

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

Weekly Digest for the Week of September 24, 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

The Roller Coaster

I find the fourth week of classes to be a great time for student reflection about the past 17 weeks beginning with graduation from high school and ending with their transition to UConn. Since mid-terms cause students to be alone in their thoughts for the first time (hopefully studying), many of them start to question why they are here, if UConn is the right choice, should they change their major, and so forth.

Over the years, I have found it a great time to post the following discussion topic in HuskyCT:

My Biggest Challenge at UConn thus Far!

We are about four weeks into your college career at UConn and, assuming it was in late June, only 13 weeks away from your high school graduation. Please take a few moments to think about what has transpired since then and post to the discussion topic your greatest challenge at UConn. After posting your challenge, read two other posts from your classmates and reply with your suggestions and thoughts.

The results are quite amazing (and a by-product is that they learn how threaded discussion topics work). Posts ranged from academic issues – so much reading! - to social issues - balancing time for friends at home and new friends - to personal issues - making friends and being sick for the first time without mom. For me, it provides an insight into the roller coaster that the first semester can be for students.

I asked my class about the posts today and they responded quite positively to the feedback and support of their fellow peers.

On a related note, I wanted to suggest you review the *7 Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education*, by Arthur W. Chickering and Zelda Gamson. You can find it on HuskyCT → *Your Class Section* → *Important Links and Resources* → *Quizzes and Surveys* → *7 Principles for Good Practice (hidden)*. Consider giving the survey to your students either by “showing” it on your HuskyCT site or by providing them with a printed copy. I have found it to be a helpful tool to encourage students to think about what it means to be a successful student. I will be using it next week as a follow-up to the “Biggest Challenge” discussion topic mentioned above. Let me know what you think!

Research Symposium

On September 26th, the Division of Undergraduate Education and Instruction will hold a Research Symposium on First Year College Students in the **Thomas J. Dodd Research Center’s Konover Auditorium** from **9-11AM**. The symposium will highlight recent research focused on UConn first year students. Presentations will include what we know about their academic, social and personal development during the critical first year. Following the presentations, the audience will have ample time for conversation and reaction to the presentations.

Please join us at 8:30 for coffee prior to the presentations.

Presenters include: Dr. Eric Soulsby: *National Student Survey of Student Engagement*
Dr. Sandy Bell, Dr. Sue Saunders and Dr. Jennifer Lease Butts: *First-Year Students' Views of Support from Parents, Peers, and Campus Personnel*
Dr. Crystal Park: *The First College Year: A Study of Students' Adjustment to College*

Midterm Warnings

If a student in your INTD 1800/1820 class is earning a D, F, U, or N grade up to this point, you need to enter the grade into PeopleSoft before October 3 (see [instructions](#) for "Record Midterm Grades"). Mid-term warnings will be sent to the student and the advisor to initiate action to improve the student's performance.

First Year Instructors may receive mid-term warnings for students in their section via e-mail. Please meet with them and provide information about the many support services available at UConn.

Last semester, instructors submitted 3,665 midterm warnings. Fifty-eight percent of students who received warnings were able to improve their performance in those classes.

Instructor Information

Some important information for 1800/1820 Instructors

ConnPIRG. Over the past two years, we have seen huge increases in students voting on the UConn campus. This year ConnPIRG is working with USG and other organizations in the UConn Votes Coalition to register 4,500 UConn students to vote. We would like to come to the INTD classes and talk to the students about the importance of the student vote and actually register the students in class to vote. We will be teaching the students about the importance of voting and that each vote does matter. In 2006, UConn students actually determined the outcome of the election in Connecticut's Second Congressional District, a race that was decided by 83 votes. This year's presidential election will be critical for the future of this country and our goal is to make sure each student has a say in who wins.

Our presentation can be as short as 15 minutes, or as long as 50. It is up to each INTD instructor to decide how long they would like us to present. Contact ConnPIRG President Alex Nguyen at alexander.nguyen@uconn.edu.

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.

Writing Assignment. Check *HuskyCT* → *First Year Instructors* → *Recommended Assignments* for more information or contact Mandy Suhr-Sytsma by email at mandy.suhrsytsma@gmail.com or 486-4387.

Writing Center Lunchtime Seminars. Each semester the University Writing Center hosts a series of lunchtime mini-seminars on topics related to writing and the teaching of writing. For more information, visit: <http://www.writingcenter.uconn.edu/facultyseries.htm>.

Résumé Assignment. The résumé template has been added to *HuskyCT* → *First Year Programs - First Year Instructors* → *Recommended Assignments*. The file will open in Microsoft Word.

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!"

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)

- **GUARD Dogs stands for Giving UConn a Responsible Driver.** This program is an alternative to driving under the influence or walking home late at night. GUARD Dogs runs from 11pm to 3am on Friday and Saturday nights. GUARD Dogs provides a safe, free, non-judgmental, reliable ride home. GUARD Dogs is entirely student run and prides itself on being completely anonymous about who we are driving home. GUARD Dogs runs within a 4-mile radius around campus, which includes Willington Oaks and Cedar Ridge. For more information, please visit our website at www.guarddogs.uconn.edu.
- **Major Fair.** Encourage your students to attend the Major Fair, **Tuesday, October 14th** in the Student Union Ballroom from 4:00-6:00pm. Students will have the opportunity to talk with faculty and student representatives from majors in all of UConn's schools and colleges. For more information, call the ACES office at 486-1788.
- **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.
- **Exams and Study Skills.** The first round of exams is in full swing, and it is a good time to direct your students to the time management, stress management, study skills, and Ask Ali resources available to them on HuskyCT. Btw, Ali is happy to answer any of their questions about 'playing the game of UConn' through her ask.ali@uconn.edu e-mail address. This is another powerful way for us to support the relationship with the academic life at UConn that our students are in the process of establishing.
- **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.

September 26

- **The Aralia Duo: "Songs of Love and Loss"**
8:00pm, von der Mehden Recital Hall; Free admission

September 29

- **Jazz Showcase**
8:00pm, von der Mehden Recital Hall
General admission: \$7, Students with ID and children are free

October 1

- **Health Fair, UConn Student Health Services**
10:30-2:30 pm, Dow Field
- **Human Rights Film Series: *Children in No Man's Land* (2007)**
4:00 pm, Konover Auditorium, Thomas J. Dodd Research Center
[More information about Film Series](#)

October 2

- **The 2008 Myles Martel Lecture: Margot Morrel, author of *Shackleton’s Way***
4:00-5:00 pm, Student Union Theater
[About Margot Morrel](#). [About the Myles Martel Lecture Endowment](#).
- **Symphonic Band, with David Mills, conductor**
8:00pm, von der Mehden Recital Hall
General admission: \$7, Students with ID and children are free

October 6- October 10

- **Clothesline Project: Art Display**
11:00-2:00pm Monday-Friday, Fairfield Way

October 15

- **Never Perfect—In recognition of the 11th Annual Love Your Body Day**
12:00pm, Women’s Center Program Room (SU 421G)
For more information visit <http://womenscenter.uconn.edu/events.php>

October 17

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

October 26

- **Landscape and Belief: A View Camera in the Himalayas: Kenneth Hanson**
3:00pm, Benton Museum

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

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 [Lesa von Munkwitz-Smith](#), 6-1735, to arrange a session – your office or the FYP office in 235 CUE.

If interested, FYE instructors may attend HuskyCT workshops in room 214 of the CUE, courtesy of the IRC: http://www.irc.uconn.edu/IRC_workshops.htm.

Workshop Date	Workshop Title
Sept. 26, 11:00 to noon	HuskyCT Gradebook
Sept. 30, 11:00 to noon	Building a User Friendly HuskyCT Site
Oct. 2, 2:00 to 3:00	HuskyCT Communication Tools
Oct. 7, 2:00 to 3:00	HuskyCT Gradebook

Oct. 8, 11:00 to noon	Safe Assign in HuskyCT
Oct. 14, 11:00 to noon	HuskyCT Assignment Tool
Oct. 21, 3:00 to 4:00	HuskyCT Group Manager and Selective Release
Oct. 24, 10:30 to noon	HuskyCT Quiz and Survey Basics