



CHAPARRAL

By and for the Employees of Glendale College - Primary Funding by the Glendale College Guild AFT 2276

Enhancing Student Motivation and Competence through Humor

by Michael Harnett, English Division

“People mutht be amuthed.”

—Mr. Sleary, the lispy circus leader, to the Fact-minded but eventually reforming educator Thomas Gradgrind in Charles Dickens’ *Hard Times*

As children only do we laugh, and as we travel onward laughter sinks down and dies out, like the light of the oil-lit lamp. This signifies that to laugh you must be innocent, and pure of heart, lacking which qualities you purse your lips, drop your jaws, and knit your brow, after the manner of men hiding vices and impurities.

—Honoré de Balzac, Prologue to *Droll Stories*

Theory: All students are intrinsically motivated to learn. Yet students report that instruction tends to be banal from their point of view (See Community College Survey of Student Engagement, 2009—Executive Summary at http://www.ccsse.org/publications/national_report_2009/CCSSE09_execsum.pdf). It appears that although we often teach with an emphasis on *skills*, focusing on skills alone does not reliably bring about the best results, as the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates (ICAS) concluded about “academic literacy” in 2002 (see “Executive

Summary: Academic Literacy: A Statement of Competencies,” at <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/reports/acadlit.pdf>). ICAS’s statement clearly links motivation or “habits of mind” to competence: “The habits of mind expected of students—their curiosity, their daring, their participation in intellectual discussions—are predicated upon their ability to convey their ideas clearly and to listen and respond to divergent views respectfully.” So how about focusing on *will before skill*, to bring student engagement and curiosity to the fore?

One way to promote these “habits of mind” and student

Inside this issue

Shop Talk with Ramona by Ramona Barrio-Sotillo	2
Speaking of the Senate by John Queen	3
CSEA Connection by Saodat Aziskhanova	4
UPDATE ON PLANNING— or what is that KH Group all about? by Peggy Renner	5
Adjunct Junction by Phyllis Eckler	8
Garfield Gleanings by Marcia Walerstein-Sibony	10
MILESTONES	12

engagement is the use of **humor** in classroom activities—that is, activities that elicit smiles, laughter, or internal reactions of amusement from students. Humor bears striking and well-documented similarities to curiosity, in fact, since both humor and curiosity present incongruities in a way that powerfully draws a person to seek resolution and understanding. We satisfy our curiosity when we figure out a problem; we laugh

(Continued on page 9)

Shop Talk with Ramona

by Ramona Barrio-Sotillo, Guild President



Welcome back to the beginning of the spring semester! There have been many interesting developments in the state budget since the end of fall. This article will focus on those updates from the state and their effects on Glendale Community College.

On a statewide level, the governor proposed his budget on January 8, 2010. As is expected every year, this is only the introduction of the state budget. After this, various legislators and committees at the state capitol will work to develop it. These changes will take place until what is known as the May Revise, when the budget with revisions is once again presented.

What is Happening with the State budget today?

In the governor's first introduction of the budget in January, as presented by Scott Lay in the Community College League of California on January 8, 2010, he proposed the following:

Major points of the proposed community college budget

- Provides \$126 million to fund enrollment growth of 2.21 percent (about 26,000 new full-time students)
- Reduces funding for apportionments and select categorical programs by \$22.9 million to account for a negative cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), computed at -0.38% due to reductions in the statutory inflationary index
- Cuts \$10 million from Extended Opportunity Program and Services
- Cuts \$10 million from Part-time Faculty Compensation
- Increases Career-Technical Education by \$20 million
- Maintains all categorical cuts and flexibility allowances approved in 2009-10, and does not backfill the \$35 million in federal funds provided this year to ease the cuts.
- Proposes student fees be maintained at \$26/unit.
- Makes technical changes to accommodate and backfill reduced property taxes and other budget year revenue shortfalls and acknowledges, but does not backfill, student fee revenue shortfall of \$10 million in the current year.
- Proposes the suspension of the competitive Cal Grant program, with no new awards provided beginning in fall 2010.

The proposed cuts of \$10 million each to Part-time Faculty Compensation and EOPS are a further blow to programs that have already suffered large cuts at GCC last year. Along with these further cuts,

(Continued on page 4)

Chaparral

Printed 3 or 4 times per semester, the *Chaparral* is published by and for the entire staff of GCC. Primary funding is by the Glendale College Guild, AFT 2276. The newsletter is dedicated to providing timely information on the campus community about any issues that affect our college, higher education, and/or professional lives. Prose, poetry, art work and opinion as well as expository reporting are welcome. The pages of *Chaparral* are open to all faculty, staff, students and administrators. Submissions for publication should be word processed in IBM-compatible Word Perfect, MS Word or ASCII file format. No anonymous submissions will be published. Please e-mail arti-

cles to Piper Rooney (piper). If you have announcements you wish printed or any questions, contact Piper Rooney at x5342 or e-mail piper.

The *Chaparral* Editorial Board is composed of volunteers and is open to any college staff members. The current board includes Piper Rooney (editor-in-chief), Susan Cisco (managing editor), Patricia Chamroonrat (production manager) and Phillip Kazanjian. Columnists are Guild President Ramona Barrio-Sotillo (Shop Talk with Ramona), Academic Senate President John Queen (Speaking of the Senate), CSEA President Saodat Aziskhanova (CSEA Connection), Classified Council President Henan Joof (Classified Council Corner), Guild 2nd Vice President

Phyllis Eckler (Adjunct Junction), and Marcia Walerstein-Sibony (Garfield Gleanings).

Disclaimer

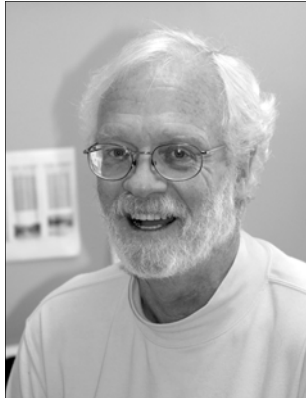
The editors reserve the right to edit for length, clarity and/or relevance; to publish editorial commentaries; to omit materials which in their good-faith judgment is believed to be libelous, obscene and/or offensive, or an invasion of privacy. Questions regarding this editorial policy may be directed to the editor-in-chief.

The views expressed in the articles of the *Chaparral* are solely those of the contributing authors. They do not represent the views of Glendale College or the Guild.

SPEAKING OF THE SENATE...

by John Queen, Academic Senate President

It has been a while since I've written about recent Senate actions, so here goes!



Middle College High School

The Senate approved a report proposing a middle college high school on campus with the proviso that under present budget conditions, funding for the program, including classroom space, would have to come from the Glendale Unified School District. In a middle college high school program, high school students attend both high school and college classes at the same time. Typically the program is housed on the college campus. The task force determined that under the right conditions such a program could be academically sound. Those conditions include targeting students with high academic potential, careful screening of students to avoid discipline issues, and initially restricting the program to 11th and 12th graders (and assessing the program before possible expansion to 9th and 10th graders.) The report also advises the district to conduct a thorough cost/benefit analysis before proceeding.

You may have noticed an e-mail from me citing an article in *The New York Times* about such programs. Here's the link again: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/08/education/08school.html?ref=us>

Graduation Requirements

In March the Senate will take up a report on graduation requirements. The task force will present alternatives to the Senate to maintain current requirements, reduce requirements or increase requirements. The task force also looked at the college's philosophy of the associate's degree, a key consideration in this debate.

In the fall, the Senate addressed a related issue when it addressed the now-defunct "transfer" associate's degree, i.e., a degree granted by GCC when students fulfilled the IGETC requirements for the UC and CSU systems. The state community college

system ended the awarding of such degrees as of fall, 2008. However, students who started at Glendale College before that date still have the catalog rights to that degree. This gets pretty technical so here's the exact Senate motion:

[The Senate moves] to allow double counting of the American Institutions, State and Local Governments, and American History graduation requirements in areas 3 and 4 of the IGETC retroactive to fall 2007 for the purposes of fulfilling the requirements for both the UC and CSU versions of the AA transfer IGETC degree.

The argument was presented that some students were able to circumvent the additional courses in areas 3 and 4 by declaring they were going to transfer to UC when in fact they were really bound for CSU. I know this makes my head spin, so if you are mystified by this, I suggest you talk to your senator, because space does not permit a further elaboration. The counseling faculty senators, Richard Cortes and Greg Perkins, are particularly expert in these matters.

It is very likely that the Senate will schedule an electorate meeting (i.e., a meeting of all college faculty) in the spring to discuss both the graduation requirement report and the middle college high school proposal.

Religious Practices

In response to a query from the administration, the Senate also passed a motion on student absences for religious reasons. The motion reads:

Glendale Community College recognizes and respects students' religious practices. Instructors will excuse student absences for religious holidays to the same extent any other student absences would be considered excused. Students may be required to make up missed work. This policy is to be added to the faculty handbook.

(Continued on page 6)



CSEA CONNECTION

Visit us on the web at: www.glendale.edu/csea

by Saodat Aziskhanova, CSEA President

Spring semester started and it is good to see students around the campus. We missed them during winter session. We had a classified employees meeting on December 1—finally!!! Definitely, the credit goes to Dr. Dawn Lindsay. We had great attendance, with approximately 100 people attending. The meeting was planned without taking into consideration that the first Tuesday of each month is also when division meetings are held, so we missed administrative assistants from the instructional area. For spring semester, there are two meetings scheduled. Thanks to Ron Nakasone, Dr. Rick Perez and Dr. Mary Mirch for updating classified employees on Student and Instructional Services areas, although Ron had nothing promising to



say about the state budget, just a depressing prognosis, but we all know the state budget is in a terrible mess right now.

CSEA started signature gathering efforts to place the On-Time Budget Act initiative on the November 2010 ballot. This initiative will help end budget grid-

lock in Sacramento, hold legislators accountable, and protect California families and businesses from the devastating impact of late state budgets. For the past 20 years, Sacramento has failed to meet its constitutional obligation to adopt a budget by June 15. Only three states in the country require a two-thirds majority vote on the budget, and they are California, Rhode Island and Arkansas. The initiative would allow a majority of the legislators to enact a state budget, as it is done in 47 other states.

Politicians will be penalized and lose their pay and perks for each day that they fail to meet their constitutional obligation to adopt a budget by June 15. The On-Time Budget initiative would change only the vote requirement for a budget, but still would keep the two-thirds vote requirement on taxes, which makes it more difficult for legislators to raise our taxes.

The accreditation team will arrive soon, and hopefully the college will be accredited, meeting acceptable levels of quality in providing education and training. I would like to take this opportunity to thank John Queen and Jill Lewis for their hard work in the process of producing the accreditation report, with the help of all constituent groups.

In Unity,
Saodat Aziskhanova

*(Continued from page 2)
Shop Talk with Ramona*

another very real threat to our students currently being discussed in Sacramento is the cutting of the Cal Grant competitive grants. According to the CC League,

The proposed elimination of the competitive Cal Grant program would hurt the neediest community college students at a time when California's citizens are deeply concerned with college affordability. This program provides 44,000 community college students grants of \$1,551 for textbooks, transportation and supplies. These are generally older students whose income averages \$14,000 and who are ineligible for the state's entitlement program because they worked between high school and college.

As can be seen, community colleges are getting squeezed financially from every direction: classes, services, part timers and especially, our students. According to the CC League, even with the additional funding for 26,000 additional full-time students, our enrollment continues to exceed state support. We will be asked to prioritize basic skills, transfer and career technical enrollment.

At Glendale College, the discussion of these priorities will take place at the Budget Committee meeting. At this meeting, our union representative, Sarkis Ghazarian, along with other constituent groups on campus, confer on how to prioritize funding or cuts at GCC through the shared governance process. Fortunately, as a result of our collective bargaining agreement ratified in the beginning of January, our adjunct faculty will not have to endure another year of cuts to their income. Our agreement with the district is to

freeze part time salaries for one year, but we will need to prepare for the following year.

As the months proceed, we will hear more about the adjustments to the community college budget. In the meantime, this is the time for our faculty and staff to get politically involved. Organizations such as the CC League, FACCC and California Federation of Teachers (CFT) are already lobbying to try to get legislators to reconsider these huge cuts. Even if it is by participating in the letter writing campaign, or point and click feature of FACCC (www.facc.org) or joining Professors for Quality Education (PQE) at GCC, or by participating in the various marches coming up, such as the *March for California's Future* taking place on March 5, organized by the California Federation of Teachers (<http://www.cft.org/index.php/component/content/article/526.html>), this is the

(Continued on page 12)

UPDATE ON PLANNING—or what is that KH Group all about?

by Peggy Renner, Strategic Master Plan Coordinator

When the Garfield Campus gained official status, the college needed an educational plan. While Garfield is the focal point of Goal 6 of the Strategic Master Plan 2008-2014, that goal did not constitute the full plan that Garfield needed, if it wanted to be able to apply for additional funds from the state. The college recognized that we also need to examine and strengthen our relationships to the surrounding community. In the past we have not included a community survey or a community forum in our planning process, and the college should do this to gain better insight into the needs of the communities we serve. Finally, we must strengthen the ties between our budgeting and planning processes. All of this must be done for both campuses.

Last spring, the planning coordinators and leadership of both campuses met and agreed that we would all benefit if we worked on an educational master plan that integrated the needs and purposes of both Garfield and the main campus. An RFP was sent out last summer asking for proposals on educational planning and external scans. Ten proposals were submitted. Dawn Lindsay, the Interim Superintendent/President; Mary Mirch, the Acting Vice President of Instruction; Karen Holden-Ferkich, the Associate Vice President of Instructional Services, Continuing Education and Community Education; Ron Nakasone, the Vice President of

Administrative Services; Edward Karpp and Peggy Renner, the planning coordinators; and Susan Courtney, Interim Director of Business Services, reviewed the applications and chose four consulting companies for interviews. The selection committee unanimously elected KH Group for several reasons. KH Consulting Group had not only done considerable research to gather information about GCC, but they also clearly demonstrated they wanted to work with us and to use the extensive work we had already done collecting data. KH had reviewed all of our current plans and was impressed with our work in developing our Strategic Master Plan 2008-2014, as well as other plans. The intent was for KH to help us to move forward to address our goals, refine the process for setting priorities, and ultimately to strengthen our planning process. Gayla Kraetch Hartsough, president of KH Consulting Group, said that GCC has done fine work collecting data, as she complimented Ed Karpp on his work, saying that this distinguished us as one of the best colleges she has seen.

The KH Consulting Group proposal was then sent to the Senate Executive, who met with Gayla; the proposal was next sent to Dawn, and finally to the Board of Trustees for approval. The work began in the fall. To get the ball rolling, Gayla and Heather Sims Of KH Consulting Group met with Team B twice in September, and twice with Team A in October and November. KH also conducted

focus groups and interviews with individuals, conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis in October, and a Community Survey in November and December. On January 27, they led the Community Forum, which brought more than fifty leaders from the community to the campus to share their thoughts and ideas about the needs of the community. The vast amount of information derived from these several sources was presented to Team A at the retreat on February 4. That meeting lasted from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Most impressively, the entire committee was there, working hard all day long—even during lunch. We owe all of the members of Team A a big thanks, but their work is not finished!

Teams A and B have divided into several work groups to address topics that emerged from the data. These included GCC-wide issues: Student Services; Student Access, Retention, and Success; Credit Programs and Offerings; Revenue Enhancement/Generation and Decision Making; Noncredit Programs and Offerings and the Garfield Campus; Workforce & Economic development; and Career and Technical Education. Each of these groups has set meeting schedules and will convene throughout February and early March to prepare recommendations that will be taken to Team A, and then up the chain of command to the Board of Trustees.

Here are some of the questions

(Continued on page 7)

Thus, if you have a policy for excusing absences and makeup work for any reason, you must extend this option to students who miss class for religious observances. The Senate requested a legal opinion from the district's attorneys and adopted language that in its view was least onerous to faculty.

Course Substitutions

The Senate recommended changes to Administrative Regulation 5119 (Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.) That regulation sets up a process that includes determining if a course substitution is appropriate when requested by a student with a verified disability. The Senate acted to strengthen representation of the division of the course in question (i.e., the one for which there would be a substitution.) Again the Senate acted after consulting with the district's attorneys for the law in this area. The Senate's recommendation will be considered by the Student Affairs committee where the revision process originated.

Recording in Classrooms

The Senate also gave input on another proposed change to Administrative Regulation 5420 (Standards of Student Conduct.) The Student Affairs committee had suggested the following amendment to the regulation:

The use of any electronic listening or recording device in any classroom [is prohibited] without the prior consent of the instructor, except as necessary to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

The Senate asked the Student Affairs committee to advise the faculty of the implications of choosing to give their consent to such recording. The Senate was concerned that such permission might result in posting recordings on the web or possibly violating the privacy rights of other students in the class.

Suggestions in Response to the Technical Assistance Report

You will recall that in November of last year, the college received a report from a team of consultants on campus climate and shared governance practices.

The Senate motion reads thusly:

The Senate response to the Technical Assistance Report of November 2009 is as follows:

1. In order to promote understanding of roles and responsibilities between the Board and the CSEA, Guild & Senate during Board meetings, the Senate recommends:
 - a. The Board may request input from CSEA, Guild & Senate on any item on the agenda;
 - b. CSEA, Guild & Senate may request to give input on any item on the agenda;
 - c. CSEA, Guild & Senate may comment on any item on a past, present or future Board agenda during their respective communications, as well as give their usual reports on their constituency groups;
 - d. In the event that during communications, CSEA, Guild & Senate wish to respond to comments made by the Board or the administration, they may do so during the closing "Comments from the Audience" (but they may remain at the dais.)
2. The Senate recommends that trustees attend Community College League of California leadership development workshops at least once every two years and within the first year of being newly elected.
3. The Senate affirms that students, faculty, staff, administrators, trustees and the public are welcome to Senate meetings.
4. The Senate recognizes that the Board controls its own agenda. Items arising from governance committees and the administration, however, must be first approved by the Campus Executive committee, with the exception for urgent actions as noted in the Governance Document. As dictated by law, the Senate retains the right to put items on the Board's agenda.

(Continued on page 7)

This policy went to the Campus Executive committee which will most likely incorporate it into a resolution for Board of Trustees consideration.

Presidential Evaluation Policy

The Senate proposed a new board policy for the evaluation of the superintendent/president which would formally include input to the Board of Trustees from college constituency groups (the executives of the ASGCC, CSEA, the Senate, the Guild, and the Administrative Cabinet) as well as survey 10% of the faculty, staff and managers every two years. In the off year, the evaluation would be made by the Board of Trustees alone. The Board of Trustees has already had one reading of the policy and will reach a decision on it by the March meeting.

Miscellaneous

The Senate recommended:

- that a student equity coordinator position be given released time and referred the matter to the RT/EP committee;
- that the Mutual Gains document and the Governance document be formally incorporated as administrative regulations;


- that a task force be established to enhance the evaluation of faculty (adjunct, tenured and tenure track) by clarifying the evaluation process, establishing best practices, the possible creation of a manual, etc.

Upcoming Items

• Senate Elections


The Senate will be conducting its elections in the spring. There will be four at-large positions up for election, including the adjunct senator. Four divisions are also scheduled to elect their faculty to division seats. A notice will go out early in the spring advising the campus of the process.

• Accreditation

The accreditation process moves into its final phase this spring with the site team scheduled to visit between March 15 and 18. The team will be interviewing students, administrators, classified and faculty and also be holding open meetings on the 16th and 17th. If you have not already read the self study, now is the time to do so! http://netra.glendale.edu/accreditation/GCC_AccreditationReport.pdf 

that these sub-committees will address: How can GCC promote itself as a valuable option for higher education? How can GCC create a seamless and complete student experience? How can we effectively implement empirically-based decision making? How can Student Services become more proactive, vs. reactive? How does GCC balance the needs of students with legislative requirements and fiscal pressures? How do we find the balance among the credit and non-credit, academic, career and technical and work force development programs? What are the

ways we can effectively generate revenue? How can we build stronger partnerships with business and industry? How can we be a stronger factor in the economic engine of our community? Are we a divisive campus or are we able to work together effectively? Have we recovered from the frustrations we encountered in the last few years, or do we have some work to do? Is campus culture stagnant? Are the channels of communication open? Are we ready to work together as partners in a common commitment to meet our students' needs and to fulfill our mission? And there are more!

Team A will meet again in the spring to review the finding of these committees and from this develop an Educational Master Plan that we will all use to guide decision making and action at the college for the next ten years. We have dared to look at the "elephants and gorillas" in the room, those issues that we have historically ignored. Now we are excited. We look forward to using new tools to analyze the rich data we collect, to enhance our planning processes, and to make decisions that will fulfill our mission for our students to greater effect. 

ADJUNCT JUNCTION

by Phyllis Eckler, GCC Guild 2nd Vice President



CALIFORNIA'S UNKIND BUDGET HURTS PART-TIMERS

Why Did Part-time Faculty Receive a Pay Cut This Year?

Beginning in spring of 2002, the Glendale College District began distributing funds that were allocated in the state budget to go directly to part-time faculty to compensate them for course preparation and class work assessment. In our salary schedule it is a "parity percentage" that is added onto the B-1 schedule. B-1 is the part-time salary schedule for all part-timers except for non-instructional adjuncts. (See link from www.glendale.edu/guild.) This hard-won line item in the state budget helped remunerate adjunct faculty for the hours of work done outside of instructional time to fulfill their teaching obligation. Full-time faculty are paid for preparation and assessment as a part of their salaries. During the Gray Davis era it was brought to the attention of the legislature that adjunct faculty were glaringly underpaid for all the work that they did in comparison to full-time faculty, and thus this Part-time Equity line item was added to the community college budget.

This line item, along with two

others designated to help part-time faculty, became part of the "categorical" line items in the community college budget. The money ear-marked for this categorical has been cut back from one state budget to the next and never received cost-of-living increases (COLA). However, never has it been slashed the way it was this past year, when the legislature signed a budget that cut almost all categorical line items by 50%. This led to 3.76% drop in adjunct faculty pay in the Glendale district.

However, not all part-time faculty in the state experienced this kind of pay cut. The state budget allowed districts to reallocate the categorical funds (many of which had been reduced) in any way that they saw fit. In some districts this parity money was already included in the base of part-time salary schedules, so there was no way that districts could unilaterally withhold it from adjuncts without negotiating for a salary reduction at the table. This was not the case in the Glendale District, since our contract stipulated that the equity (or parity) money could be reduced or eliminated if the state budget took it away. If we were to roll the parity funds into the base salary of part-timers, it would protect them from any further cuts if parity money were to be reduced again.

In the latest round of negotiations the full-time faculty took

a .5% pay cut for this year with a promise from the district that no further reductions in the parity percentage would occur this year or in the next year, even if the state budget for 2010-11 again reduces this categorical line item. So far the governor's budget is already proposing a 40% further cut to the equity line item for 2010-11. We can consider ourselves safe for now as far as pay cuts go. The threat to the college budget, however, is continuing in this year's state budget.

What Can Part-timers Do to Help Secure their Pay?

There are two ways that part-time faculty income is affected by poor college budgets. One is the kind of hourly pay reduction of 3.76% that we saw just this year. But the other more serious problem is when classes are cut. Once cut, classes are often impossible to get back on the schedule (and since adjuncts are limited by the 67% rule, a class cut can mean anywhere from one third to one half of their income slashed). Every college district in the state is given funding to educate a certain number of students per academic year. This number is called the Full-time Equivalent Student (FTES) "cap." Once this cap, or number of students, is reached the college is not paid for any more

(Continued on page 11)

when we understand the violation of normal conditions as a pleasant anomaly. Think of Peek-a-Boo: When you hide, you violate normal conditions; when you then show yourself, a toddler figures out that all is well and laughs—he or she has resolved the incongruity in an enjoyable way. While the humor may relate directly to the subject matter at hand (*endogenous* humor) or not (*exogenous* humor), my research suggests that endogenous humor activities are more effective for student motivation. As a result, these engaged and motivated students should develop skills and have successful learning outcomes.

Practice

You can systematically plan to enhance student motivation to learn in your classes through prepared humor activities. One advantage of such planned activities is that *the students themselves actively derive the humor response, and the desired learning, from engaging in the activity; the instructor does not have to be the source of humor like a standup comic*. Instead, you can promote active learning simply by handing out and introducing a task for students to accomplish.

To that end, consider the following elements of endogenous humor activities that you can run in the classroom:

- Enjoyable incongruity
- Directly related to assignment or course topic
- Small-group setting
- Activity on handout or announced
- Oral or kinesthetic components as well as written

The first element, *enjoyable incongruity*, is crucial to your activity's success. The fact that the activity is endogenous promotes ideas that the activity is relevant to students' learning and success in the course. Placing students in groups of three or four and allocating responsibility to each person increases the likelihood of student participation. Having a well-delineated handout or presentation of the assignment gives everyone a clear sense of the challenges and goals as well as the procedures of the activity. Also, involving multiple modes of learning, such as oral discussions or scenario enactments and activities that involve physical movement, can literally get students up and active in the learning of the moment.

Using Humor in Classes

Even Juan laughed then. Everyone laughed. And suddenly the bus was not full of strangers. Some chemical association was formed. Norma laughed hysterically. All the tension of the morning came out in her laughter.

—John Steinbeck, *The Wayward Bus*

As examples, here are some prompts for endogenous humor activities in an English 101 class. Together, I hope that they show how you can apply the elements of humorous activities and enhance student engagement. Since motivation applies to all human endeavors, **you can develop activities that enhance motivation and competence across the disciplines**. All of these activities were run in classes by various instructors here at GCC, and they all rely on readings that were already completed in preparation for a writing assignment.

1. You are familiar with the benefits and problems of technology from our readings. Others have proposed brain-detectors for teachers to check homework, and in-car monitors for parents to supervise their sons' and daughters' away-from-home activities. Other than these, **propose an invention that would use technology of your imagination for a clear purpose at school and/or at home**. Describe how the invention would work as clearly as possible. Then explain some key issues involved with it: for example, who would be happy to see such an invention, and who wouldn't like it? What are the best and worst possible things that could happen with it? What else do people need to know about it?
2. **“A Modest Proposal for _____”**: In 1729, Jonathan Swift (author of *Gulliver's Travels*) jokingly proposed that the hunger problem could be solved by eating infants (boiled, roasted, etc.). He noted that this would also reduce overpopulation and aid the economy. Now write your own “modest proposal” to help solve the problem of _____. Make a list of PROPOSED ACTIONS and REASONS that are at least as absurd, yet as logical, as Swift's idea is.
3. **Reading**: “The Ultimate College Application Essay” (see <http://paws.kettering.edu/~jhuggins/humor/essay.html>)

(Continued on page 11)

GARFIELD Gleanings

by Marcia Walerstein-Sibony, Garfield Guild Steward



The last two columns I wrote were upbeat and positive, as well they should have been. We are happy to see the construction of the new extension of Garfield campus, even if it is a bit messy now. We're proud of all our faculty who receive awards. Don't think, however, that I've been skipping through the fields of flowers while adjuncts lost pay, health care costs skyrocket, winter session was cut down, and colleagues were cleaning mud from their lovely hilltop homes. I just held off, because I was, for a change, optimistic that the new folks in Washington would at least help us out of this health care mess. But the reality is that it's pessimism, not optimism, that is more realistic. I'm not talking about issues that pertain just to Garfield faculty, but since 90% are adjunct, I think it's fair to discuss some issues here. I want to bring up two: the unaffordable health care offered to couples or families and the public attacks on STRS for adjuncts, by means of ballot propositions or initiatives.

We were all waiting patiently for the big **health care** reform while the economy went to pot, and now those adjuncts who desperately need affordable health

insurance are once again out in the cold. Glendale receives only 6% from the state for adjunct health insurance. A short while back, it was 50%. A few years ago, the full-time faculty graciously donated their Blue Shield refund to help cover adjunct costs, but that sum is rapidly dwindling. This past year there was another large rebate, but times are different, and full-timers decided to give those funds to help the general budget deficit of the college as a whole, so no more money can be expected from that source for adjunct health benefits. Meanwhile, the changes in medical coverage have changed radically, due to a dramatic decrease in state funding. Where once, members could expect 50% coverage, they are now looking at something like 6%. Similarly, coverage for dependents has become expensive and complicated.

Not all those who took out Glendale's health benefits are in the hole. The Guild arranged that individuals get a reduction of \$250 (maximum \$3000) from their monthly fees for Blue Shield membership. This means they pay approximately \$235.51 from their salary. I believe this is a reasonable and affordable fee, although some faculty members said that it was too high. Of course, if your classes have been cut to just a few hours a week, even that is not affordable. But if, heaven help us, you actually need insurance for your kids, spouse or partner, the price skyrockets. The college still chips in \$250/mo but no additional money for dependents on the policy, so the price triples or quadruples.

Right now there are two plans.

At last count, according to Menchie Braza, the 5 plan has a high monthly premium, \$886.72/mo for ten months for a couple, and a whopping \$1451.75/month for a family. Deduct the contribution from the District and it is still about \$739/per paycheck for a couple and \$1282/per paycheck for a family. The second plan, the 40, has a much lower monthly fee, but includes \$40 visit fees and 40% fees for hospitalization. The maximum out-of-pocket is more or less the same for both programs. The cost for a couple in the 40 program after the \$250 reduction is \$436.08 per paycheck and \$788.78 for a family. But how many doctor's visits, tests, etc. at \$40 or 40% out-of-pocket, is a family going to have in a year? Most likely many, so this will be no bargain either. The Garfield members who have complained to me about the high cost of this insurance did not believe that the 40 program would save their families any money. Imagine, having your health insurance jump from about \$8,000 in 2008 to \$12,820 in 2010—to be balanced, of course, on a pay cut of 3.76%, which all adjunct took.

With all the class cuts, of course, many faculty have completely lost the ability to buy any health insurance through the college, since they may be teaching less than a 40% load. I only know of one potential case related to Garfield, and that was luckily solved. Because this is a state-wide epidemic among adjuncts, FACCC stepped in and organized health insurance through Kaiser, open to any adjunct faculty member. But Kaiser's plan is based on age, and as high as the plan at Glendale is, those who are over 55 would

(Continued on page 11)

Assignment: Write your own “Ultimate College Application Essay.”

These activities feature enjoyable incongruities that lead students to address the topics in relatively sophisticated ways. Students engage in analysis and argument, which are fundamental learning outcomes in English 101. The activities have students play with absurdity within a logical framework, such as an improbable invention or an immoral solution to hunger. “The Ultimate College Application Essay” activity features the use of outlandish exaggerations to lampoon the way most application essays are written. Apparently, an actual student named Hugh Gallagher wrote the essay shown on the link listed above and was accepted to New York University in the early 1990s. For example, Gallagher writes,

I woo women with my sensuous and god-like trombone playing. I can pilot bicycles up severe inclines with unflagging speed, and I cook Thirty-Minute Brownies in 20 minutes. I am an expert in stucco, a veteran in love and an outlaw in Peru [...] I have spoken with Elvis. But I have not yet gone to college.

In all that I have argued and described above, I mean to suggest that if students smile or laugh as they do their work on an activity in class, they are likely to be more motivated, and perhaps more competent, than they otherwise would have been. There are so many other ways to use humor for useful educational purposes, and there are even more ways to motivate optimal learning among students, which we all must continue to seek. I invite you to deepen what you already do—use humor to enhance the classroom environment—more to its full potential in your courses across the curriculum as we carry out our mission for our students. 📖

Selected References

- Berlyne, D. E. (1960). *Conflict, arousal, and curiosity*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1990.
- Harnett, M. C. (2007). *Humor as an enhancement of writing motivation and competence*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara.
- Kashdan, T. B., Rose, P., & Fincham, F. D. (2004). Curiosity and exploration: Facilitating positive subjective experiences and personal growth opportunities. *Journal of personality assessment*, 82 (3), 291–305.
- Malone, T. W., & Lepper, M. R. (1987). Intrinsic motivation and instructional effectiveness in computer-based education. In Snow, R. E., & Farr, M. J. (Eds.), *Conative and affective process analyses* (pp. 255–286). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Veatch, T. (1999, July 15). Humor is affective absurdity. *A theory of humor*. Retrieved February 17, 2010, from <http://www.tomveatch.com/else/humor/paper/node2.html>

students (even if we choose to cram them into our classes). If this “cap” is reached earlier in the academic year (which runs from July 1 to June 30), the college will actually save money by turning away students that we aren’t being paid for. The college district does this by slashing course offerings. Of course it is the part-time faculty who often suffer the loss of assignments when this happens. It is in the best interest of part-time faculty to spread the

number of students out throughout the year so that classes are not cut. To do this they must put limits on how many extra students they take into their classes. If they do not, spring offerings might be reduced because the FTES “cap,” or allotted number of enrollees, was met by the end of winter session.

During a growth phase the college is given extra money to add more classes and fill classes to the brim, because the state budget gives the college extra money to pay for more students to be educated. This is **not** a growth period

and there is no extra pay for part-timers to do what they should be paid for—preparation and assessment—let alone for larger classes or more sections. Keep this in mind as you see the long line of hopeful students outside your classroom this spring. It is hard to turn away students, but letting them add your class may cost you your job. 📖

If you wish to respond to this article or add your own thoughts please contact Phyllis Eckler at peckler@sbcglobal.net

actually be expected to pay more through FACCC’s Kaiser program. (If you are younger, you should check this out. It might be a better plan.) I have tried to suggest alternatives, but so far

was simply told that there are no funds. There must be a way to offer affordable health insurance to all who need it, not just to those who insure only themselves. Right now, I know many families who are struggling to figure out how to pay for health insurance and are

jeopardizing their own, or their family’s health in the effort. If the federal government isn’t able to do anything in the near future, we have to take care of ourselves—we need not just health insurance, but affordable health insurance. 📖

Seboo Aghajani (Admissions and Records), **Meg Chil-Gevorkyan** (Student Outreach Services), and **Sharis Davoodi** (Human Resources) graduated from Woodbury University with a Master's degree in Organizational Leadership (MOL) in August 2009. Sharis, Meg and Seboo were the first students to represent GCC in the MOL program. They also participated in Woodbury University's first "Hooping Ceremony Graduation."

Adjunct geography instructor **Marla Conti** and her husband Don Ellis recently adopted their daughter Anya from a small town in eastern Ukraine. They have been working on the very complicated international adoption since they met her on a hosting program in 2008, and they finally brought her home permanently in November 2009. Anya just turned 11, and is now enrolled at Gardner Street Elementary in West Hollywood, where many students speak her native language, Russian. She is learning English quickly, has made lots of friends, and is thriving in her new environment. For Anya and her new family, this is a real-life dream come true.

Jane DiLucchio has a short story ("Blondes Have More Fun"), featuring her mystery series sleuth, Diega DelValle, in the upcoming anthology, *Murder in La La Land*. The launch party for the anthology will be at the Mystery Bookstore in Westwood on Saturday, May 22 at 5 p.m. Everyone's invited! (Champagne and munchies!)

Alan Frazier, Assistant Professor of Aviation and Administration of Justice,

has resigned his position to accept a professorship in the John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences at the University of North Dakota. Alan will continue to teach online courses here at Glendale Community College.

Marcia Irvin (GCC day shift custodian for 10 years) reports that her youngest daughter, Leonna Irvin, traveled to South Africa in January to study at the University of Zululand for six months. Leonna attends UC Berkeley and will graduate in 2011. Marcia wants her daughter to know that she is very proud of her, and wishes Leonna's father were still alive to share her joy.

Prof. **Osheen Keshishian** of EOPS was invited to Istanbul, Turkey, by the Anadolu Kultur Organization to be one of three speakers at the centennial celebrations of the Armenian-language newspaper *Jamanak* (Time) in January. He gave a lecture on ethnicity and ethnic survival in the United States. His talks were reported in local Armenian and Turkish newspapers.

Sid Kolpas has been awarded the Hayward award for 2010 by the Academic Senate of the California Community Colleges. Created in 1985, the award honors community college faculty members who demonstrate the highest level of commitment to their students, college, and profession. In addition to excellence in teaching, they must have a record of outstanding performance in professional activities and a record of active participation on campus. The ASCCC honors four faculty annually, one from each area of the state. Sid is the first faculty member to receive the

award at Glendale College, and only the second Mathematics faculty so honored in the award's history.

Sid's daughter, Dr. Allison Kolpas, University of Delaware Department of Mathematical Sciences, has published her sixth article (February, 2010): "Effects of Demographic Stochasticity on Population Persistence in Advective Media" in the *Bulletin of Mathematical Biology*.

The Glendale Chamber of Commerce has announced that GCC Interim Superintendent/President **Dr. Dawn Lindsay** will receive the organization's Woman of the Year award. She will be honored at the annual State of the City and Chamber Awards Luncheon on March 25 at the Hilton Glendale. Congratulations to Dr. Lindsay!

Peggy Renner has been elected to serve on the Nominating Committee of the Organization of American Historians (OAH). The election is a national one, and the OAH is the preeminent organization for faculty who teach the history of the US. This means Peggy will help to select the OAH presidents for the next four years.

Shant Shahoian and his wife, Lucy Boiadjian, announce the birth of their son, Noah Vem Shahoian, on February 10. He is happy and, according to the doctor, "has a strong set of lungs on him." His mama is doing well. His papa? His papa was a bit of a blubbering mess but is all better now. Noah weighed 7lbs. 4 oz. 📖

(Continued from page 4)
Shop Talk with Ramona

time to become involved politically in our state and at the college.

Once again, I would like to welcome you to the beginning of a new semester and hope that we will be able to continue to work together to do what is best for our faculty, staff and students. 📖

In solidarity,
Ramona Barrio-Sotillo
Guild President



MetLife Auto & Home®

For more information about these and other savings, go to:

aft.org/members

CALL 877/238-9638 TODAY FOR A FREE PRICE QUOTE.

MetLife Auto & Home is a brand of Metropolitan Property and Casualty Insurance Company and its affiliates: Economy Fire & Casualty Company, Economy Preferred Insurance Company, Metropolitan Casualty Insurance Company, Metropolitan Direct Property and Casualty Insurance Company, Metropolitan General Insurance Company, Metropolitan Group Property and Casualty Insurance Company, and Metropolitan Lloyds Insurance Company of Texas, all with administrative home offices in Warwick, RI. Coverage, rates, and discounts are available in most states to those who qualify.

AFT + is your advocate. For information on all **AFT +** programs, call 800/238-1133, ext. 8643, or e-mail aftplus@aft.org. The AFT has an expense reimbursement and/or endorsement arrangement for marketing this program. For more information, please contact AFT Financial Services at 800/238-1133, ext. 4493; send an e-mail to disclosureinfo@aft.org; or visit www.aftplus.org/disclosure.