector for student affairs, right. The three discussed ways that WWU and the western Ukraine university might work together on both student learning and faculty development.

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VPUE announces grants for faculty and departments, to support efforts for first-year and transfer students

The Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (VPUE) announces one-time funding for a limited number of individual faculty development and department/program initiatives that focus on first-year and transfer students.

The grant funding for 2006-07 is made available through the New Student Enrollment Fee. As has been determined by ongoing advisory committees, the monies are to be allocated to support faculty and departments /programs in the enhancement or expansion of curricular and co-curricular offerings for new students.

Applications for the first round of grants must be received by March 10, 2006 for full consideration. Individual faculty members as well as departments or programs are encouraged to apply. For complete details on the grants, including award amounts, submission criteria, forms, and deadlines, go to the VPUE website, <http://www.wwu.edu/depts/vpue/> and click the link to *Grants* in either the *Announcements* or the *VPUE's Links* sections.

For more information, please contact Ann Carlson at ann.carlson@wwu.edu or x/2345.

E V E N T S

Martin Luther King Jr Day Events:

"We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character, that is the goal of true education."
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

MLK Day Read-In for Children

Monday, January 16, 11 AM – 4 PM, Village Books

Western students will read multicultural and social justice books and participate in diversity activities with children ages 3-7. Bring your children and participate.

Book Donation Drive

(ongoing, from now - MLK Day)

The AS Bookstore and Village Books are offering special discounts on selected children's titles if you would like to donate a book. All donated books will go to selected elementary schools in Whatcom County. Details available at the bookstores, or for more information on both events, contact Marie at the Center for Service Learning, x/7520.

Events are sponsored by: Vice President for Student Affairs and Academic Support Services, Center for Service Learning, New Student Services/Family Outreach, Residence Life, Ethnic Student Center and Americorps.

► Inside: "First Thursdays" workshops for faculty

Nominations now being accepted

CII Innovative Teaching Showcase highlights educating global citizens

Justina Brown and Karen Casto,
Center for Instructional Innovation

The Center for Instructional Innovation is now accepting faculty nominations for this year's online Innovative Teaching Showcase. This year's theme, "Educating Global Citizens," will focus on those faculty members who provide experiences that encourage students to look at their world from new perspectives.

This will be the seventh Showcase, which highlights the best teaching practices of WWU faculty, in a dynamic multimedia format. This year's showcase theme reflects President Karen Morse's 2005 *State of the University* address, which emphasizes the both the importance of and the university's commitment to preparing students as global citizens. The Showcase will be unveiled in an open house at the CII on June 2.

Examples of the "global citizens" theme may

include: classes or programs that have an international component; classes that increase students' understanding of the world; study abroad programs; internships abroad; or institutes or programs that bring students to Western from other countries.

Faculty, students, and staff are encouraged to nominate innovative faculty members for the Showcase, and faculty are also encouraged to nominate themselves. To fill out the nomination form online and see previous showcases, go to <http://pandora.cii.wvu.edu/cii/> and click on "Innovative Teaching Showcase."

For more information, contact Karen Casto at X/4943, or by email: karen.casto@wvu.edu Or stop by the CII in Miller Hall 156.

WWU & Ivan Franko, *continued from pg. 1*

In October, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Kris Bulcroft met with administrators, faculty and students at Ivan Franko to discuss some ways the new partnership might evolve. The visit was made in conjunction with attending the AUDEM annual conference, held in Yalta in the Ukraine.

"We hope to host two students from Ivan Franko in the 2006 – 07 academic year," Bulcroft said.

"We're also anticipating that students and faculty from Western may also have the opportunity to go to Ivan Franko as part of the exchange."

Bulcroft added that she had met Yaroslav Prytula, a professor in the cultural studies program at Ivan Franko, at a previous AUDEM conference. When the UPEC initiative was announced, she contacted Prytula, and the two agreed to move forward on partnering their respective universities.

Ivan Franko students—many of whom participated actively in the Ukraine's recent electoral "Orange Revolution"—expressed interest in learning more about student government and leadership as part of the

exchange with Western. Ivan Franko faculty also indicated an interest in sharing strategies for more "student-centered" pedagogies and assessment methods.

Ivan Franko is almost 800 years old, and is the second oldest university in the Ukraine, as well as one of the country's top-ranked schools. Similar to Western, it has approximately 12,000 full-time students and a strong liberal arts emphasis. The medieval city of L'viv, located near the Polish border and with more than 750,000 residents and two dozen universities—was founded in the 13th century. Known as the "culture capital of the Ukraine," L'viv's eclectic architecture has a variety of eastern and western European influences. In 1998, the city center was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

For more information on the partnership with Ivan Franko, contact Ann Carlson in the VPUE office, x/2345, or ann.carlson@wvu.edu



Ivan Franko National
University in L'viv,
Ukraine

NEWS BRIEFS

Collaborative classroom available for Fall 2006

As of Fall quarter 2006, Bond Hall 419 will be available for general university use as a collaborative classroom space. The room—which holds a maximum of 36 students—is fully mediated, and the traditional, tablet armchairs have been replaced by round tables and moveable, more comfortable chairs. This more innovative "learning space" is designed especially to facilitate integration of technology, group work, and more faculty-student interaction.

Faculty may request Bond Hall 419 for Fall quarter, beginning in mid-February 2006, by contacting Troy Ragsdale in the Registrar's Office, troy.ragsdale@wvu.edu or x/3758.

Western Reads Director needed for 2006-07

The Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (VPUE) is seeking a faculty member who would like to serve as the director of the Western Reads program for the 2006 – 07 academic year. Western Reads is a campus-wide reading program designed to promote intellectual engagement, community, and conversation. It is sponsored jointly by The Office of the VPUE and New Student Programs.

A committee will select the book for next year's program this winter quarter. The Director's compensation is negotiable, dependent upon the agreed-upon duties. For more information or to apply, contact VPUE Kris Bulcroft, x/3004 or kris.bulcroft@wvu.edu

To learn more about Western Reads, visit the website:

<http://westernreads.wvu.edu>



Mark your calendars now for these energizing and useful faculty development workshops, sponsored by the Center for Instructional Innovation and The Teaching-Learning Academy, with support from the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. Updates and additions are posted online at: <http://pandora.cii.wvu.edu/cii/events/default.asp>

WINTER QUARTER 2006

Time Out!

THURSDAY, Jan. 12, at 4–5 PM
Miller Hall 158

Your email inbox is full, students are lined up for your office hours, and there are still dozens of exams to grade...where, and how, do overloaded faculty find time to reflect, connect, and create the space necessary for both attending to their work as instructors and their lives as scholars? Take the time to attend this workshop, and learn how to incorporate reflective practice into your daily work life as well as use it effectively with your students the classroom. (Note: this workshop has been rescheduled from December.)

Successful Strategies for the Large Classroom

THURSDAY, Feb. 2, at 4–5 PM
Miller Hall 158

A big class isn't just a small class with more people in it – instead, it requires different teaching methods and different organizational techniques to make it an inclusive learning environment for all students. Join Carol Edwards, Dean of the College of Fine and Performing Arts, to discuss what you can—and can't—expect from your large courses, gain successful strategies to teach and involve your student “audience,” and find out simple things you can do, regardless of discipline, that both enhance learning and streamline your workload.

Carol Edwards, Dean of the College of Fine and Performing Arts, will give strategies for teaching large lecture courses, Feb. 2



Writing Syllabi that Engage and Motivate Students

THURSDAY, March 2 at 4–5 PM
Miller Hall 158

A course syllabus gives a positive first impression of your course, and makes explicit to students your learning objectives and expectations. During this workshop, best practices for syllabus creation will be explored, and a new online syllabus creation tool designed by the Center for Instructional Innovation at WWU will be demonstrated.

SPRING QUARTER 2006

Using Humor and Play for Learning

THURSDAY, April 6, at 4–5 PM,
ROOM TBA

“Humor is also a way of saying something serious.” —T.S. Eliot

Taking advantage of a humorous situation—and having fun—in class can be great ways to create “teachable moments.” Appropriate and intentional use of humor in the classroom can also create a learning environment that boosts cognition, eases student anxiety, facilitates group cohesion, and enhances instructor appeal. At this interactive workshop, you will hear how humor heightens “funderstanding.” Come laugh and learn with us!

Distinguished Lecture Series: Konrad Steffen, Jan. 25



Climatologist Konrad Steffen will discuss “Changes in the Arctic Ice Cover - Greenland Ice Sheet and

Surrounding Oceans,” as part of the President’s Distinguished Lecture Series on Tuesday, Jan. 25, 6:30 PM, at the PAC Mainstage. Tickets are free but required. For more information:

<http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~lectures/>

Beyond the Classroom: Service Learning, Internships, International Experiences

THURSDAY, May 4, at 4–5 PM
ROOM TBA

Preparing students as active participants in the global community requires a variety of innovative pedagogies, as well as forging explicit connections between the in and out of classroom experience. Join the Center for Service Learning and Office of Undergraduate Education to explore ways to deepen the “real world” learning experience of Western undergraduates through work experiences and international exchanges.

Innovative Teaching Showcase Open House (CII)

Thursday, June 1, from Noon—2 PM
ROOM TBA

Every year, the Center for Instructional Innovation creates a cutting-edge multimedia showcase, featuring the best practices of Western’s most dynamic instructors. This year’s theme is “Educating Global Citizens,” and at the open house, you can see it all, as well as meet the directors and staff of the CII, enjoy refreshments, learn more about the Innovative Teaching Showcase, and meet this year’s Showcase’s featured instructors.

PRAXIS is published quarterly throughout the academic year by the Office of the Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education. Created as a forum for faculty and student support professionals on Western's campus, PRAXIS promotes the exchange of ideas and provides information on upcoming events and topical issues in teaching and learning at the undergraduate level.

Office of the Vice Provost for
Undergraduate Education
Western Washington
University
516 High Street Bellingham
WA 98225-9033

Phone: 360.650.2345
Email: praxis@wwu.edu

PRAXIS online:
<http://www.wwu.edu/depts/vpue/praxis/>

Teaching-Learning Academy

Egalitarian environment encourages dialogue, reflection among students, faculty, and staff



Peter Moe, Program Assistant, Teaching-Learning Academy

In fast paced academia, it is rare to have a chance to be still and reflect. Some blame our quarter system, some blame an overload of commitments, but whatever the cause, the problem remains the same: we need a place encouraging reflection. It would be easy to claim there is simply not enough time to foster time-consuming reflection, but, as Teaching—Learning Academy (TLA) student participant Josh Wright notes, “it is not a matter of *having* enough time but instead of *making* enough time.” Thankfully, Western’s TLA has done just that: created a venue allowing students, faculty, and staff to congregate—free of the burdens of our titles—to discuss and reflect on issues affecting our community.

A hallmark of the TLA is its interdisciplinary, egalitarian environment. Students of all majors convene bi-weekly with faculty and staff representing the many diverse sides of Western. While outside the TLA, students may feel intimidated by faculty and staff, inside the TLA students are empowered to speak freely. Lauren Steed, another student member of the TLA, characterizes this exchange as a breaking of hierarchical boundaries, which “[improves] the dialogue process through the flow of exchanged information.” Faculty and staff listen to students, and in turn students listen to faculty and staff; it is a true conversation in which participants gain a deeper understanding of the other.

This unique environment dismantling hierarchies and encouraging reflection does not happen by mere chance, but instead by explicitly stated ideals. TLA participants strive for a dialogue that is marked by these essential traits:

- ◆ **A respectful environment.** People feel safe to express differing points of view and understanding is the primary goal;
- ◆ **Active listening and engagement.** People work reciprocally to find meaning in each others’ thoughts, feelings, and experiences;
- ◆ **Open-Mindedness.** People try to hear and understand what others do and say;
- ◆ **Non-Threatening Tone.** People can ask clarifying questions, say nothing, or speak their minds without needing to be argumentative or defensive;
- ◆ **Structured Informality.** People share a common process, although they may have differing goals, beliefs, viewpoints, attitudes, and needs.

The TLA exploits the connection between silence and reflection, allowing participants to bask in the space provided by each, a characteristic of the TLA student participant Chelsey LaRowe values. In writing about the TLA, student members Kristin Wissler and Katie Bohannon attest to the TLA’s conversational ground rules key role within dialogue. The foundations of the TLA help greatly in establishing the non-hierarchical community of the TLA, but they also serve to create the reflective environment that is the core of our dialogues.

Join the TLA for winter quarter

The TLA’s 2005-2006 overarching discussion question is: *What do we think it means to be an educated person? And how might we structure experiences at Western to honor and sustain that kind of education?*

After our conversations fall quarter, we are beginning to see a bit of tension between what we believe to be an educated person and what society believes it to be. The TLA study groups will be meeting this quarter on Jan 11/12, 25/26, Feb 8/9, 22/23, and March 8/9. Meeting times are Wed. at Noon or 3 PM; and Thurs. at Noon or 3 PM. If you would like to join in this ongoing conversation or want more information, please contact Peter Moe via email: peter.moe@wwu.edu