



Faculty Forum

From the Faculty Center for Teaching Excellence

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
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Add Your Voice and Multiply the Results

As we did last year, we begin this new year of Faculty Forum with an invitation to all faculty to send us opinion pieces for monthly publication. We have two opinion pieces in the polishing stages, with one on "Designing an Effective System of Evaluation" to lead off in September, but we are looking for opinion pieces for each month through May; here is your chance to share your point of view with your colleagues, the university community of scholars.

Do you have opinions on any aspect of classroom practice or on any administrative issues that impinge directly on teaching and research? Do you have an opinion on the nature of the student as learner or on the characteristics of excellent teachers or scholars? Any topic related to instruction will be suitable and all points of view will be respected. Start today to put your thoughts together. You don't have to send us polished prose; give us a rough draft and we will work with you to put it in the most effective form possible for presentation to the faculty at large.

If we haven't heard your voice yet it is only because you haven't spoken up. The Faculty Forum does not champion any particular ideology. It is simply a sounding board for the academic community. If you think the Forum is missing a point of view, let us know; write it out and we will print it. You may recall that in our initial issue last year we announced that our main goal was "to spark a lively dialogue about college teaching." If several pieces seem to take a similar stand, it is only because no dissenting opinion has been submitted. The Forum belongs to the faculty; as editor, I exist only to facilitate the dialogue.

Before you rush off to your word processors, however, let me remind you about the Teaching Tips section of Faculty Forum. At the onset of our publication last year, a number of faculty suggested the inclusion of specific and practical teaching tips in the publication of responses on the 15th of the month. We were able last year to publish a number of these and the response to them was generally quite positive. If you want us to continue publishing Teaching Tips, send us one this semester, even this week if you can. Send a brief outline of a specific problem met in teaching a course and how to solve it. Last year we had tips on how to remember student names, how to prepare students for reading assignments, and how to design effective research paper assignments,

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among others. Teaching Tips do not need to be in prose form; they can be presented in a single page in outline form. As with the opinion pieces, send them to Terry at the Center and we will help you polish them if you wish.

Welcome back. I look forward with excitement, anticipation, and confidence to another successful year of the Faculty Forum. If you want to help make WCU a better place to work, a better place to educate young people, and a place with a strong sense of academic community, add your voice to the dialogue. If we don't hear from you, you lose an opportunity to make an impact and the sense of community falls that much shorter of its potential. I look forward to hearing from YOU.

Terry Nienhuis, Editor