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Editorial

“The mission of the *Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)* is to promote and support high quality teaching and learning at the American University of Beirut in keeping with the mission of the University, particularly the University's commitment to excellence in teaching and the enablement of students to think independently and become life-long learners.” Accomplishing this mission requires a shared understanding of its tenets by the AUB community and a concerted effort by CTL to organize activities that are aligned with this mission and are implemented in collaboration with faculty members and AUB centers with similar missions and orientations.

It is in this spirit that the *CTL Newsletter* is being published. We hope that this newsletter will become a channel for reporting on CTL activities, sharing ideas among faculty members regarding innovative professional development initiatives that aim

to enhance student learning and critical thinking abilities, and reporting on scholarship of teaching and learning projects that aim to enhance the quality of student learning at AUB and for continuous improvement.

Saouma BouJaoude



Ada Dodge Hall, CTL Office

CTL Advisory Committee

The CTL Advisory Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning. It assists in:

- Serving as a liaison with faculties and departments and the University community as a whole.
- Promoting faculty development opportunities available on campus.
- Promoting the University's commitment to excellence in teaching and focus on student learning

- Participating in long-term strategic planning for the CTL and its role in the university.

- Advising the CTL on major policy decisions and about ways to build on strengths and address challenges.

- Providing insights about pedagogical needs of faculty members and accordingly suggesting programs of interest to the faculty.

- Reviewing and assessing the CTL programs, services, research, and resources.

Members of the Advisory Committee:

- Rima Afifi
- Hadi Barada (IT ACPS)
- Saouma BouJaoude
- Amal BouZeineddine
- Nuhad Dumit
- Ali El Hajj (Chair)
- Nadim Farajalla
- Dima Jamali
- Waddah Nasr
- Malek Tabbal
- Nathalie Zgheib

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Teaching Excellence Award

The purpose of the Teaching Excellence Award is to honor and recognize individuals who have exhibited excellence in teaching at the American University of Beirut. By recognizing such individuals, the University demonstrates its commitment to teaching as a scholarly endeavor, emphasizes the importance of outstanding teaching, and provides incentives for faculty members to pursue activities which could enhance their abilities as teachers. The award is based on evidence of teaching effectiveness and contributions to advancement of AUB's educational programs as implied by the teaching mission of AUB. The Award was established in academic year 2002-2003 and since then two faculty members receive the award annually.

This year the Award winners were **Dr. Charlotte Karam**, Assistant Professor of

Management, Marketing, and Entrepreneurship, Olayan School of Business; and **Dr. Mona Nabulsi**, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine.



Award winners Dr. Charlotte Karam and Dr. Mona Nabulsi, with Provost Dallal

Program and Course Learning Outcomes

In an attempt to follow-up on the implementation of assessment of program learning outcomes and to support departments in this process, CTL staff members are presently holding individual meetings with assessment committees from all FAS and FAFS departments to review the process and results of assessing their program learning outcomes for the academic year 2011-2012 and provide them with guidance regarding the preparation of the annual assessment report. In addition, CTL staff members are coordinating with FEA to insure that assessment reports are completed on a timely basis, and have been reviewing several rubrics for use in General Education. Finally, CTL is working with OIRA and FAS to consider the automation of indirect assessment of PLOs.

CTL Staff Professional Activities

* Dr. Saouma BouJaoude and Dr. Amal BouZeineddine will present a paper entitled "Assessing learning outcomes: Changing habits of mind and transforming universities into learning communities" at the 2012 assessment institute in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA., October 28-30, 2012.

* Dr. Saouma BouJaoude and Dr. Amal BouZeineddine presented a paper entitled "Assessing Learning Outcomes" (in Arabic) at the conference on "Assessing Learning Outcomes at the University Level" organized by Islamic Association for Guidance & Higher Education, May 31, 2012.

The teacher who is indeed wise does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom but rather leads you to the threshold of your mind.

Gibran Khalil Gibran

CTL Staff

Director: Dr. Saouma BouJaoude

Associate Director: Dr. Amal BouZeineddine

Assessment Officer: Mrs. Dania Salem

Administrative Officer: Miss Lamia Husseiny

New Initiatives at CTL

Scholarships on Teaching and Learning (SOTL)

CTL initiated the Scholarship on Teaching and Learning grants. Through this initiative, CTL offers grants to faculty members to support projects which will examine and reflect upon the teaching and learning practices in specific disciplines and which use research methods and make the results known to the campus community and beyond.

Faculty Learning Community (FLC)

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is launching a new initiative that involves the establishment of *faculty learning communities*. A *Faculty Learning Community (FLC)* is a group of faculty members 8 to 12 members in size “engaging in an active, collaborative, yearlong program with a curriculum about enhancing teaching and learning and with frequent seminars and activities that provide learning, development, transdisciplinarity, the scholarship of teaching and learning, and community building.” (<http://www.units.muohio.edu/flc/whatis.php>).

Collaboration with the Lilly Conferences

CTL has initiated a collaborative effort with the *Lilly Conferences on College and University Teaching* to increase access to international conferences and current developments in teaching and learning in higher education.

CTL Activities Fall 2011-2012

During the Fall 2011-2012 CTL conducted a variety of activities. These activities included a workshop on “Assessment of Course Learning Outcomes” conducted over a two week period. Additionally, CTL organized a workshop on teaching large groups effectively (Cooperative Learning), on November 17, 2011, a workshop on Using Moodle for Assessment in collaboration with the IT ACPS on December 6, 2011 and another Workshop on Community –based learning (CBL) in collaboration with the Center for Civic Engagement on December 20, 2011. One of the major activities related to teaching and learning was the 2nd Annual Conference on *Effective Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* on Dec 9 and 10, 2011. The Conference included four preconference workshops (Dec. 9) that were conducted by CTL and IT-ACPS staff and 8 concurrent sessions in total (Dec. 10) topics ranging from assessment to methodology of teaching and technology in education.

**Who dares
to teach
must never
cease to
learn**

John Cotton Dana

CTL Activities Spring 2011-2012

The workshops and seminars presented during spring 2011-2012 included workshops on Developing a Teaching Portfolio on February 23, 2012 and Writing to Engage Student Learning, on March 2nd, in collaboration with the Writing Center. Additionally, CTL organized its annual faculty Seminar on Learning and Teaching Excellence. The seminar included six sessions and was held every Tuesday between 5:00 and 7:00 pm from March 15th to April 19th, 2012. Each session discussed a different topic. Fourteen faculty members attended regularly; in addition, other faculty guests attended a number of the sessions because of their interest in the session topic. Finally, CTL organized a workshop on Peer Observation on May 24, 2012.



Featured Article

TEAM-BASED LEARNING by *Nathalie K. Zgheib, MD.*

Team based learning (TBL) is a student-centered, problem-based teaching approach that stimulates teamwork and active learning while maintaining individual accountability. The learning method consists of repeating sequences of 3 phases: phase 1 is the individual pre-class preparation of the contents to be later discussed in class; phase 2 is the individual readiness assurance testing that assesses the knowledge that has been supposedly acquired by students in phase 1; phase 2 also includes group readiness tests, discussion with the instructor and appeals; phase 3, the last phase, involves a higher level of learning: it aims at applying higher course concepts using small-group assignments. Effective learning in TBL is based on key instructional principles that stress the importance of accountability and interactive discussions. These can be created and fostered by creating assignments based on the four S's: significant problem, same choice, specific choice and simultaneous reporting. In contrast to classical lectures that focus on "covering content", the TBL instructional method aims at "applying knowledge" in a highly interactive setting. It has also the advantage of "ensuring the effectiveness of small groups with high student faculty ratios (e.g. up to 200:1) without losing the benefit of faculty-led small group discussions with lower ratios (e.g. 7:1)". One can visit the www.teambasedlearning.org web site for more information.

The department of Pharmacology and Toxicology at the Faculty of Medicine (FM) has had a very encouraging experience with TBL. This innovative teaching and learning technique was first introduced, in 2007, into 2 case-based sessions in the pharmacology course provided to second year medical students, and showed improved student performance. After that, and since 2008, bi-weekly clinical pharmacology TBL sessions were introduced into the third year medical curriculum. Two articles describing the course and its outcome were recently published. We have shown that medical students were highly satisfied with the course and the teaching approach, and that their performance on prescription writing and formulary development had improved.

TBL is also gradually growing at AUB. For example, TBL will be a staple of the new curriculum that is being developed within the FM. Furthermore, several TBL training workshops were held in collaboration with CTL, and a TBL Faculty Learning Community (FLC) will be launched in early fall 2012-2013. Please call CTL if interested in joining the FLC.

Conference on Effective Teaching and Learning in Higher Education



One of the major activities related to teaching and learning is the Annual Conference on *Effective Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* that is held in December of each year. The 2nd annual Conference included four preconference workshops that were conducted by CTL and IT-ACPS staff and 12 concurrent sessions in total, topics ranging from assessment to methodology

of teaching and technology in education. The conference was attended by around 100 participants from Universities in Lebanon and other Arab countries.

Furthermore, CTL has been working on preparations for the 2012 annual conference. The call for proposals was sent on February 20, 2012.

Conference strands included: Teaching, Learning and Assessment Procedures in Higher Education, Measuring Teaching Effectiveness, Blended Learning, Innovations in Teaching Technologies and Methodologies, Program and Course Learning Outcomes, and Service Learning. In addition four

workshops entitled "Technology in Team Based Learning (TBL)", "Don't Suspend it, Blend it", "Developing Tools to Assess Program Learning Outcomes", and "Enhancing University Students' Cognitive Skills". The conference keynote speaker is Tony Bates, President and CEO of Tony Bates Associates Ltd, a private company specializing in consultancy and training in the planning and management of e-learning and distance education.

For more information about the conference please refer to <http://www.aub.edu.lb/conferences/etlhe/Pages/index.aspx>.