

January 2010 Newsletter

Dear Adjunct Faculty,

I hope this newsletter finds you well, wherever you may be! I've had great conversations with some of you so far this semester, which seems to be moving right along! I have a few reminders for you as we close the second week of classes already:

Phase III Outcomes Forms and Syllabi: Please be sure that you are submitting these forms with your syllabus to your Division. If you are a new adjunct with us this semester, your deadline to submit the Phase III form is February 22, 2010. Everyone should have their syllabus in to their Division by now. To view (a .pdf version of) the Phase III form and an example, please visit the Adjunct Webpage: Forms: <http://www.msugf.edu/facstaff/Adjuncts/forms.html>. A .docx file containing the form was emailed out earlier in the semester and I have attached it here as well.

Email Accounts: Please remember that you are required to regularly check your email account with us (this is separate from D2L email, which pertains to the online classroom environment). If you run into difficulty accessing your email account at any time, please submit a request/ ticket through the helpdesk so that someone can provide assistance to you and so we may track the progress of your request. You may make this request by stopping by either helpdesk location on campus or by calling 406-771-4433.

Students and Financial Aid: You may have students in your class(es) that will need verification of their success in your course. The financial aid office will be sending out emails to instructors at their "@msugf.edu" email accounts with more information next week. If you are requested by a student to provide this verification, you may do so by sending an email **from your MSU – Great Falls** email account to [finaid@msugf.edu](mailto:finaid@msugf.edu) or by stopping in to the financial aid office and completing a roster by hand and signing it. The earliest you should provide this information is January 27<sup>th</sup>. The deadline for providing the information is February 4<sup>th</sup>. It is essential that you are responding to these requests in a timely fashion as delays on your end could have a great impact for students who are awaiting their reimbursement checks (this could mean not having money for groceries, heat or rent for some of them). If you have students who make this request but are not passing, you may let the financial aid office know about the student's progress in your course and continue to update them once the student's progress is satisfactory.

Smart Boards in Classrooms: You may notice that your classroom on the Great Falls campus has changed a bit since you last taught in it (or if you are new, may be wondering how to use the stuff in it). The latest change is the addition of Smart Boards. These will replace the LCD projectors you see hanging from the ceiling. If you wish to display a presentation using the computer in the room (to be projected), turn on the Smart Board power button and the computer. Use a jump drive to bring your presentation materials (or you can use your D2L course shell to house this information as well!). If you need assistance or directions on how to use the equipment in your classroom please call Ken (771-4331) or EJ (771-5150) to **schedule an appointment** shortly before your class. Please use **only** the "pens" that go with the Smart Board and do not remove these from the classroom. These pens are specifically for use with the Smart Boards and do not actually leave marks on the screen. **Do not** use white board markers or any other type of marker on the Smart Board.

Check Your Rosters: Please remember to check your rosters before heading to class. You may see that some students are no longer on your roster or others have been added. It is important to check your rosters along with your attendance to watch for student no-shows or students who are in your class but are not registered. Students who do not appear on your roster should not be allowed in your course. If you are noticing students who seem to be missing, please make your best efforts to contact those

students. If you do not receive active efforts from missing students following your attempt to contact, please submit an S.O.S. ([http://www.msugf.edu/advising\\_planning/SaveOurStudentForm.pdf](http://www.msugf.edu/advising_planning/SaveOurStudentForm.pdf)) to Courtney Johnsrud. If you have questions about the S.O.S. form, please give Courtney a call at 406-771-4387.

Adjunct Faculty Development Requirements for Spring (Great Falls campus): The deadline to have your requirement completed for a stipend is one month away (Feb 22, 2010)! There are many exciting things going on throughout our body of adjunct faculty! 26 adjuncts completed the Success Strategies for Student-Centered Teaching last fall. 27 adjuncts are enrolled this semester. This academic year we've seen adjuncts engaged in or requesting to be a part of the following types of activities:

- STAR Advising sessions and Student Orientation
- College in Day
- Presentations to the campus on various topics
- Peer reviews and sitting in on lectures of other faculty
- Attending program- specific advisory board meetings
- Curriculum development for up- and- coming or existing programs/courses
- Participation in the Adjunct Advisory Committee
- Meetings with Divisions or Department Chairs/Program Directors
- Participation in the Success Strategies for Student-Centered Teaching course and/or individual modules.

If you are participating in campus-related groups, committees or events please let me know so I may continue to pass along the great news about how adjuncts are serving the College aside from teaching. This is really something to be proud of and something we need to share!

Adjunct Feedback Survey: This survey is still open for the taking! If you have completed it, **thank you!** If you have not responded to this year's survey, the time you take to provide comments is greatly appreciated. You may have done a survey similar to this during the last academic year. It is very important that we receive your feedback each year so that we may continue to compare adjunct feedback from previous years and move common themes forward. The number of responses to this year's survey is under last year's mark so far, so please take the time to provide us with your anonymous feedback. The survey will be open until January 31, 2010 at the following link:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FFZC5QL>

Adjunct Spotlight: This month's adjunct-written article comes to us from Meredith Connie. Meredith lives in Tacoma, WA and teaches online Music courses for us!

*Fairy Tales, Pop Culture and Teaching.*

*I'm a performer as well as a teacher and my research for a current project led me to the unexpurgated version of Rapunzel (interesting reading – it includes Rapunzel's pregnancy and her suitor being blinded by thorns in a grisly episode - none of which survives in modern versions) and other fairy tales from the Grimm Brothers. Fairy Tales, I discovered, are much underestimated – often we think of them as children's tales but really they are a repository of folk knowledge and can be a clear indicator of how we view the world. Not just the people who made up the fairy tales, with bawdy humor and a surprisingly bloodthirsty outlook – but also our own society who makes so sure to clean them up so they are wearing respectable clothes. Also surprising – the true heir to fairy tales in our own society is a good old fashioned gory horror movie. Not only do they have the blood and guts but they have morality tales embedded in them too (thank you Steven King).*

*So what does all this have to do with teaching? It told me, in yet another way, about our tendency as a society to devalue popular culture and not see it as the mirror that it truly is. Let's face it, popular culture – those horror movies and pop songs - do not have the highest regard as academic tools. I'm not ashamed to say that I do enjoy horror movies and pop songs in all their checkered glory – and not just because I am 'researching' the world of popular culture, but also because it is part of the world that I grew up with – part of my own culture. Our students, too, interact with this world of popular culture all the time, just as I do, and it is a part of their world that is very comfortable to them because it is part of who they are, often much more so than academic studies at a college.*

*And this brings me to teaching. No matter how they perform in classes, which by nature deal in standardized information, every student we encounter functions within the world outside of the school – they arrive at school as already functioning human beings, already acculturated, competent members of their community. They know stuff about horror movies and pop songs, or whatever their brand of popular culture may be. What we do as teachers is give them access to another kind of culture, in which they not only learn information, but how to act within a classroom, how to respond to our questions in acceptable ways, and how to deal with standardized methods of assessment.*

*"[P]erhaps our job as teachers was not in the first instance to "correct" them. Our job as teachers ... was to find out how, in some way and in some measure, to reacaculturate the students who had placed themselves in our charge."*

*- Kenneth A. Bruffee "Collaborative Learning: higher education, interdependence, and the Authority of Knowledge", 1993, John Hopkins Press.*

Thanks Meredith! I'll be looking for another adjunct volunteer for February's newsletter to write something for the "Adjunct Spotlight". If you are interested, please contact me!

I hope the semester continues on successfully for all of you! As always, please feel free to stop by, call or email me. I'm always delighted to hear from you!

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This newsletter, and all adjunct newsletters, is also posted on the adjunct webpage under "Newsletters":  
<http://www.msugf.edu/facstaff/Adjuncts/index.html>

