Florida College English Association
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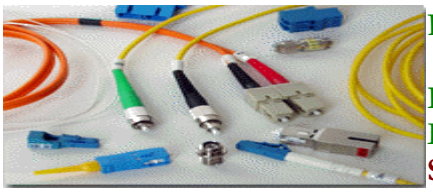

President's Message

FCEA Membership: Jumper Cables for a Community of Learners

Susan M. Nugent, President of FCEA

In moving from New Hampshire to the Florida Keys, we expected the greatest challenge would be adapting to the climate change. However, it was not the difference between cold and snow and sun and hurricane that demanded our energy but it was the feeling of isolation from colleagues and professional organizations in New England. It was as if in leaving New England, we no longer had access to jumper cables, New England's great energizing connectors. What is the equivalent of jumper cables for college English teachers in Florida? Let me propose FCEA membership. In the spring of that first year teaching at Florida Keys Community College, my husband and I ventured north to attend Florida College English Association's Conference. I won't forget the feeling of walking into a room filled with people I didn't know. But, someone said, "Nugent, that sounds Irish," and introduced us to O'Sullivan, McCarthy and McMahon. That moment of not knowing someone in FCEA is a short one. In FCEA, connections are made, ideas shared, and the networking is underway.

Once the first trip to FCEA's Conference is made, next year's trip is never as long. There will be people to see, courses to discuss, research to undertake, department issues to address, and books to share. For the last thirteen years, FCEA has served as jumper cables for me; each conference gives me a much needed charge of energy for the school year. My experience is probably very much like yours. As I look over the names of members, many of the same people return year after year, and they bring their new colleagues. As a group, we grow together through the scholarship and the professionalism of our members. I even found a friend from 4Cs past, Audrey Roth, who nominated me for the FCEA Board. And when we left the Keys for Gainesville, Susan Miller, FCEA colleague, welcomed me at Santa Fe Community College.

Coming to the first conference results in meeting new colleagues with other approaches to the classes we all teach. That first conference leads to another where we take our turn as presenter or board member or officer. FCEA helps us grow as teachers, as

researchers, as writers, as professionals, and, equally important, as friends.

Last year, I asked each board member to bring one new member into the community of FCEA. The board responded to that request, bringing new faces and new ideas to the Fall Conference. Now, it's time for all members to help build FCEA's membership. Remember how isolated teaching has been at times for all of us and invite your colleagues to join you in FCEA's energetic community.

Through attending a conference, we gain connections, jumper cables; through connections, energy; through energy, growth; through growth, improvement; through improvement, ….
You finish it.

2003 FCEA CONFERENCE:

The 2003 Fall Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn at Indian Rocks Beach, Florida, on October 16 and 17, 2003. The conference, "21st Century Paradigms: Technology, Pedagogy, and Research in the Cyber Age," will emphasize technology, and some sessions will take place at the St. Petersburg College Seminole Campus. The Conference Organizers, Kevin Morgan and Julia Rawa have issued a Call for Papers due no later than September 1, 2003.

CALL FOR "POSTERS":

This year FCEA is encouraging participants to submit abstracts for a poster session concentrating on the topic of "themed courses." How do you make your composition classes eventful and interesting to your freshmen students? What makes your Introduction to Literature students really appreciate your courses? How has a themed course changed the dynamics of your classroom?

Poster sessions combine graphic displays with the opportunity for individualized informal discussions between participants and presenters. The audience is welcome to peruse at will among poster stations. Presenters are encouraged to provide handout materials and assignments dealing with their poster's theme.

Please read the rules below before submitting your poster abstract:

* All poster abstracts must be submitted via email by August 1st, 2003.

* The abstract must have a maximum of 500 words

* Status of abstracts will be emailed to the author on or before September 1st, 2003.

* Posters should be at least 22" X 28" in size.

Send your questions and requests for the poster session to: Courtney Ruffner ruffnec@mccfl.edu

NOMINATIONS FOR DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUE AWARD:

At last fall's FCEA Conference, the first Distinguished Colleague Award was given to Dr. Fred Standley of Florida State University. Fred has been a long-time member of FCEA serving as Vice President, 1991-92, as President, 1992-93 and as CEA Liaison from 1993 to the present. He holds the Daisy Parker Flory Chair at FSU, where he directed Graduate Studies 1970-73 and chaired the English Department 1973-82 and 1997-99. His work on James Baldwin is nationally known, and he recently edited "The Diaries of Claude Denson Pepper."

FCEA is now opening nominations for the 2003 Distinguished Colleague Award, given for "significant and sustained contributions in teaching, scholarship, and service." All active FCEA members are eligible for this award. Candidates need not demonstrate equivalent contributions in all three areas; selection is based on overall accomplishments. Submission requirements include a letter of nomination, a list of three references, and a curriculum vitae. Contact Jane Anderson Jones at (941) 408-1499 or Jonesj@mccfl.edu for more information. Please mail nominations to: Jane Anderson Jones, Department of Language and Literature, Manatee Community College: Venice, 8000 South Tamiami Trail, Venice, FL 34293

CALL FOR PAPERS: *Florida English*, a journal of the Florida College English Association

The staff of *Florida English,* the literary journal supported by the Florida College English Association, announces a call for submissions to its premier issue. *Florida English,* a quality, print journal, will be published annually and highlight works of fiction, poetry, and criticism.

Submission guidelines:

- **Send one short story, up to five poems, and/or one critical essay on both paper and IBM-compatible disk (Microsoft Word or RTF).**
- **Mail submissions to Poetry Editor, Fiction Editor, or Critical Essays Editor, *Florida English,* Department of Language and Literature, Manatee Community College, 5840 26th Street West, Bradenton, Florida 34206. Include SASE with enough postage if you would like to have your manuscript returned (otherwise, submissions will be recycled).**
- **For all submissions, please include a cover sheet with your name, address, phone number, email address, institutional affiliation (if you have one), and the titles of your poems, story, or essay.**

- Do not include your name on any other page.
- Do not send simultaneous submissions or previously published work.
- Follow current MLA guidelines for critical essay submissions.
- Upon acceptance, you will be asked to provide a brief bio for the contributor's page.

Payment upon publication is one copy of the limited print run of *Florida English*. Additional print copies will be available for $5.00 per copy.

USING OWLS TO CREATE WEB-SUPPORTED COURSES

by Julia Rawa

Students and educators who move into the cyber realm are shocked by the sheer volume of information available to them. They are thunderstruck as they see the vast cyber universe unfold before them. Perhaps they feel like Keats experiencing the sublime "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer":

> Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
>
> When a new planet swims into his ken;
>
> Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
>
> He stared at the Pacific--and all his men
>
> Looked at each other with a wild surmise--
>
> Silent, upon a peak in Darien. (9-14)

Vasco de Balboa (not Cortez) was--of course--the first European to see the Pacific Ocean from the Isthmus of Panama. Though dazed for a moment by the sublime, he probably recovered adequately enough to consider (in the Western fashion) how to use the resource before him. Contemporary educators also pause to consider how they should use the vast cyber resources before them--particularly in the context of the classroom. Should they supplement courses with online environments and so share the postmodern sublime with their students? If so, which specific online environments might support their pedagogical goals? Should they create web-supported courses? Should they create web-based courses? How can they avoid internet overkill? These are serious questions that many English instructors are grappling with at present. English instructors can answer many of these questions and serve their students well by using online writing labs (OWLs) in their courses. They can use university level OWLs to support their pedagogical goals and extend

the learning environment beyond traditional boundaries; moreover, their students will become more cyber savvy as they explore exciting new cyber horizons.

More and more universities are creating sophisticated online writing labs (OWLs) that instructors and students alike can access at their convenience. These OWLs are free--unlike many of the specialized cyber tutorial services schools are currently spending money on. OWL authority Stuart Blythe observes that, "to varying degrees, an OWL may help distribute handouts and other information for writers, provide new ways of communicating and collaborating, offer a venue for student publication, offer promising starting points for research, [and] offer pointers to writing resources on the Internet"; OWLs may offer "e-mail services (for asynchronous, "epistolary," interaction), ftp servers (for sending & retrieving information), gopher servers (for sending information & conducting research), web sites (for sending information & conducting research), and MOO's (for synchronous interaction)" (http://english.ttu.edu/kairos/1.1/owls/blythe/owl3.html 3/17/02). Instructors can use OWLs in the classroom (especially in a computer lab setting with a high grade single beam projector) to support their pedagogical goals. All English instructors can make good use of the celebrated Purdue University OWL to capitalize on its concise cyber handouts on grammar, punctuation, syntax, composition, rhetoric, and research & documentation tactics. English instructors can access key lecture material via the click of a mouse; moreover, their students can return to the same vital information as necessary. The Purdue OWL is a superb place to start a research module, since research tips and engines are provided. The professional writing instructor can also access power point and hypertext presentations on the cover letter, resume, proposal, etc. via the Purdue OWL. OWL presentations are engaging and comprehensive; consequently, they appeal to a wide variety of learners. The Purdue OWL even offers a virtual tour. This tour introduces the Purdue OWL and helps the novice navigate through the services it offers to students, teachers, and writers around the globe (http://owl.english.purdue.edu/lab/owl/tour/index.html 3/17/02).

Instructors can extend learning environments beyond traditional boundaries by using OWLs in the classroom. Instructors who may not be keen on designing or teaching web-based courses can still create web-supported courses by incorporating OWLs into their curriculum. The best OWLs are comprehensive yet easy to navigate through, so students don't feel overwhelmed by too many online tools. Even so, some OWLs offer more dynamic opportunities for interactive cyber exploration than others. The University of Missouri has a cutting edge OWL called The Online Writery which offers services via Email and MOO to the writing public. English instructors can ask their students to stop by The Writery Café, an open discussion list for "writers [who] just need to talk--to kick around ideas, dream up projects, commiserate about problems, plot & scheme, goof, theorize, etc." (http://www.missouri.edu/~writery/index2.html 3/17/02) as they move through the writing process. Instructors and students can also access links to related web sites and writing resources (including research engines and creative writing links). The Online Writery features a very appealing "Gallery," where students can actually publish their work. The Missouri OWL is cleverly designed and refreshingly inclusive in ethos. The Online Writery is a striking asset to any instructor teaching rhetoric or composition–especially if the instructor is emphasizing process.

The intrepid teacher or student encounters, as the University of Missouri's Writery

Café swims into his or her ken, a quotation (Richard Goodwin, from "The American Condition" qtd. in The Great Good Place by Ray Oldenburg) which seems to suggest the very nature of the postmodern cyber experience:

> A thousand minds, a thousand arguments; a lively intermingling of questions, problems, news
> of the latest happening, jokes; an inexhaustible play of language and thought, a vibrant
> curiosity; the changeable temper of a thousand spirits by whom every object of discussion is
> broken into an infinity of sense and significations--all these spring into being, and then are
> spent. And this is the pleasure of the Florentine public.
> (http://www.missouri.edu/~writery/index2.html 3/17/02)

That which was sublime–in the civic centers of Renaissance Florence–is still sublime today. The energy of the great conversation imparts courage, inspiration, and resolution to the participant. The interactive cyber experience can impart courage, inspiration, and resolution to students. English instructors can serve students well by using online writing labs (OWLs) in their courses; these free, innovative labs can be used to create positive (subject specific) academic experiences. These experiences can–of course–be broadening on many levels. Instructors can use university level OWLs to support their pedagogical goals and extend the learning environment beyond traditional boundaries–and into promising new directions.

Works Cited

Blythe, Stuart. "Why Owls? Value, Risk, and Evolution." *Kairos* 1.1 (1996). 17 March 2002 <http://english.ttu.edu/kairos/1.1/owls/blythe/owl3.html>.

Goodwin, Richard. "The American Condition" qtd. in *The Great Good Place* by Ray Oldenburg. 17 March 2002 <http://www.missouri.edu/~writery/index2.html>.

Call for Papers: 2004 CEA Conference "IS THERE, SHOULD THERE BE A NEW AESTHETICISM?
Thirty-fourth Annual Conference of the College English Association, 1-3 April 2004, Richmond, Virginia.
For submission information, go to the CEA Website.