

# **FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE**

## *Weekly Digest for the Week of November 12, 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](mailto:kevin.sullivan@uconn.edu) or [David.Ouimette@uconn.edu](mailto:David.Ouimette@uconn.edu)

**[SEE HUSKYCT](#) → [FIRST YEAR PROGRAMS](#) → [FIRST YEAR INSTRUCTORS](#) → [WEEKLY DIGEST](#) → [NOVEMBER 12, 2008 FOR SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS \(ATTACHMENTS TO NEWSLETTER\)](#).**

### **Thoughts from the Director, David Ouimette**

#### **Week 12 – Evaluations are Coming!**

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) has sent the **Official Student Evaluation of Faculty Forms** to our office and you should be receiving them by the end of this week. Please take a few minutes to read the directions and have a student (not your mentor) administer the forms either next week or in your last class and then have them delivered back to our office so that we can be sure to meet the **December 12th** deadline in OIR.

#### **Negotiating the Holidays**

Attached is an article that many FYE instructors use for discussion in their classes at this time of year. While many of our students have already gone home and Thanksgiving will not be the first time, the issues of how their relationship has changed between parents, siblings, and hometown friends can be real and intense. This will be my first time as a parent, and I have been canvassing students about the rules at home. It sounds as if the freedom that students enjoy at UConn may not be the same at home and "curfews" are an issue. Enjoy the article and feel free to share with your students.

### **Focus on Instructors**

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

During one of the FYE Roundtables, instructors were discussing the frustrations they experience in trying to get the students engaged in the class. John Bennett, who teaches in the School of Engineering, related how he has developed a system that acts as a guide with respect to the responsibilities of students to the instructor and vice versa. I asked him to share his experience, and he has, along with samples of agreements he has developed with engineering classes that are being sent as 3 attachments.

The first (*Navigating Your Course*) is the one for students seeking to develop one from information supplied by faculty in a syllabus and in initial lectures, etc. [BUT not developed through direct interaction between the students and the faculty member].

The second two are the initial handout (*FSPA development handout*) and the general FSPA developed by the students and me in my ME 2233 course (*ME 2233 FSPA*).

FYI, the student responsibilities listed are the ones commonly occurring in an individual student submission to me. In putting it on our HuskyCT webpage, I of course reminded students that each student needs to make personal decisions as to their specific FSPA to emphasize the responsibilities they believe necessary for themselves individually to make it work [I didn't collect these individual one and I'm not sure of course that they even developed a personal one].

I will also share with you that I gave a HuskyCT assignment to revisit the FSPA about mid-semester asking them to consider whether or not their individual FSPA needed revision after a half semester's use. The summary answer was that they really did not suggest changes that

should be considered. They liked how I was keeping up with my willingly suggested responsibilities. AND most importantly, the real problem was / is that they did not keep up their attention to the agreed upon responsibilities and that they needed to indeed begin doing that again.

In my INTD 1820 class [where the first approach with no faculty direct involvement was suggested], the students report anecdotally that they believe it's working for them. Starting next Monday, they will be giving short oral reports on the project [how they applied the efforts in the INTD 1820 class to one or more of their courses]; I'm hoping to have some of them include their TSPA efforts.

I'll be doing a luncheon ITL workshop on this during the spring semester. I have a lot of rich feedback since I have 80 students in the ME 2233 course and 15 in the INTD 1820 course.

## **AOD Education (Alcohol and Other Drug).**

A **Post-test Survey** will be open on **Friday, November 14<sup>th</sup>** and end on **Dec. 5<sup>h</sup> (two academic weeks later)** via the URL below:

[http://web.uconn.edu/alcohol/test/FYE/posttest\\_Fall2008/FYE\\_posttest\\_survey\\_Fall2008.php](http://web.uconn.edu/alcohol/test/FYE/posttest_Fall2008/FYE_posttest_survey_Fall2008.php)

**Please ask your students to complete this Post-test Survey at your earliest convenience to encourage the highest completion rate for this Post-test Survey.**

Please share the information below with your students:

1. All students are asked to complete the Post-test regardless whether they completed the Pre-test Survey.
2. ALL students who completed the Pre-test Survey should complete the Post-test; otherwise, their Pre-test Survey Response would have little value.

As a reminder, the Survey Link can be sent via an email to your students. Or follow the attached instructions and post a Web Link to your class HuskyCT site and invite your students to access the survey from there.

If you have any questions, please contact Jeffrey Carlson ([jeffrey.carlson@uconn.edu](mailto:jeffrey.carlson@uconn.edu)) or Dr. Carolyn Lin ([carolyn.lin@uconn.edu](mailto:carolyn.lin@uconn.edu); phone: 486-0341). Thank you so much for your kind assistance.

## **Instructor Information**

### **Some important information for 1800/1820 Instructors**

**Violence Against Women Prevention Program (VAWPP) Peer Educators.** To request a workshop, please send an email to [VAWPP@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto:Kathleen.Holgerson@uconn.edu) or 860-486-4738.

**Looking for a class on Student Involvement?** Contact [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.suhrsyttsma@gmail.com](mailto:mandy.suhrsyttsma@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](mailto:amy.pumerantz@uconn.edu).

## Focus on Students

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

- **Community Assistants Needed.** Being a Community Assistant is a great opportunity to gain leadership experience, be a mentor, build campus connections, and of course have fun. Requirements: must have lived on campus for at least 1 semester at UConn and have a 2.5 GPA. Additional Information and the application are available on our website: <http://www.communityassistant.uconn.edu>. Applications are due by December 5, 2008 by Noon. Optional information sessions will be held throughout November, see the website for more details.
- **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
- **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](http://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 12<sup>th</sup>, 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 [AmandaWLRR08@gmail.com](mailto:AmandaWLRR08@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.

### November 13

- **Dramatic Reading of My Nose and Me: A TragedyLite or TragiDelight in 33 scenes**  
7-9 pm, Nafe Katter Theatre; benefits the Covenant Soup Kitchen in Willimantic
- **"Waking from Dreams of India" : Neil Chowdhury**  
4:00pm, Room 101 Dept. of Art and Art History

### November 14

- **Essence of the Caribbean**  
8-10 p, Anna M. Snow Residence Hall  
Promotes awareness of the different Caribbean islands' language, food, and culture.

**November 15**

- **Robert H. Gray Memorial Lecture in the Arts: Maestro Keith Lockhart, conductor, Boston Pops**  
2 pm, von der Mehden Recital Hall, free and open to the public

**November 18**

- **Warsaw Philharmonic, Antoni Wit, Conductor; Valentina Lisitsa, Piano**  
8 pm, Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts, tickets on sale

**November 19**

- **Last Lecture Series: Dr. Olivier Morand, Economics**  
3-4 pm, Buckley Lounge

**November 20**

- **International Nite**  
5-11 pm, Rome Ballroom (above South dining). Donation: \$3 (benefits scholarship)

**November 20-23 & December 3-6**

- **CRT: The Skin of Our Teeth, by Thornton Wilder, directed by Helene Kvale**  
See the [CRT website](#) for times, Harriet S. Jorgensen Theatre

## **HuskyCT Training**

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