

# The Banyan Tree



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Newsletter of the Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET)  
Georgia Southern University

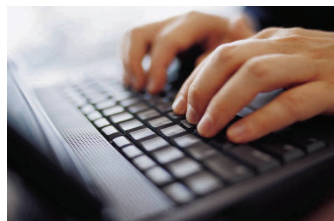
## Open Forum on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

An open discussion about the results of Georgia Southern's participation in the Survey will be held on February 26, 2007, from 3:30 - 4:45 pm in the Professional Development Center on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the CIT building. The Forum is co-sponsored by the Office of the Provost, First Year Experience, Honors Program, Office of Strategic Research & Analysis, Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, and the CET. The survey measures students' perceptions of how engaged they are in educationally meaningful activities and contexts that have been associated with high levels of learning. The purpose of this forum is to discuss the NSSE findings and their implications for teaching and student learning at Georgia Southern. To view the Survey results, go to <http://services.georgiasouthern.edu/osra/download/NSSE.htm>



We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time. \_ T. S. Eliot

## NEW! Academic Writing Circle (AWC)



The goal of the interdisciplinary AWC is to support the writing of professional academic manuscripts (articles, conference papers, book chapters, etc.). The group will decide its schedule and activities. Sessions may include 1) review of successful articles and proposals, (2) interactive editing, (3) presentation of manuscripts at different stages of development, (4) discussion of ideas on what to write, (5) components of manuscripts such as abstracts, introductions, methods, etc. All projects and reviews are treated with confidentiality. *For more information*

## Upcoming Conferences on Teaching & Learning

February 16-18, 2007: 2007 Lilly South Conference on College and University Teaching  
Greensboro, NC | <http://www.iats.com/conferences/schedule.html>

February 23-24, 2007: 14<sup>th</sup> Georgia Conference on College & University Teaching  
Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, GA | <http://www.quinnipiac.edu/x18694.xml>

March 1-3, 2007: General Education and Assessment: Engaging Critical Questions, Fostering Critical Learning  
Miami, FL | <http://www.aacu.org/meetings/generaleducation/index.cfm>

March 11-13, 2007: Southern Regional Faculty and Instructional Development Consortium  
Chattanooga, TN | <http://www.srfidc.org/>

March 29 - April 1, 2007: 55<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Science Education (NSTA)  
St. Louis, MO | <http://www.nsta.org/sessions>

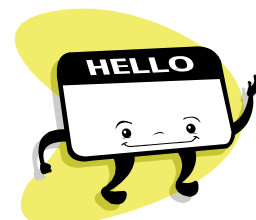
April 2-5, 2007: 18<sup>th</sup> International Conference on College Teaching & Learning  
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL | <http://www.teachlearn.org/final.html>

April 13, 2007: 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Conference on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning  
Indiana University South Bend, South Bend, IN | [http://www.iusb.edu/~ucet/sotl\\_2007.shtml](http://www.iusb.edu/~ucet/sotl_2007.shtml)

May 18-20, 2007: The Teaching Professor Conference  
Atlanta, GA | <http://www.teachingprofessor.com/>

June 3-7, 2007: 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Institute on College Teaching  
The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA | [http://www.vtc.edu/summer\\_institute.html](http://www.vtc.edu/summer_institute.html)

November 1-2, 2007: The SoTL Commons: A Conference for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning  
Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA | <http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/ijstl/conference/>



"Growth is the only evidence of life." \_ John Henry Newman

## Director's Message from the Canopy

Why do we teach the way we do? What are our assumptions about our teaching, students, and how they learn? Is student learning significant and transformative in our courses? Do our exams, assignments, grading practices, etc. assess and promote "deep learning"? Are we enjoying working with students as much or more than when we first became teachers? What do we know about the research on how college students best learn and how best to teach our disciplines for such learning to occur? Do we know the pedagogical research literature?

What if there were a way to approach teaching and student learning that could lead to improved student learning outcomes? There is. It is called the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SoTL) where SoTL is a research-led, evidence-based approach to teaching so that students learn. Good teaching is not which particular method or technique is used, but about good student learning outcomes.

To gain an experience of SoTL-in-action, 1) read the inaugural issue of *International*

*Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning*; 2) participate in *The SoTL Commons: A Conference for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning* on November 1 - 2, 2007; 3) join a *Faculty Learning Community* for 2007-2008. SoTL may be the most effective way to improve teaching and learning, and to transform an academic culture into a collegial culture of inquiry about teaching, learning, and scholarship. SoTL is a continuously growing body of literature about student learning that can help good learning outcomes become more normative.

And with your support and participation, Georgia Southern could become a national center for SoTL and its applications for the transformation of student learning.

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Information cannot replace education. \_Imparato & Itarari

Most ideas about teaching are not new, but not everyone knows the old ideas. \_ Euclid

## CET Web Site & CD

Visit the CET web site regularly at <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/cet/> for updated resources, calendars, events, announcement for faculty, etc.

The CET has created a **multimedia CD** full of teaching & learning resources, and featuring people, traditions, places, things of Georgia Southern University. For a downloadable version of the CD, go to <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/cet/SB/NFO/tour.html>

**NEW! International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning**  
[<http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/ijstl/current.htm>]



The inaugural issue of the CET's new, peer-reviewed, open access eJournal, **International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning** is online. The goal for the journal is to become the premier publication in the world for the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) and be deeply international in its readership, authors, and Review Board.

**NEW! "The SoTL Commons: A Conference for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning"** (<http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/ijstl/conference/>)

The CET will host an annual conference that could grow into a key national and international conference for SoTL. The inaugural conference will be held on November 1 - 2, 2007 in the Nessmith-Lane Continuing Education building. Proposals for presentations undergo a blind, peer-review process and the submission period began January 15, 2007. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Mary Taylor Huber, an internationally known writer and

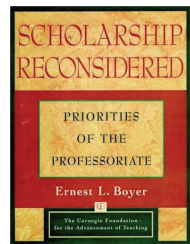
**The secret of education is respecting the student.** \_Emerson

## Faculty Learning Communities Forum

The Faculty Learning Communities Program will present the inaugural **FLC Forum** on April 10, 2007 from 3:30 - 5 pm in CIT 1004. The Forum is open to all FLC members, but also to all other faculty. Each of the FLCs will briefly showcase its work for the 2006-2007 academic year. Faculty, staff and administrators who may want to consider joining an FLC for 2007-2008 are strongly encouraged to attend.



## Scholarship Reconsidered Seminar



Based upon Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, a discussion will be held on January 25, 2007 in the Professional Development Center on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the CIT building from 3:30 - 4:45 pm to address such topics as "What is scholarship?," "Are there different forms of scholarship?," "Scholarship & the faculty reward system," etc. The seminar will be led by members of the Faculty Learning Community for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning. Boyer's book is very brief (80 pages) and a limited number of copies are available to borrow from the CET library (*contact Alan Altany for a copy*).

**Those who go to college and never get out are called professors.** \_George Givot

## Featured Books from the CET Library

Faculty are invited to check out books from the CET's lending-library. Any of the books may be borrowed, including the following:

*Team-Based Learning: A Transformative Use of Small Groups*  
*Engaging the Online Learner: Activities & Resources for Creative Instruction*  
*The Power of Problem-Based Learning*  
*Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Keys to Practice*  
*The Learning Portfolio: Reflective Practice for Improving Student Learning*  
*Creating Significant Learning Experiences*

## Reading Roundtable

Each semester the CET sponsors a faculty book discussion group called Reading Roundtable (RR). A different book is read each semester. The RR meets several times during the semester, according to the schedules of its members, to discuss the book. Some 28 members of the RR for the spring semester are reading *What the Best College Teachers Do* by Ken Bain (Harvard University Press, 2004). Plan on joining the Roundtable next fall to read a different book.



## Focus on Excellence Lecture Series for 2006 - 2007

This annual series of 6 lectures is facilitated by the CET and the campus is invited to attend presentations by the previous year's recipients of the Awards for Excellence in Contribution to Instruction, Research / Creative Scholarly Activities, and Service. All lectures begin at 4 pm and are followed by a reception. Remaining lectures:

February 6, 2007 | Room 1603, Nessmith Lane Building | Research

"Human Genome Project, Genomics, and Tick Genomic Research," Dr. Quentin Fang

February 27, 2007 | Room 3302, Professional Development Center, CIT Building | Service

"Professional Service: Opportunities, Challenges, and Rewards," Dr. Donna Saye

March 6, 2007 | Room 3302, Professional Development Center, CIT Building | Instruction

"Teaching Economics: Comparing Topic-Based vs. Core Knowledge Approaches at the High School and University Level," Dr. Anthony Barilla

## Grants & Awards & Educational Leave

For information, go to <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/cet/grants/htm>.

**Imagination is more important than knowledge.** \_Albert Einstein

## Innovative Teaching Strategies Retreat

The CET sponsors a faculty retreat to enhance innovative teaching strategies. The retreat is held twice a year, early May and December and provides dedicated time with CET staff and colleagues for course development and work on a variety of pedagogical and technological issues in a friendly, resource-rich environment. The spring retreat will be held May 8-11, 2007 in the CET. The deadline for proposals is March 15, 2007. *If you'd like to learn more, contact Raleigh Way at the CET.*

## Faculty Retreat Showcase

On Monday, May 7, 2007, from 3:30 - 5 pm in the Professional Development Center on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the CIT building, there will be a **Retreat Showcase** of the work of the faculty who participated in the December 2006 retreat (Heidi Altman, Horst Kurz, Shonda Bernadin, Marian Tabi, Maggie Davis). If you have not attended a Showcase in the past, please plan on this one and see how colleagues are improving their courses.

**The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeing new landscapes, but in having new eyes.** \_Marcel Proust



## Featured Web Sites

Theories on How People Learn: [http://www.funderstanding.com/about\\_learning.cfm](http://www.funderstanding.com/about_learning.cfm)  
Critical & Creative Thinking: <http://eduscapes.com/tap/topic69.htm>  
Active Learning Techniques: <http://www.vcu.edu/cte/activelearningtechniques.html>

## Resources for Teaching & Learning

The CET seeks to provide faculty opportunities to learn the best pedagogical research.

Online Faculty Development Resources: <http://www.developfaculty.com.online/>  
Desk-top Faculty Development: <http://sll.stanford.edu/projects/tomprof/newtomprof/postings.html>