Math Faculty Workshop in Pedagogy Earns Rave Reviews

(Submitted by Dr. Daryao S. Khatri, Professor of Physics) - The nation as a whole is experiencing a dropout rate of 50-70% in math, science, and engineering courses at the collegiate level. Reversing this trend at the University of the District of Columbia has, of necessity, become a top priority. Along with other factors that affect retention rates in these courses, a professor teaching style is one of the most important factors that may contribute to high dropout rates. If we want to be successful in this effort, we must change the teaching style of professors in math, science, and engineering disciplines.

It is in this regard that the UDC Title III office has sponsored two faculty workshops in the sciences. The first one was held in December 2005 for 16 Ph.D. faculty members from the Department of Chemistry and Physics for four full-days. The second one and the most recent one was conducted for nine math faculty professors for nine full-days from May 2-12, 2006 from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. The workshop was conducted in room 105 (E-lab) of building 41. The objective of the workshop was to seek a change in the attitude (we need help in pedagogy) of faculty who teach remedial and introductory courses in math. The workshop was a phenomenal success as is evidenced by comments submitted by participating faculty members.

“The Math Faculty Workshop is the best workshop that I have attended since I have been teaching at UDC. This is the only workshop that taught me how to handle students. Most faculty think that they know how to teach and reach these students but they don't. The workshop will teach them the techniques. Each new faculty should be required to take this workshop.”

“If I had taken this workshop 30 years ago, I would be a better teacher today. This workshop should be offered each semester so that the regular full time faculty will take advantage of these techniques. The workshop opened my eyes. It was so exciting. I can't wait to use some of these techniques in my future teaching experience.”

“I feel this workshop would be great for education majors as a methods course on teaching techniques. Compilation of many techniques and examples into a very well compartmentalized structure for quick review and detailed discussion. Tying the various pedagogical concepts to the teaching of math, physics, and computer sciences was effective…immediate feedback!”
“I hope we could have more of this kind of opportunity in the near future. Let me take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for your support and sponsorship of one of the most awesome experiences for me here at UDC.”

For more information on these workshops, contact Dr. Daryao S. Khatri at dkhatri@udc.edu.

Coping and Caring Film Series airing on UDC Cable

On Monday May 28th, UDC Cable TV began airing a nine-week series of emotionally powerful documentaries about caring for the elderly, the sick, the disabled, the loved, and about living with pain, loss and illness. Coping and Caring: A Film Series airs on Monday evenings at 9:00 pm. and repeats on Wednesdays and Fridays on Comcast Channel 98 and RCN Channel 19. Films in the series include:

May 29, 31 and June 2, 2006 - Their Brothers' Keepers: Orphaned by AIDS (2005: 55 minutes) Theirs is no normal childhood. They are the millions of children whose parents have died of AIDS. They have no time to grieve. They are the parents. Filmed over a seven month period, Their Brothers, Keepers goes inside Chazanga Compound, a shantytown in Lusaka, Zambia and follows the day-to-day struggles of two child-headed families.

June 5, 7, 9, 2006 - Sister Helen (2002: 90 mins.) Winner of the 2002 Sundance Director's award, this docudrama centers on Sister Helen Travis, an unconventional nun determined to help substance abusers in the South Bronx. A recovering alcoholic, Travis turned to God after hitting rock bottom when her two children and husband died from substance abuse-related causes. The hard-nosed Sister runs a halfway house, dispensing her unique form of tough love in a tireless effort to help recovering addicts.

June 12, 14, 16, 2006 - Fierce Goodbye (2004: 44 mins.) Over four million people a year in the US mourn the tragic suicide deaths of family members. Here, family survivors reveal their intimate stories and aching pain to assist other survivors and to help the broader community understand the unique and terrible grief of suicide.

Burton Buller, producer of Fierce Goodbye: Living in the Shadow of Suicide, prepares Jill Marks, Minneapolis, Minn., for videotaping at the gravesite of her daughter.

June 19, 21, 23, 2006 - Tiger’s Apprentice (1998: 56.40 mins.) San Francisco resident M. Trinh Nguyen, the director, travels to the Mekong Delta in Vietnam to investigate a traditional medicine master (who is also one of her great-uncles) and to examine the status of “ancestral-transfer” medicine in a rapidly changing Viet Nam. As the medicine master is in short supply of willing and qualified students, Trinh finds her documentation shifting to an unwitting apprenticeship. For the World Health Organization’s on traditional medicine.

June 26, 28, 30, 2006 - Losing Layla (2002: 50.40mins) 'What started as a film about a mother and father’s differing responses to the impending birth of their child became, instead, one of the most heartbreaking depictions of a mother’s grief for her dead baby ever shown on television. Through Losing Layla we saw not just the death of Layla but perhaps, the death of every child, and not just the grief of Vanessa Gorman, but the universal grieving of all mothers for a lost child.' The Australian Women’s Weekly.

July 3, 5, 7, 2006 - Carved from the Heart (1998: 30mins) Stan Marsden, a Tsimshian wood carver, loses his son to a cocaine overdose. Grieving, he decides to create a totem pole in his son's memory and invites the town of Craig, Alaska, to help. The project grows and becomes a communal effort bringing the town together both Native and non-Native, young and old.

Malaria: Killer Number One (OCHA) (19.43) - A presentation of Ethiopia’s malaria crisis by the United Nation’s office for the coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Malaria kills an estimated three million people every year – mostly in Africa. It is the number one killer in many countries south of the Sahara. Ethiopia is among the places hardest hit. Extreme poverty, lack of health care and population pressures help the disease spread like wildfire. New cures, preventative action and massive intervention by international agencies are bringing a glimmer of hope.

Who is Disabled? (8 mins 44 secs) - A short film that challenges the notion that those who are handicapped are disabled and the stigma that many associate with it. In Ghana, children with intellectual disability are labeled as cursed from the gods and considered useless, so parents are often ashamed of them.

July 10, 12, 14, 2006 - Spit It Out (2004; 55 mins.) A funny and poignant portrait of Jeff Shames' successful efforts to come to terms with his stutter and his family's legacy of denial. Jeff's father is intolerant of and rageful towards his son's imperfections, while his mother never discusses her own childhood stutter. As a teenager, Jeff turns to alcohol and drugs to mask his shame, and eventually marries an alcoholic who interacts with the outside world for him. After his wife gets sober, Jeff discovers the stuttering self-help community and embarks on a healing journey of sobriety, self-acceptance and forgiveness.

struggle and hardship, they build new lives for themselves, recreating family and community in the context of this disease. Their poignant and revealing stories offer heartfelt reflections on societal fears and aversions to sickness, bodily differences, and death.

July 24, 26, 28, 2006 - ‘G’ Methamphetamine on the Navajo Nation: (2005: 58 mins.)
Through interviews, this film examines the effect of crystal Methamphetamine use on the Navajo Nation and exposes us to the shattered lives of those affected by this highly addictive drug.

Walk for Literacy Seeks Volunteers, Walkers
The State Education Office at the University of the District of Columbia has is looking for assistance with their support of the Nation’s Capital Walk for Literacy scheduled for this September.

VOLUNTEER NOW! - Learn valuable event marketing & production skills – Be a part of Street Teams (distribute flyers in strategic locations), a Media Assistant (follow-up calls to media), or part of Rally Teams (provide support and motivation to walking teams for literacy). TO VOLUNTEER: 866-832-2289 or walkforliteracy@gmail.com. The Nation’s Capital Walk for Literacy Needs Walkers! Join us on Saturday, September 23, 2006 at Tech World Plaza (9th & K Street, NW), Check-in Begins @ 8 a.m. – Walk Starts @ 9 a.m. – Go to signmeup.com/53273 to register now! Students $10.

IHSD to Host “Partnering & Capacity-Building Technical Assistance” Workshop
Dr. Antonia Nowell, Director of the School of Business and Public Administration Institute for Human Service Delivery (IHSD) reports that the Institute will host a day-long “Partnering and Capacity-Building Technical Assistance Workshop” for the D.C. Department of Human Services Income Maintenance Administration. The overall goals are to facilitate collaboration, partnering and to enhance performance outcomes for community-based programs. Over 75 invited participants, representing community-based human service organizations who receive funding from the DHS will be in attendance. Staff members from IMA and IHSD have joined forces to ensure a successful day. The workshop will take place on Wednesday, June 14, 2006 from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM in Building 52, Room 306.
Master of Public Administration Student U.N. Assn. Fellow

Ms. Yuping Li, a Master of Public Administration student who just completed her first year of studies, has been accepted as a United Nations Association Fellow for the Fall 2006 semester. She is the only UDC student and will join graduate students coming from seven universities in the metropolitan Washington area who are studying in a wide range of fields. Ms. Li comes from Beijing China and joined the UDC MPA program in August of 2005. Most recently she has been interning in the PATHS program where she is a research assistant.

Final Thoughts

The UDC Spark is your publication. It can only be effective if you make contributions. If there is something happening in your department that everyone else should know about, then tell us. As always, we ask that you please submit items of interest in text format by e-mail only to mandrews@udc.edu by noon on every other Thursday. PLEASE – NO FLYERS – text paragraphs in Times Roman 12 (black) only. We always welcome photos and appropriate clip art.