



## FALCON Gets Down to the Nitty Gritty with Student Resilience

By Karol Dehr, Continuing Lecturer/  
Associate Director of Writing for Outreach,  
English and Linguistics

The 19th annual FACET Adjunct Faculty and Lecturer Conference, now called FALCON, was held in Indianapolis from Friday, November 7 through Sunday, November 9. FALCON Chair Jon Becker (IU Northwest) welcomed faculty to the conference theme “Getting Down to the Nitty-Gritty: Enhancing the Role of Teaching in Student Success.” The conference was open to the public for the second year and 177 registrants gathered to hear, according to Becker, the “notion of grit...as we focus on student persistence and the role adjunct faculty and lecturers play in teaching this skill and aiding our students in a successful and timely completion of their degree.”

The afternoon session continued with keynote speaker Dr. Constance Staley, University of Colorado, Professor of Communication and Director of the Gateway Program Seminar at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, who engaged the audience in an hour and a half of lively discussion and

concentration on what resilience is, how to build it, how to teach it, and how to adapt teaching strategies for individual students. She provided participants with a packet of information which included dozens of resources and suggested readings on resilience.

She began with the notion that a teacher’s job is obviously to help students understand course content, but it is also to assist them in handling both success and failure. Staley mentioned that while we tend to teach students how to be successful, we may not teach them how to “learn from failure.” Entering students often ask themselves fundamental questions as they transition to higher education, such as if they belong in college, are they smart enough, and will others like them. These fundamental questions and their experiences with these issues are closely linked to their resilience and persistence in college.

Resiliency was defined by Staley and the larger group as the ability to persevere, learn from failure, rebound from setbacks, and have the “grit” or strength to overcome obstacles. Suggestions on building resiliency addressed the difference between

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## Solving “The Case of The Disappearing Students”

By Worth Weller, Continuing Lecturer,  
English and Linguistics

Imagine this.

Your Internet courses have started successfully; after the first week everyone has checked in and completed their initial assignments. A couple of weeks go by, though, and suddenly you notice Johnny hasn’t checked in for nine days and Rachel has missed an important assignment by four days.

Ouch: you’ve been infected by a case of “the disappearing students.”

Naturally you are disappointed, as you feel you’ve been doing everything right. You’ve sent out weekly announcements,

you’ve graded assignments and discussions quickly and returned prompt feedback, but still students are slowly but surely fading away.

It’s at this point, or actually well before this point that Blackboard’s Retention Center comes to the rescue. Located in the Evaluation menu under Class Management, this relatively new feature of Blackboard provides a one-stop shopping approach to monitoring student progress, providing individualized contact and keeping track of your own efforts at retention.

Setting up the Retention Center to monitor student progress and provide timely alerts involves little more than

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performance and learning goals, changing students' mindsets of what it means to be successful, and managing distractions, stress, and anxiety. How to handle stress and anxiety is not unlike the grief process, said Staley, who cited the works of Jane McGonigal (physical and mental, emotional, and social resilience) and Carol Dweck ("The Effect of Praise on Mindsets"). She shared a variety of resources, including Mindfulness apps such as headspace.com and calm.com, the Look Up YouTube video, and "The Happy Secret to Better Work," a TED Talk.

Staley also addressed how important the link is between a student's social and emotional well being and their learning. As teachers, we should emphasize the idea of positivity and teaching with hope. That hope can transfer to student learning; and, instead of focusing on failure, she asked us to think of it as "time-released success."

Following dinner, evening roundtables called "Gritty Issues Facing Non-tenured Faculty" allowed participants from each table to identify and share one technique used in the classroom to motivate apathetic students. Ideas included learning students' names quickly, connecting participation grades to attendance, teaching a life lesson once a week, having a sense of humor, making students do jumping jacks if no one got the answer right to a posed question, and having students contribute questions for an upcoming exam. The evening ended with a viewing of a TED Talk from Dr. Angela Lee Duckworth on "Passion and Perseverance."

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making sure that all your assignments, including discussions, have accurate due dates set in Blackboard. With that accomplished, the Retention Center, from day one of your class, will monitor individual students in terms of missed deadlines, their current grade in comparison to the class average, their amount of activity in the course compared to the class average, and the number of days since the student last entered the course.

As you can see in the accompanying screen capture, the Retention Center identifies any student who is underperforming or who has disappeared, so to speak, from your class. By clicking on the red dots under the alert categories, you can see specifics of the issue, as well as find the mail icon which will let you send a customizable message to your student at risk. A copy of your message is displayed in the Retention Center so that you can easily

Saturday and Sunday provided a variety of concurrent sessions from faculty within the IU system, as well as from Loyola U, Ball State, and Spalding U. **Dr. Debrah Huffman (ENGL)** presented a session on why student don't do assigned readings and aren't engaged. She modeled a range of reading methods: reading journals, rhetorical reading, concept mapping, and how the challenges technology may affect student reading.

**Dr. Marcia Dixon (COM)** presented a session guiding faculty in examining themselves as individuals, using the "I am From" poem prompt that led to crafting our teaching philosophies. This interactive session allowed participants the opportunity to pair/share and to articulate what each truly value about teaching and how to begin to compose that philosophy.

**Gail Rathbun (CELT)** co-presented an interactive session on campus learning centers and how to make use of these valuable resources.

Other sessions over the two days included the following: balancing work and life, using student evaluations effectively, best practices in online courses, and motivating today's students. Roundtable discussions on Saturday afternoon addressed HR and legal issues facing non-tenured faculty and the role of adjuncts in student persistence.

The closing plenary on Sunday featured Dr. Curt Bonk (IUB): "Education 3.0: My, Our Learning World is Changing!" He focused on education and the changes taking place, and that "we are in the midst of a learning revolution and

transformation." He emphasized we are all "living in an age of educational resources" and today's successful instructors are those "who foster our autonomy and self-directed learning pursuits," using innovative and insightful teaching strategies for 21st-century learners. ▼

## Scantron Services

### Test-scoring

Finals will be processed on a first come, first served basis, with a turnaround of 1 business day.

While-you-wait appointments are not available during finals week.

Please be sure to schedule your drop-off time by completing your test scoring work request form in advance of your exam.

### Evaluation processing

Due to the heavy seasonal demands on Stephanie's time, course evaluations will not be processed until after the week of finals. Please refrain from sending your evaluation forms to CELT until the week of finals.

Stephanie will be out of the office beginning 12/24/14 and will return on 1/5/15. Please keep this in mind when sending your forms to CELT.

STUDENT ▲	MISSED DEADLINES	GRADES ALERT	ACTIVITY ALERT	ACCESS ALERT
Betty Doe	•	•	•	•
John Doe	•	•	•	•
Susie Doe	•	•	•	•

see what you said to the student if you need to follow up later.

I usually go through the Retention Center at the beginning of the week, at least for the first half of the semester (after that, students who have disappeared really can't catch up). I send individualized messages of encouragement to each at-risk student, along with the details identified by the Retention Center. This activity takes me very little time, so well organized and informative is the Center, and I am often rewarded with return e-mail thanking me for my concern, promising to catch up, and even offering to name their first child after

me (or not).

That students seem to appreciate the alert messages should come as no surprise, as our own colleague **Dr. Marcia Dixon** in her 2007 study of Internet students at two large Midwestern universities came away with this simple recommendation for online instructors: "be sure to incorporate meaningful and multiple ways of interacting with students."

Blackboard's Retention Center clearly is one meaningful, not to mention efficient, way of providing the kind of interactivity she had in mind. ▼

# Ground the Chopper: Are We Becoming Helicopter Educators?

By Lesa Rae Vartanian, Associate Professor, Psychology

I love teaching cognitive development. I see myself as a “hard-core Piagetian, with a decidedly-Vygotskian slant.” I emphasize the importance of confusion (what Jean Piaget referred to as “disequilibrium”), failure, and persistence—for without them, development stalls. But I also stress the importance of support from more advanced thinkers, who, by providing minimal guidance, can facilitate success by making sure the learner is neither over- or under-challenged (what Lev Vygotsky meant by “scaffolding” and working in the “zone of proximal development”). My passion for Piaget and my verve for Vygotsky define and drive my pedagogy (or so I have always believed) and my research, which of late has been focused on “helicopter-parenting.”

For the last few years I have preached about the likely dangers of parents’ over-involvement in their children’s lives—how swooping in like an Apache or Blackhawk helicopter, to protect against and/or prevent “negative” outcomes is sure to do more harm than good by robbing young people of important experiences that contribute to the development of autonomy and self-efficacy. Reducing or fully removing contact with occasional confusion and frustration may not only lower tolerance for

both and place limits on achievement, but also create dependence that hinders adaptation and goal-setting. The constant “hovering” communicates a subtle but dangerous message: “You cannot do this without me” (perhaps reflecting insecurity or a need-to-be-needed, on the part of those chopper-like parents). Finally, after years of threatening to collect data and be that uber-annoying “I-told-you-so” person, I do indeed have data supporting what I knew was a sound argument. I am so that person; I think Jean and Lev are saying “You go, Girl.”

I have a question for my good colleagues across the university who I know care deeply about their students’ success, at IPFW and in life: Are we becoming the higher ed equivalent of “helicopter parents?” With policies, initiatives, and tools like Degree Maps, 15-to-Finish, MapWorks, grade checks and progress reports—most (if not all) launched as a result of or in response to a variety of external mandates and pressures—are we helping or hurting students? Are we facilitating or obstructing the development of creative critical thinkers and problem-solvers who must meet the myriad challenges that lie ahead for them, individually and collectively? With our rubrics, models, samples, examples and constant reminders, feedback...have we stunted their ability to



plan, to seek answers with appropriate independence, and to develop a nascent sense of what defines “quality?” Have we compromised their patience for authentic learning by vilifying what are inherent and even necessary parts of it—confusion and “failure?” We are under an enormous amount of pressure to document our students’ learning and justify the role we play in it. Could we benefit from examining whether we are truly facilitating or hindering by “hovering?” (Those of you who know me know darn well when I “have a question” it’s never really just ONE question.)

Being the hard-core Piagetian that I am, I expect such reflection might be uncomfortable for many at first—perhaps even flat-out frustrating. I know those are my own reactions as I turn these questions to myself, and examine my own pedagogical techniques and strategies. But, my Vygotskian streak encourages me to believe that as a community of educated scholars and scholarly educators, we can collaborate to find the “sweet-spot”—the zone where support and guidance do not threaten or compromise optimal development. ▼

## Research Mentorship as Pedagogy

By Elliott Blumenthal, Associate Chair, Biology; Associate Professor, Immunology; and Faculty Athletics Representative

Pedagogy is defined as the science and art of education. The Virginia Tech Center for Instructional Development and Educational Research has defined pedagogy “as the environments that educators create that will encourage learning.” The most common form of pedagogy is teaching and teaching methods, but there is also the pedagogy of research. The pedagogy of research supervision and the art of mentoring student-based research is not currently as accepted as the pedagogy of teaching at most universities. The Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University—Reinventing Undergraduate Education, A Blueprint for America’s Research Universities, suggests that universities should make research-based learning the standard.

Some universities have adopted this

approach, but many have not. There is accumulating evidence that mentoring student-based research is beneficial for students, increasing motivation, as well as their retention. It has been reported (Bauer and Bennett) that students who were exposed to research had a greater satisfaction with their undergraduate experience and had increased curiosity, research skills and communication skills. Hakin proposed that undergraduate student research has four components: mentorship, originality, acceptability and dissemination. Students who performed undergraduate research stated that their research started out as being directed, but ended up being self-driven and that they felt more motivated and connected to their discipline. At Minnesota’s University of St. Thomas, when freshman and sophomore biology majors were exposed to a research-based education that focused on learning research techniques, doing readings of

primary literature, and writing research projects, only two of 47 students changed majors and 54% of the students ultimately worked as research or teaching assistants (Chaplin et al.). There is growing evidence that student-based research is a benefit for students and helps in maintaining student interest in their respective majors and in promoting retention (Crowe and Brakke).

There is an art to mentoring student-based learning projects just as in teaching in the classroom. Across the curriculum, students should be introduced to research their freshman year. This would enable the student to be able to link what they are learning to “real life” experiences. If the student is motivated by the research, they will be more invested in their classes and more than likely stay engaged until they graduate.

The pedagogy of mentor-based student research may change somewhat depending on the discipline, but for the most part there

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is commonality. For example, the mentor must not only make sure that the student has sufficient background to formulate a working hypothesis, but there is also a steep learning curve for the student to understand and perfect their lab skills. The mentor must teach critical thinking skills, troubleshooting skills when techniques do not work, skills for reading primary literature, skills in interpreting and writing, and communication skills. As mentioned previously, the research is mentor directed, but it will soon become student directed as confidence and understanding of the process are gained. Faculty at the University of Colorado have developed an "Undergraduate Research Student Self-Assessment" (URSSA), that is currently hosted by [salgsite.org](http://salgsite.org) (SALG-Student Assessment of their Learning Gains) that can be customized for assessment of success for our students who are performing research. To see the survey questions go to [http://www.colorado.edu/eer/research/documents/URSSA\\_MASTER\\_reviewCopy.pdf](http://www.colorado.edu/eer/research/documents/URSSA_MASTER_reviewCopy.pdf)

We need to develop strategies for involving UG students in problem-based research from the start of their academic careers. To do so requires the development and dissemination of effective strategies and assignment designs that can be deployed across the curriculum. We will also have to develop appropriate means to assess the outcomes, and it is likely that portfolio assessment will be in our future. Undergraduate research is a high-impact instructional practice and an important part of our strategic plan. We need to put hearts, minds, and tangible resources into these efforts. We will also have to find a way to reward faculty for their investment of considerable time, energy, and expertise. Other regional universities have adopted

this model and we can look to them for guidance (Cruz, et. al.).

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Experiences on Students: An Overview of Current Literature. Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR), [www.cur.org](http://www.cur.org), 2008. ([http://d32ogoqmya1dw8.cloudfront.net/files/NAGTWorkshops/undergraduate\\_research/cur\\_publication\\_summer\\_2008.pdf](http://d32ogoqmya1dw8.cloudfront.net/files/NAGTWorkshops/undergraduate_research/cur_publication_summer_2008.pdf))

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## FACET Corner

*By Elliott Blumenthal, Associate Chair, Biology; Associate Professor, Immunology; and Faculty Athletics Representative*

**Sarah Beckman (NURS), Adam Dirksen (COM), Britton Wolfe (ETCS-CS), and Lesa Rae Vartanian (PSY)**, are "the team" for the 2014-2015 FACET Leadership Institute's High Impact Practice Project. They are interested in student learning and success in the context of online courses. The team is examining whether students who succeed in online courses share common characteristics and whether there are specific attributes that relate to student success in these courses. A

better understanding of predictors of course outcomes could yield better effectiveness in the development of interventions and policies regarding online course offerings. This team is also currently looking at institutional data for patterns regarding IPFW students and their outcomes in online courses.

FACET sponsored one lunch for 2nd and 3rd year faculty this semester. The topic was teacher-student interactions. Fifteen 2nd and 3rd year faculty and FACET members attended this luncheon. Another luncheon is in the works where online

learning will be the discussion topic.

A team of FACET members are currently examining data collected on the high-impact practice of undergraduate student research. They are looking at the student survey data from the 2014 Student Research Symposium, a Chairs survey, and information found in Opus, as well as institutional enrollment data for student research courses. The compilation of this data will be presented to **VCAA Drummond** with the aim of gaining more support for the development of additional research opportunities for undergraduates on campus. ▼

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# Upcoming Events

## December

### CELT Open House

Monday, December 15  
11:00 am-2:00 pm in KT 238

## January

### 5th Annual Symposium on Teaching and Learning

### Class Matters: The Role of Faculty in Working-Class Student Success

Presented by Sherry Lee Linkon  
Thursday, January 8, 2015 in LA 159

Registration required by noon on  
December 31, 2014

Visit the IPFW College of Arts and  
Sciences webpage at  
[http://www.ipfw.edu/departments/coas/  
events/teaching-symposium.html](http://www.ipfw.edu/departments/coas/events/teaching-symposium.html)  
for more details and to register.

## February

### The 2015 Fort Wayne Teaching Conference

Teaching as a Reflective Practice  
Friday, February 6, 2015  
Walb International Ballroom  
Visit the conference webpage at  
[https://www.ipfw.edu/offices/oa/  
faculty-affairs/fort-wayne-teaching-  
conference/](https://www.ipfw.edu/offices/oa/faculty-affairs/fort-wayne-teaching-conference/) for more details.

## March

Please note that the 2015 CELT  
Spring Teaching Conference that  
was previously scheduled for Friday,  
March 27th has been canceled due  
to a scheduling conflict.

Our Spring program will be added soon!  
Visit <http://ipfw.edu/celt> to view the most  
up-to-date list of events.



## Director's Message

By Gail Rathbun, CELT Director

CELT will start 2015 with a new look! To celebrate our new office design we will hold an **Open House on Monday, December 15th from 11 until 2**. Refreshments will be served and Sam will demonstrate Apple TV, now installed in 38 classrooms. Don't get lost – our new entrance is Kettler 238.

Faculty participants in the IPFW Writing Circle, led by **Ludy Goodson (CELT)** and **Shannon Johnson (LIB)** put in 152.5 writing hours since July. Participants report making 40 presentations connected to their writing circle work. The 10 active members of the group report producing 12 manuscripts for publication since starting with group, which began two years ago. For information about the circle go to the IPFW Faculty Writing Circle library guide.

Our Fall teaching workshops attracted 87 registrations. **Stephanie Stephenson (CELT)** and **Teri Luce (POLS/HIST)** designed and conducted two workshop series to train over 35 staff members in using Class Climate, our new course

evaluation system. **Sam Birk (CELT)** and **Deb Huffman (ENGL)** conducted training in using iPads and ebooks for a joint cohort of Communication and English and Linguistics adjuncts and their students.

CELT's Teaching Fellows received as many consulting requests in 6 weeks as they usually receive during an entire semester. We are now back up to five Fellows: Lead Fellow **Michelle Drouin (PSY)**, **Chand Chauhan (MATH)**, **Mary Cooper (HHS)**, **Cathleen Carosella (ENGL)**, and **Lesa Vartanian (PSY)**. Applications to become a Fellow will be accepted year-round at the Call for Nominations page accessible from the Contact Us -> CELT Advisory Board page.

These are just some of the highlights of the Fall semester. To find resources for your teaching, more professional development events, and to request services, visit the CELT web site at [ipfw.edu/celt](http://ipfw.edu/celt).

Have a happy and healthy end of semester and winter break! ▼