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A Great Conference on Teaching and Learning is Coming to a University Very Near You!

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Teaching and Learning Center

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The 2nd Annual
Winthrop
Conference on
Teaching and
Learning,
January 31,
2015.

Register at:

<http://www2.winthrop.edu/login/tl/default.asp>

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Winthrop University

A Great Conference on Teaching and Learning is Coming to a University Very Near You!

I love going to academic conferences. I love the travel and getting away from home; I love seeing old friends and making new ones; I love the break from the norm; I love finding great restaurants in a new city; I love sharing my research with colleagues from around the country and the world; I love getting new ideas that will invigorate my scholarship and my teaching.

I hate the cost and some of the hassles of traveling. And with travel funds diminished, I have had to cut down on my conference attendance. I have had to turn down some excellent opportunities because of the lack of funding.

I also find it hard to find enough time to attend the professional development opportunities we have on campus. In addition, I find it hard to find the time to do all the reading about new ideas and research about college teaching. And I direct the Teaching and Learning Center: if it is hard for me to find time

for that, how hard is it for everybody else?

An answer to all of these problems comes in a bit over two weeks when we hold the Second Annual Winthrop Conference on Teaching and Learning, Saturday, January 31. If you share any of the concerns I have listed above, I think you will find this local conference very helpful and attractive.

This year, we expanded the conference from a Friday afternoon to all day Saturday, and we opened up participation to local colleges and universities. When Gloria Jones, Dana Bruneau, and I began planning for the conference in September, we had a bit of anxiety over whether we would be able to pull it off. Would we be able to attract enough presenters to fill a whole day? Would people from area schools be interested? Would the conference have the kind of high quality we hoped for?

The answer to all these

questions is a resounding yes. We have 25 sessions scheduled, including workshops, panel discussions, papers, and presentations. We have presenters from Winthrop, of course, but also from these colleges and universities: Clemson, Presbyterian, UNCC, Converse, N.C. State, Tri-County Tech, University of Tennessee-Martin, Slippery Rock, and Brigham Young.

And as to the quality of the program, I can't imagine a fuller day of excellent sessions on a variety of topics. Global issues are well represented, with two sessions on study abroad and related issues. There is a good focus on student success, including the first- and second-year experience, LEAP, part-semester courses, diversity, undergraduate research, and high impact practices.

Teaching technology sessions include two on flipped classrooms, and another that covers the use of smartphones,

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Pinterest, and Twitter as teaching tools.

A number of sessions focus on teaching strategies, including team-building, group projects, critical thinking, and class discussion. Other sessions focus on assessment, sustainability, and publication.

I know a conference is good when I have a hard time choosing what session to attend at any given time. This is going to be the kind of conference that you wish you could be in two or three places at once.

This conference will once again demonstrate the talents and knowledge of our faculty and staff. Adding colleagues from other schools is going to further showcase our excellence. I expect our visitors will go back to their home institutions impressed and singing our praises.

Our move to a full-day conference necessitated that we charge for registration. The fee of \$40 covers a continental breakfast, a luncheon, materials, and a keynote speaker. (And we thank Meg Webber and the Global Learning Initiative for partially sponsoring the conference, which helps

keep the fee that low). That forty bucks is a bargain: consider that we are allowed \$35 a day for meals when we travel to a “real” conference. But hey, this conference is as “real” as any you might go to.

Our keynote speaker is the Chancellor of USC-Upstate, Dr. Tom Moore, familiar to those of us who remember his time at Winthrop as Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Arts and Sciences. Tom was the first person we thought of as a keynote speaker, and he accepted our offer immediately. Tom is excited about coming back and talking to us about teaching and learning. Given his passion for the topic, I am sure his remarks will be inspiring. He is an engaging speaker, as many of us know.

The deadline for registration is Friday, January 16. You can find the form online at the TLC website,

<http://www.winthrop.edu/tlc/default.aspx?id=36898>

You can also see abstracts of all the sessions, and soon, the conference schedule.

This conference is only going to get bigger and better in the coming years. Given the response this

year when we opened it up to area schools and expanded the hours, I can envision this conference becoming one of the biggest and best in the region, one that will probably expand to two or even three days.

All of us are well-trained in the content of our disciplines, but very few of us have any focused training in pedagogy. My excellent PhD program in English provided us exactly zero hours of instruction or even discussion of teaching. I know things have changed since my Ice Age years in Rochester 30 years ago, but I suspect they have not changed that much.

And even if you have a deep background in pedagogical practices, the world is changing rapidly, and we have to keep informed just to keep up. This conference will be an excellent way to do just that.

Please join us for what is shaping up to be a great conference and a great day. And you get to sleep in your own bed the night before and the night after!



Thanks For Helping Make the Teaching and Learning Center Work!

Winthrop's Teaching and Learning Center offers a wide variety of sessions each year for faculty and staff, on teaching, technology, professional development, and personal development. From leading class discussion to mastering the Smart podium to tenure and promotion to cooking soufflés, the TLC tries to make sure that all faculty and staff receive

the kinds of professional and personal development that will make them better teachers, administrators, and employees.

To offer this programming, the TLC depends on the talent, expertise, and generosity of our faculty and staff. We do not have a big budget to bring in outside speakers and experts. Even so, we are able to offer engaging,

timely, and valuable sessions every year on a variety of topics. We thank those who have offered their time and talent in past years.

We also thank those of you who have attended TLC sessions. Your time is valuable, and we appreciate you taking some of it to enrich yourself through professional and personal development.

A Service From the TLC: Teaching Consultation

The TLC for several years has been offering a service: teaching consultation. At the instructor's request, I (or another agreed-upon person) will visit your class to observe and consult with you afterwards about your successes and challenges. This consultation has nothing to do with the tenure and

promotion process, and no reports will be made to department chairs or deans (unless you so request). The invitation to the consultant can only come from the instructor, not from a dean or chair or any other person. All conversations will be private and confidential. If you don't want me to visit your class and observe your teaching, we could

just meet and talk about your teaching. If I am not available to visit your class because of my schedule, I will find a qualified person to do the consulting. So please let me know if you would like to invite me into your class or for a consultation. Call or email me (803) 323-3679 or birdj@winthrop.edu.

Go2Knowledge—Learning On Demand!

Go2Knowledge is a website that offers a variety of video presentations on faculty and staff professional development. You will find presentations by nationally-known experts in seven categories: At-Risk Populations, Campus Safety, Organizational Development, Student Success, Teaching and Learning, Technology,

and Open Educational Resources. Within each category, you will find a number of excellent and informative videos. The Office of Academic Affairs has provided us a one-year subscription to this service.

People often tell the TLC that they would like to go to sessions, but they don't have the time or they can't

at the times sessions are offered. With Go2Knowledge, you can attend sessions on demand, anywhere, 24/7. The TLC will also have frequent Go2Knowledge Groups, where we meet to discuss a presentation. Log in here: <http://www.go2knowledge.org/winthrop> See you there!

Register for a TLC Session
At

www.winthrop.edu/tlc

The 2nd Annual Winthrop Conference on Teaching and Learning

The registration form for our Second Conference on Teaching and Learning, Saturday, January 31, 2015 is posted on the TLC webpage. **Deadline is January 16, 2015.** Come join us for a great day of teaching and learning!

<http://www.winthrop.edu/tlc/>

Thought For the Week

"Wrinkles should merely indicate where smiles have been."
--Mark Twain