

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

Weekly Digest for the Week of October 29, 2008

Welcome to the FYE community of faculty, staff, and students dedicated to supporting our new first-year and transfer students create a more successful transition to the University of Connecticut. The Weekly Digest will publish every Wednesday during the Fall semester and contain details about workshops, upcoming events, tips/techniques, and other information geared to help you have the best semester possible with your FYE class. Comments, suggestions and constructive critique are welcomed. E-mail kevin.sullivan@uconn.edu or David.Ouimette@uconn.edu

Thoughts from the Director, David Ouimette

Week 10 - How about an Open Forum in Class?

Steve Zinn, Professor of Animal Science and a longtime FYE instructor, told me that he tries to schedule an open forum in his FYE class for Animal Science majors once every 4 weeks. He related that open forums allow students to ask questions on a wide range of topics such as roommates, academic coursework, internships, and career goals. After my classes this week, I decided to schedule an open forum for next week. I have decided to do this because we have been moving along at quite a pace -- the writing assignment, the resume project, a few guest speakers, and upcoming advising session. I was looking at the calendar, and Thanksgiving is late this year. I sense my students are feeling drained by the length of the semester and overwhelmed by the constant barrage of new things to learn and do. You may want to consider an open forum for your class and encourage your mentor to lead the discussion!

If you decide to do an open forum for a session, please share your experience with other FYE instructors at the HuskyCT→ First Year Programs-First Year Instructor site. What worked? What were the challenges? What would you do differently? We know it can be challenge to get first year students to open up without some structure!

On another note, I wanted to let you know about **Pumpkinfest**. Sponsored by Alpha Lambda Delta (ALD),* this event is in its second year and is being held this Friday, October 31, from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm in front of the CUE building on Fairfield Way. Encourage your students to attend and maybe carve a pumpkin to enter into a contest. At 4:30 pm, judges will decide which pumpkins are worthy of awards and winners will be announced. T-Shirts and pumpkin ice cream from the Dairy Bar will be available; all proceeds will be donated to undergraduate enrichment scholarships. By the way, you may want to mention to your class that the ALD invites all first-semester students who end up with a 3.5 or greater GPA after their first semester to be members of the society.

*Alpha Lambda Delta is a National Honor Society for first-year students who earn a GPA of 3.5 or greater after their first semester.

Focus on Instructors

(This section will highlight FYE instructors that are making a significant contribution to the University.)

University Registrar **Jeffrey von Munkwitz-Smith** devotes a FYE class session to faculty research. He says, "Several years ago it struck me that students didn't really understand what we meant when we told them that UConn is a Research University. They did not realize that research is a fundamental part of the fabric of the institution; that it occurs all over, not just in a few labs around campus. I thought by bringing in faculty to talk about their own research, particularly faculty from a variety of disciplines, it would help students understand what we mean when we use the term "Research University." I also thought that when student hear enthusiastic faculty talking about their research, they just might get curious about how they could get involved. This roundtable might plant that special seed of intellectual interest, or so I hope."

Instructor Information

Some important information for 1800/1820 Instructors

AOD Education (Alcohol and Other Drug). Sign-up for the AOD education session by e-mail: nisha.hardnett@uconn.edu. Make sure students fill out this pre-test survey the week before the scheduled AOD presentation. The survey can be found at http://web.uconn.edu/alcohol/consent_form.php.

If you are **not** having AOD present in your class, please consider having your students take a short pre- and post-test that will create a control group for Dr. Lyn's study.

Contact jeffrey.carlson@huskymail.uconn.edu for details.

Violence Against Women Prevention Program (VAWPP) Peer Educators. To request a workshop, please send an email to VAWPP@yahoo.com. The email should include: Professor's Name, Course Title, Number of Students enrolled, Location, Date and time, and Workshop preference. If you have any questions or need any additional information, please contact Kathleen Holgerson at Kathleen.Holgerson@uconn.edu or 860-486-4738.

Looking for a class on Student Involvement? Contact [Andrea Lama](mailto:Andrea.Lama) with preferred times and dates for the presentations. "We look forward to helping your students get involved!"

Writing Assignment. The University Writing Center liaison to the INTD 1800 instructors is Mandy Suhr-Sytsma. She is happy to answer your questions/concerns, as well as offer suggestions for the Writing Assignment. Her office is in CUE 125. Her office hours are Monday from 1-3pm and Tuesday from 1:30-3:15pm. Her office phone number is 860.486.2419 and email is mandy.suhrsytmsa@gmail.com.

Nutrition and Wellness Services. To request a program or for more information, please contact Amy Pumerantz, Nutrition Coordinator of Student Health Services: 486-0771 or amy.pumerantz@uconn.edu.

Focus on Students

(This section will include helpful activities/assignments/information for your INTD 1800 and INTD 1820 students)

- **Financial Literacy Survey.** Recently, many articles have discussed the current state of financial literacy amongst today's college students. The Wall Street Journal reported in August that the average credit card debt for graduates is \$2169, and that about 10% have a debt of \$10,000. Given the volatile economic climate, it is important to communicate with students about debt, student loans, and credit cards. To begin this conversation on campus, Office of Student Financial Aid Services is working to develop a Financial Literacy program for students that will include a web component (modules on several different topics), targeted presentations to student groups, and "train the trainer" materials. To get started, we are conducting a survey to find out which topics in Financial Literacy interest our students. We request your help in referring your FYE students to this survey. The survey is on the Student Financial Aid Services homepage and can be accessed using the following link <http://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?key=poA-UuqblzLRq0fDtS-1YBQ>. Thank you in advance for your assistance! Jean Main, Director - Student Financial Aid Services
- **Alpha Lambda Delta's PumpkinFest.** Alpha Lambda Delta is an honors society into which students are inducted after their first semester at UConn. The organization is hosting its second annual PumpkinFest on Friday, October 31st from 11:00-4:00PM on Fairfield Way. There will be pumpkin carving at \$2/pumpkin or \$5 for a pumpkin and a T-shirt. Have students stop by for some Dairy Bar ice cream, hot chocolate, cookies, and local-grown apples. A giant pumpkin display featuring the state-record pumpkin from Connecticut will be there for your viewing pleasure. Prizes will be awarded to the top four pumpkin-carving designs. Support Alpha Lambda Delta and get in the spirit of the season! This event is open to **all** UConn students, faculty, and staff. Any questions contact ALD at uconnald@gmail.com.
- **Study Skills Workshop.** Encourage students to attend a workshop on Study Skills on 11/05/2008 from 5:00-6:00PM in CUE 134. Questions? Email kevin.sullivan@uconn.edu.

- **Urban Semester Program.** The Urban Semester Program is currently accepting applications for the spring 2009 Semester. The program offers students a unique and exciting opportunity to live in Hartford and perform public service internships. Students spend 3-1/2 days a week in an internship in a local organization and attend two weekly seminars. Internships are available for a variety of majors. Students receive a full 15 credits for the classes and internship. For applications and further information, please stop by or contact the Urban Semester Office in room 323 of the Center for Undergraduate Education, telephone 860-486-5997.
- **Discovery Leadership Program Series.** Recommend your students get involved with the Discovery Leadership Program Series. Have students visit www.leadership.uconn.edu and click on *Discovery* for more information.
- **Long River Review Literary Magazine.** Students may submit works of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry for publication in the *Long River Review Literary Magazine*. Submissions for the first issue will be accepted until February 12th, 2009. Collection boxes are found in the CLAS building in the main English Department office, in the Freshman English office, and right outside the elevator on the third floor. For more information, email AmandaWLR08@gmail.com.

Special Events: Expand your Students' Horizons!

Encourage your students to attend these events as part of the *Writing Assignment* or for personal enrichment.

October 30

- **Radha Devi Joshi Foundation Lecture: "Indian Women in the House of Fiction": Dr. Geetanjali Singh Chanda**
4:10pm, Babbidge Library Class of '47 Room
Dr. Chanda will speak on the subject of her recent book by the same title. In this book, she maps Indian English women's literature in India and the diaspora while situating it in the larger framework of world literatures.

October 31- November 1

- **2008 East of California Conference: A Movement to Look Back To**
Keynote Address Given by Gary Y. Okihiro
Friday, October 31, 4pm, Student Union Ballroom
Panel Sessions/Roundtables
Saturday, November 1, 10:00am-3:45pm, Student Union Ballroom

November 1

- **Closing Address Given by Nitasha Sharma**
Saturday, November 1, 4:00pm, Student Union Ballroom
Please direct any questions to Cathy Schlund-Vials (e-mail: cathy.schlund-vials@uconn.edu) or to the Asian American Studies Institute (860-486-4751).

November 2

- **Connecticut Constitutional Convention: Know What You're Voting On!**
3:00-4:30pm, Women's Center Student Union 421
A non-partisan discussion to learn more about the important political matters you'll be voting on. Sponsored by the Women's Center and Community Outreach. Refreshments will be served.

November 3

- **Dr. Maya Angelou**
7:00pm, Jorgensen Center for the Arts
Visit: <http://womenscenter.uconn.edu/events.php>

November 11

- **"Globalization: India Present at the Creation": Nayan Chanda**
3:30pm, Babbidge Library Class of '47 Room

November 13

- **Dean Robert Gray Memorial Lecture: Maestro Keith Lockhart, conductor of the Boston Pops**
2:00pm, Von der Mehden Recital Hall
Contact Kirk Matson, Theatre Production Manager, von der Mehden Recital Hall, UConn
Kirk.Matson@uconn.edu 860.486.2969
- **“Waking from Dreams of India” : Neil Chowdhury**
4:00pm, Room 101 Dept. of Art and Art History

HuskyCT Training

Do you feel you need a quick refresher for HuskyCT? Contact [Lesla von Munkwitz-Smith](#), 6-1735, to arrange a session – your office or the FYP office in 235 CUE.