

Journal for Academic Excellence

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Teaching and Learning Conference

**Center for
Academic
Excellence
Dalton State
College**

A Division of the Office of
Academic Affairs

The mission of the CAE is to facilitate, support, and enhance the teaching and learning process at Dalton State College. The Center serves to ultimately improve student success and achievement of learning outcomes by promoting the creation of effective learning environments through the provision of resources and faculty development opportunities.

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Ms. Anne Loughren, Assistant Director of Campus Recreation, Fitness Programs, graduated from Georgia College and State University with a Master of Science in Health & Human Performance with a concentration in Health Promotion. As a student at GSCU, she was awarded the School of Health and Human Performance "Outstanding Graduate Student Award" in Health Promotion in March of 2014, and she was inducted into the Honor Society Phi Kappa Phi in April 2015.



Ms. Tracey May, Interim Coordinator of the Gilmer Campus, graduated from the Leadership Gilmer class on May 3. It was a nine-month program through the Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce that involved participants' learning about the community, local government, non-profits, and leadership through seminars lead by the Fanning Institute and local speakers.

Ms. May states, "We were required to attend at least one meeting of each of the local governing bodies, as well as perform twelve or more hours of volunteer service. It was a wonderful experience and, even though I have lived in Gilmer County all my life, I learned a great deal I did not know prior to the class."



Dr. Ronda Ford, adjunct instructor of flute at Dalton State College, will be going on a ten-day tour to Japan with the International Flute Orchestra during the last two weeks of May. The flute orchestra will perform concerts in Osaka, Tokyo, and Kyoto. The flute orchestra is a 35-member group made up of professional flutists from the United States and Canada. Ronda's mentor, Dr. John Bailey, will be conducting the ensemble.

Faculty and Staff Accomplishments

Undergraduate research continues to be an integral part of the Dalton State experience. Psychology students, directed by Dr. Alicia Briganti, Dr. Elizabeth Dunaway, and Dr. Jonathan Gulledge, presented the following posters at the annual Southeastern Psychological Association's (SEPA) convention in New Orleans, LA, on March 30-April 2.

- "Social Media and its Effects on Self Esteem" - Jose Gonzales, Robyn Bates, Ashlee Ingle, Brittany Ingle, Ashley Salter, and Dr. Gulledge.
- "Distraction Effects from Cell Phone Use in the Classroom" - Mikayla Flowers, Jeri Mitchell, Triston Ledford, Dr. Briganti, and Dr. Dunaway.

Pictured below (left) are poster authors Mikayla Flowers and Triston Ledford and (right) poster authors Brittany Ingle, Ashley Salter, Ashlee Ingle, Jose Gonzales, and Robyn Bates (a Fall 2015 graduate and a current graduate student at the Georgia School of Professional Psychology).



Faculty and Staff Accomplishments

Congratulations to these faculty members who achieved tenure in Spring 2016.



Dr. Kerri Allen
Associate Professor
English



Dr. Cicero Bruce
Associate Professor
English



Dr. Tammy Byron
Associate Professor
History



Dr. David DesRochers
Associate Professor
Biology



Dr. Michael Hilgemann
Associate Professor
Mathematics



Mr. Matthew Hippias
Associate Professor
Political Science



Dr. Eugene Mesco
Associate Professor
Biology



Dr. Roben Taylor
Associate Professor
Education



Dr. Seth Weitz
Associate Professor
History



Dr. Lirong Yu
Associate Professor
Mathematics

Congratulations to these faculty members who achieved promotion and tenure in Spring 2016.



Ms. Jaime Connors
Associate Professor
Accounting



Dr. Ellie Jenkins
Associate Professor
Music



Dr. Jonathan Littlefield
Associate Professor
Marketing



Mr. Ryan Reece
Associate Professor
Education

Faculty and Staff Accomplishments

Congratulations to these faculty members who achieved promotion in Spring 2016.



Dr. Robert Clay
Professor
Mathematics



Dr. Kent Harrelson
Professor
English



Dr. Clint Kinkead
Associate Professor
Communication



Dr. Cheryl Owens
Associate Professor
Nursing



Ms. Mary Pierce
Associate Professor
Nursing



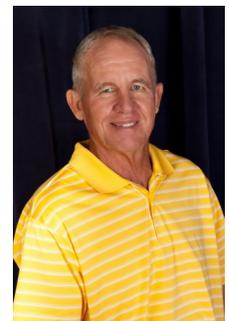
Dr. Tricia Scott
Professor
Chemistry



Ms. Jane Taylor
Associate Professor
English



Dr. Barbara Tucker
Professor
Communication



Congratulations to the winners of the Dalton State Foundation Excellence Awards. Pictured from left to right: Dr. Ellie Jenkins, Associate Professor of Music, was awarded the Excellence in Research award. Mr. Jerry Drye, Associate Professor of Communication, was awarded the Excellence in Service award. Dr. Cheryl Owens, Associate Professor of Nursing, was awarded the Excellence in Teaching award. Mr. Chris Bedwell of OCIS won the Beth Burdick Award Service Excellence Award. Mr. Dick Hennier, Associate Professor of Management and Marketing, won the Barbara Schiffler '79 Award for Business Teaching.

Electronic Rubrics for Evaluating Student Oral Presentations

Christine Jonick and Jennifer Schneider

Abstract: Proficiency in oral communication is often cited as a key learning outcome for post-secondary graduates. To achieve this goal, students require repeated, guided practice as well as timely, insightful feedback from instructors. This paper describes a unique electronic rubric that expedites the process of evaluating and scoring oral presentations. It allows instructors to click on levels of performance and comments for criteria being evaluated. Based on the selections, feedback and scores are automatically generated both for assessment and student grading purposes.

Christine Jonick is Professor of Accounting at the University of North Georgia. She teaches principles of accounting and intermediate accounting both on campus and online. Her research interests include using technology to design and implement effective methods of teaching that improve student learning. She is also actively involved in the initiative to provide no-cost or low-cost learning resources to students. She has an Ed.D from the University of Georgia and an MBA from Adelphi University. She also owns and operates a small business in the Gainesville, GA, area.

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Jennifer Schneider is Assistant Professor at the University of North Georgia, Gainesville Campus. She is a Florida CPA and began her career at PWC. She has over fifteen years experience with Fortune 500 companies, primarily in audit and financial/SEC reporting. Prior to coming to the University of North Georgia, she taught at the University of Amsterdam. Her research interests are in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. She is also a faculty advisor for Beta Alpha Psi, an international honors organization for financial information students and professionals.

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Introduction

Proficiency in oral communication is often a key learning outcome for post-secondary students, particularly in business programs designed to prepare graduates for the challenges of the workplace. Effective oral communication is a requirement for success in business, and managers often cite oral communication as a critical competency for new employees. Maes, Weldy, and Icenogle (1997) report that oral presentation skills are among the seven most important competencies that prospective employers consider in selecting college graduates for entry-level positions. The richness of face-to-face, oral interaction constitutes a vital element of

meetings, sales presentations, public relations, and countless interpersonal dynamics (Carroll, 2014).

Students can develop their oral presentation skills when they know the expectations for effective presentations, give multiple group and individual presentations, and experience consistent instructor feedback (Kerby & Romine, 2009). This paper describes a tool designed to address the ability to provide timely, insightful feedback on students' performance on oral presentations.

Rubrics for assessment

Rubrics are often used to guide the evaluation process. A rubric is a tool that is set up

as a matrix in which the rows contain the various elements of an assignment and the columns provide the scoring criteria. Expectations on a number of criteria are listed against possible levels of performance. Well-designed rubrics help streamline the work of reviewers and provide a tool for consistency in assessing multiple presenters. An added advantage of rubrics is that they allow students to have a better understanding of the important target criteria for their performance and the specific areas of their work that need improvement (Anderson & Mohrweis, 2008).

Purpose

This paper describes a unique electronic rubric that instructors have developed to expedite the processes of evaluating, scoring, and reporting results on oral presentations. It is versatile in that it is customizable for different types of presentations and content. It is designed to provide immediate feedback and is built in a platform that is familiar and available to almost all faculty.

Immediate feedback

Feedback may be classified according to how soon it is provided after a student responds to a question or completes an activity or exam. Some researchers argue that immediate feedback (i.e., supplied as soon as a student has responded to a question or completed an assessment exercise) promotes retention of learned information. Those who argue for immediate feedback assert that a test procedure that does not employ immediate feedback is likely to foster misconception rather than further learning (Dihoff et al., 2003). Many educators agree with Chickering and Gamson (1987), who assert that immediate feedback to students is one of seven cardinal principles that enhances student learning.

Excel spreadsheet as an evaluation tool

Spreadsheets can be programmed to generate formative feedback. Educational research indicates that formative feedback can engage and motivate students and help them

identify their strengths and weaknesses, reflect on their performance, improve their study skills, and increase their level of achievement (Aisbitt & Sangster, 2005; Evans, 2013; Halabi, 2006; Lewis & Sewell, 2007). Leveraging this familiar tool to offer timely feedback on student oral presentations may contribute to a more meaningful learning experience for students and a less burdensome workload for evaluators.

Electronic rubric

The remainder of this paper describes a unique electronic rubric that expedites the processes of evaluating, scoring, and returning results on oral presentations. The rubric includes standard elements of professional oral delivery, yet also allows instructors to customize how content is evaluated and scored based on individual preferences. It allows instructors to click on levels of performance and comments for criteria being evaluated. Based on the selections, feedback and scores automatically generate both for assessment and student grading purposes.

Figure 1 on page 7 is a sample of a rubric used to evaluate the Management and Personnel section of a business plan project. Clicking in cells causes the font in them to turn to red and bold-face and also causes the score to accumulate.

Specific features and capabilities of the electronic rubric are as follows:

Live during presentation

The evaluator may complete the rubric as a presentation is in progress. This includes selecting appropriate cells in the form based on the presenter's performance against set criteria. It also involves adding free-format comments on an optional basis to make feedback more robust and personalized.

Criteria for effective oral presentations

All but one of the rows in the rubric's matrix evaluates one of the widely-accepted elements of a professional oral presentation. In the sample rubric in Figure 1, these are labeled *Message, Organization, Delivery, and Professional*

Oral Assignment Rubric

MGMT 3661

Presenter Brian Armstrong

Management and Personnel Section of the Business Plan - Content	3 - Thorough coverage	2 - Some coverage	1 - Brief mention only	0 - Omitted
1. All management responsibilities explained	3	2	1	0
2. Work experience and responsibilities of key managers discussed	3	2	1	0
3. Educational credentials of key managers cited	3	2	1	0
4. Additional personnel requirements described	3	2	1	0
5. Management and personnel requirements tied to operations section	3	2	1	0

Elements Evaluated	Exceptional 4	Good 3	Fair 2	Poor 1	Points	Percentage	Weight
Content: Assignment-specific topical criteria listed above. Total points earned = 13, or 86.7% of the total possible points for content.	Earned 15 points on the content above	Earned either 14 or 13 points on the content above	Earned between 10 and 12 points on the content above	Meets fewer than 10 points on the content above	3	40%	1.2
Message: Evidence of audience-analysis; appropriate language; use of reference; supporting facts; concise yet complete	Meets all message criteria	Meets all but 1 of the message criteria	Meets all but 2 of the message criteria	Meets too few or none of the message criteria	2	15%	0.3
Organization: Flow; cohesiveness; transitions; introduction/body/conclusion; slide presentation/visual aids	Meets all organization criteria	Meets all but 1 of the organization criteria	Meets all but 2 of the organization criteria	Meets too few or none of the organization criteria	3	20%	0.6
Delivery: Eye contact; posture; gestures; voice characteristics; nonverbal cues; evidence of preparation; confidence; appearance, use of notes/slides	Meets all delivery criteria	Meets all but 1 of the delivery criteria	Meets all but 2 of the delivery criteria	Meets too few or none of the delivery criteria	4	15%	0.6
Professional Impact: Overall impression; takeaway value	Comparable to high-quality presentations seen in actual business practice	Presentation appropriate and effective for real business application with minor revisions	Presentation appropriate and effective for real business application with significant revisions	Presentation would be inappropriate and/or ineffective for a real business application	3	10%	0.3
The management responsibilities were explained well. Might have done a bit more to tie these to the work experience of the individuals who hold these positions.							3.0
You exhibited excellent deliver skills. You were able to engage the audience and appeared confident and knowledgeable.							75.0%

Figure 1. Sample oral presentation rubric for the Management and Personnel section of a business plan

Impact. These are the same for all presentations required in a course, program, and/or school in order to maintain a consistent approach for students across all the presentations they deliver.

Customizable content evaluation

An oral presentation requires content; the speaker must have something to say. The quality, depth, and accuracy of the content is evaluated on the first line of the second table. One of the outstanding features of the electronic rubric is that it allows for customization of the content area based on instructor preferences and topics. Instructors not only select the areas of content they wish to evaluate, but also the method of scoring each element. This is accomplished in the first table in the rubric, which is designed by the instructor. Once a selection is made for each row in the first table, the overall results automatically feed into the first row of the second table. The sample rubric in Figure 1 looks at five elements of content, as is shown in the first table in the rubric. Scoring is programmed into the rubric based in evaluator selections.

Unique comments

The second table of the rubric provides space for comments that instructors may add based on the performance of an individual presenter.

Limitations and Future Research

This paper is limited to the discussion of an electronic grading tool designed to expedite the evaluation of oral presentations. Its development is based on literature that indicates that immediate feedback and familiar technology will have a positive impact on developing oral presentation skills.

Follow-up research will be conducted involving customizing the rubric for different instructors and topics and placing these rubrics into practice. Data will be collected from both instructors and students regarding their experiences with the electronic rubric and whether it impacts student learning.

Conclusion

Presenters learn from repeated, guided practice and from timely, insightful feedback from faculty and peers on their performance. The electronic rubric is designed to expedite and enrich the feedback process.

Instructors will benefit from this tool that may not only make their work easier, but also report much needed feedback to students on a more comprehensive and timely basis when compared to traditional rubrics. Students are likely to be more engaged and encouraged when they receive results quickly and electronically from their instructor.

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Engaging Students Through Cinematic Experiences of Diversity and Global Learning

Ray-Lynn Snowden

Abstract: Diversity/Global Learning is one of the ten High-Impact Educational Practices of the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U). This paper introduces a selection of recommended film and media resources the author has successfully used in collegiate Intercultural Communication and Small Group Communication classes to "help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own," as the Diversity/Global Learning high-impact practice is defined by the AAC&U. This paper highlights five chosen films and accompanying media resources which address United States' diversity issues or select global cultures. Suggested criteria for cinema selection are listed. Themes in the films explore differences and worldviews such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality; prejudice; stereotyping; and segregation or select struggles from around the globe about human rights, freedom, and power, fulfilling the AAC&U definition of high-impact educational practices for Diversity/Global Learning.

Ray-Lynn Snowden is Associate Professor of Communication in the Communication, Media, & Journalism Department of the University of North Georgia, Gainesville campus. She holds B.A., M.A., and J.D. degrees and is also ABD on her Ph.D. in Communication. Her research interests include intercultural communication, gender communication, and alternative dispute resolution.

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Introduction

Now more than ever we need to talk to each other, to listen to each other and understand how we see the world, and cinema is the best medium for doing this.

Those words come from Academy, Grammy, Emmy, and Golden Globe Award winning film director Martin Scorsese (Scorsese). I have found that Scorsese's words represent a best practices path for teaching Diversity/Global learning by using film to facilitate the American Association of Colleges and Universities' High-Impact Educational Practices:

Many colleges and universities now emphasize courses and programs that help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. These

studies—which may address U.S. diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore “difficult differences” such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality, or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power. (AAC&U, 2016)

As a college professor in a Department of Communication, I teach an intercultural communication course that develops awareness of, respect for, and sensitivity to diverse cultures. I welcome the challenge of integrating, teaching, and showing the concepts, power, and humanity of diversity and global learning to students not only in my intercultural communication class, but also across all of my collegiate communication classes. I agree with Martin Scorsese that the power of the cinema can help us listen to others, see ourselves, and understand how others with different worldviews experience life. This paper



introduces a selection of recommended film and media resources that help my students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own as portrayed through the power of the cinematic experience, through movies and media resources, all of which I have successfully used in my classes.

First, five select feature films are introduced that can be used to help students appreciate different aspects of Diversity/Global Learning. Second, a recommended set of criteria will be listed for selection and incorporation of film and media as teaching resources for Diversity/Global Learning. Third, each of the five recommended films will be discussed, delineating how they meet the stated criteria. Supplemental resources relating to the five recommended films will also be suggested to further engage students in the learning process.

The five select recommended motion pictures used to teach aspects of Diversity/Global Learning discussed in this paper are:

1. ***Lawrence of Arabia***, which shows T.E. Lawrence's World War I experiences in the Middle East with British military colonialism and Bedouin tribal culture.
2. ***The Education of Little Tree***, the sensitive portrayal of a White American/Native American boy growing up with his grandparents in the Smoky Mountains during the Depression and who is forced to attend the "Indian schools" of that era.
3. ***Giant***, which spans generations of a wealthy Texas family from the 1920s to the 1950s. Issues such as gender roles and inequality, Hispanic inequality, segregation and regional White privilege are portrayed.
4. ***Spare Parts***, an inspiring narrative based on the true experiences of four undocumented high school students of Mexican origin who compete in a national robotics tournament with the aid of their Hispanic Robotics Club advisor.

5. ***The Gods Must Be Crazy*** which follows the travels of a Bushman from the Kalahari Desert whose life unexpectedly intersects with a South African wild life researcher and an elementary school teacher.

Film Selection Criteria Discussion

Before the movie selections and their attendant supplemental resources are explored in more detail, six criteria for movie and media resource selection in classes are listed and briefly explained.

First, consider the nature of the viewing audience. The number of students in the class matters, as smaller classes can allow for more informal discussion and interaction with the students. What is the gender component of the class? Consider what elements of the film might appeal to all genders represented in the class. In upper level collegiate courses, instructors may already know and have had many of the enrolled students in previous classes. Knowing about the individual members of the viewing audience, their depths of knowledge, and their intellectual curiosity, can help an instructor make discrete and informed decisions among top film choices.

Finally, the time frame of the class itself can contribute to the continuity of the cinematic experience. Movies are frequently viewed most successfully in longer timeframes. Seventy-five-minute classes or longer are recommended, as many movies can be shown and finished with a short discussion time possibly left over during two consecutive class periods. Fifty minute classes can offer more of a problem to preserve that "willing suspension of disbelief" demanded by the cinematic experience, because the lengths of full feature films will necessitate three class periods, which is the equivalent of a week of class at many institutions. However, the strategic choice of shorter movies which still meet the instructor's criteria can accommodate shorter class times.

Second, consider the characteristics of culture, diversity, and global learning that the ultimate choice of media will showcase. The resources that I choose for COMM 3050

Intercultural Communication relate to diversity and global learning concepts which have previously been discussed in class. The text I use is *Communication Between Cultures* (Samovar et al., 2013). Some examples of concepts discussed and learned in class and pictured in selected movies and media could be culture shock, ethics, family, gender roles, cultural or regional history, cultural values and behavior, social identity, cultural history, religion, stereotyping, prejudice, racism, ethnocentrism, language and culture, nonverbal communication, and professional, educational, and medical contexts for culture. The instructor should target the aspects of culture, diversity, and/or worldview to be showcased in the selected film and then review appropriate movies where chosen aspects are integrated into their content.

Third, consider the quality of the movie or media. A highly recommended resource for most films is the website International Movie Database (www.IMDb.com). A quick online visit to this website with a movie name—or even part of the name—will yield a goldmine of information about the production. The database lists awards for which the movie has been nominated or won, full cast and the characters they portray, running time, movie review board rating, director and writers, release dates, filming locations, storyline and synopsis, plot keywords, movie genre, box office monetary data, company credits, technical specs, and fascinating trivia relating to the production. An instructor can view how a movie has been characterized in a wide range of variables before making a decision about cinematic quality.

Fourth, consider introducing a class to a movie or media they have never before seen. This is not always possible; however, the first viewing impression impact can be more significant than remembered and already internalized impressions perhaps not related to the diversity/global learning objectives. Look for older classic movies such as *Lawrence of Arabia* from 1962 or *Giant* from 1956 that predate the age of most students;

or in the alternative, consider new releases such as *Spare Parts* from 2015 that fly under the radar of pop culture box office hits. Bring students new cinematic experiences that touch their emotions as well as their minds, and engaged learning can transform the classroom.

Fifth, consider showing the movie/media during class time with the class as the audience as opposed to assigning independent student viewing outside of class with in-class discussion afterward. My experience is clearly not to flip the classroom for these cinematic experiences. In the quiet darkened classroom, the audience focusing on the shared cinematic experience happening on the screen can turn a class of disparate students into a cohesive group with shared knowledge. Many times I watch students leave the classroom talking with each other about what they have just seen and experienced, and those discussions continue as they walk down the hall. Heads are not focused on separate cell phones. The cinematic experience can provide interpersonal pathways of communication and learning through informal opinion sharing as well as express classroom discussions and observations. This is not a recommended flipped classroom assignment because vital components of the cinematic experience would be missing.

Sixth, after seeing the movie, students are asked to reflect and answer questions applying class concepts, demonstrating their understanding of those concepts as pictured in the movie. Depending on the course calendar and learning objectives, students may discuss their individual answers as a non-graded activity during class after seeing the movie in totality and having had time to reflect on their answers to pre-published questions. Alternatively, students may be assessed on their written answers to previously distributed questions on an assignment sheet to be submitted for a grade. A time frame of about a week is recommended for students to complete the graded assignment and a rubric is provided for assessment. A best-of-both-worlds approach is to schedule a movie with the non-graded discussion activity as a model



learning activity, and then later in the semester show another movie with student assessment as a graded activity.

Additional criteria I use for film selection in my COMM 3050 class are the following course learning objectives:

1. To explore transactions of public and interpersonal communication, verbal and nonverbal, among and between diverse cultures and groups.
2. To develop awareness of, respect for, and sensitivity to diverse cultures.
3. To encourage intercultural transactions and inquiry through student interviews with those from diverse cultures.
4. To explore cultural identity.
5. To become acquainted with historical contexts for worldviews and values of select diverse cultures.
6. To recognize and model strategies, theories, and research for understanding cultural differences.
7. To offer communication skills for improving quality of intercultural interactions and competence.
8. To introduce intercultural communication resources such as websites, texts, journals, online databases, and video materials which provide information about and enhance appreciation of cultural diversity.

Five Recommended Films Showcasing Diversity/ Global Learning

Lawrence of Arabia

The first movie discussed, *Lawrence of Arabia*, is the heroic true-life odyssey of World War I British Officer T.E. Lawrence as he is transferred into and personally transformed by the Middle East Theatre where he is assigned to Arabia. Lawrence finds himself uniting diverse, and previously warring among themselves, Bedouin tribes. He mobilizes them to fight a

successful guerilla war against the Turkish Empire on their own desert battlegrounds.

Lawrence is transformed through his understanding of and close interaction with the Arab cultures. He begins to dress like the Arabs, begins to think like the Arabs, and learns their ways and worldview. There is a question of cultural identity development change for Lawrence himself as a result of his intercultural experiences. Historical and geographical contexts for diverse worldviews and values are depicted, especially British military ethnocentrism and prejudice. Students observe different values and worldviews of the Bedouin tribes and the British and Turkish militaries of the era. The Bedouin fighters value their water and their horses or camels, because without them, they could be dead. To own a well in the desert is to be powerful. Bedouin modes of transportation, primarily travel by horse or camel, were different from the British or Turkish motor vehicles.

This movie also offers diverse cultural modes of verbal and nonverbal communication practices. Bedouin dress, evolved from cultural tradition and environment, was different than British military dress. Bedouin tent meeting places were different, as high level meetings between Arab Princes and high ranking British military were held seated on rugs under a lavish tent. Arab social status for societal classes were different as persons in some classes could never advance beyond the class into which they were born.

The movie shows the manner in which the Arab warriors fought wars and their “code of justice” which was different from the British. However, the movie also shows Bedouin genuine friendships were familiar; their loyalty to tribal family, brotherhood, and their leaders was familiar; their keen intelligence was familiar; and their sense of independence as a culture was familiar. This movie shows cultural differences, yet also makes clear cultural similarities—especially of the human characteristics within the different cultures and even some similarities between the cultures themselves.

I selected the 1962 MPAA-PG rated classic, *Lawrence of Arabia*, for the first 3000-level intercultural communication class ever taught in the first semester of a brand new bachelor of arts in communication degree (IMDb.com, Inc. *Lawrence of Arabia*). None of the students in the class had seen the movie and had no idea what to expect. This film is a visual masterpiece with a memorable soundtrack, story, and characters supporting the compelling adventure narrative of the real World War I hero, T.E. Lawrence, whose historical exploits and victories engaged my students, especially since the Middle East is so frequently in the news these days. The International Movie Database website records that this critically acclaimed movie won seven Academy Awards, including 1962 Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Musical Score. It also earned twenty-three other wins such as Best Motion Picture at the Golden Globe Awards and 1963 BAFTA Best British Film and Best Film From Any Source, with many more nominations to the film's credit. The film has a 218-minute running time (IMDb.com, Inc. *Lawrence Of Arabia*).

This first intercultural communication class was comprised of four male and two female students, and the small class size allowed for much student discussion and interaction. To help make the movie more meaningful, after it was over, I gathered my six students around a table and introduced them to many archival photographs of the movie's historical characters, not only to T.E. Lawrence, but also to then Prince Faisal (later King Faisal of Saudi Arabia), a key Bedouin leader and warrior, Auda Abu Tayi, and Lawrence's commanding officer, British General Allenby. These photographs and so many more are found in the highly recommended 2013 book, *Lawrence In Arabia: War, Deceit, Imperial Folly and the Making of the Modern Middle East* by Scott Anderson. After I showed this film and the archival pictures to my small class, some students thanked me for that learning experience.

The Education of Little Tree

The second movie discussed, *The Education of Little Tree*, frequently touches the

hearts as well as the minds of its viewers and makes its characters come alive as "people" not as foreign "others" from different cultures. The setting for this coming of age story is Tennessee's Smoky Mountains in the 1930s, and the cultures explored are co-cultures within the United States. An eight-year-old boy, who is called by his Cherokee name, "Little Tree" by his beloved "Granma" and "Granpa," is of American White and Native American ancestry and learns to navigate his world through the eyes and worldview of the Cherokee. His grandparents, a proud White Scotsman and an intuitive Cherokee woman, lovingly raise Little Tree in their mountain cabin after the loss of his parents, much to the horror of his prejudiced Aunt Martha. Issues of ethnocentrism, prejudice, and stereotyping are portrayed throughout the movie by several characters, but the beauty of the Cherokee worldview, religion, and ways of knowing inform the viewer as well as the innocent young Little Tree.

There comes a time when the United States government mandates that Little Tree must leave his grandparents to attend the Notched Gap Indian School. Therein lies a whole new education for Little Tree as the pedagogy and practice of that time required that the school forbade the use of Little Tree's Indian name (so the School Master simply picked out a random "American name" of "Joshua" for "Little Tree") and forbade any use of the Cherokee language. Upon entering the school, Little Tree's hair was shaved, he was showered and deloused impersonally, and his clothes were burned so he would leave, ostensibly, his Cherokee identity behind. Identity development, cultural work ethic, religion and spirituality, educational practices, cultural dress, Cherokee history about the Trail of Tears, and many other cultural diversity aspects are integrated into this sensitively pictured story.

I show this film to every intercultural communication class and there has never been a class where, when the movie was ending, sniffles and quiet sobs were not heard. It is one thing to read about diverse cultures and practices in a textbook; it is quite another experience to develop

a relationship with a movie's characters so strong and so memorable that the end of the movie resonates with viewers much like the loss of a dear friend. Such is the power of the cinematic educational experience with this movie that I recommend most highly and without reservation. My most recent intercultural communication class to experience this 1997 MPAA-PG rated film consisted of thirty students with an equal number of males and females, only one of whom had previously seen the movie. *The Education of Little Tree* won Best Performance In Feature Film at the Young Artist Awards and Outstanding Performance by both an Actor and an Actress at the First Americans in Arts Awards and runs an hour and fifty-two minutes (IMDb.com, Inc. *The Education of Little Tree*).

To complement the lessons of *The Education of Little Tree*, I offer an extra credit option that relates the movie to historical reality. *Films on Demand* is a library database accessible through the GALILEO virtual library of the University System of Georgia system. The documentary, *We Shall Remain—America Through Native Eyes* offers an hour-and-fifteen-minute video segment entitled, *The Trail of Tears*. This documentary depicts in detail the historical, social, and legal roles Georgia played in the lives of the Cherokee nations in the 1800s, and specifically before, during, and after the Cherokee Trail of Tears (*Trail of Tears*). Students may choose to watch the *Trail of Tears* documentary and write a summary of what they observed and learned as it relates to Georgia and the Cherokee Nation. This semester six of the intercultural communication students earned extra credit points from completing this assignment.

Giant

The third movie discussed, *Giant*, is a sweeping two-hundred-one minute saga of three generations of family in mid-1900s cattle country versus oil country Texas (IMDb.com, Inc. *Giant*). The authenticity of this 1956 film shows White ethnocentric privileged attitudes to segregation and diversity in the home, in education, and in professions in Southwest Texas in the years

preceding the 1950s. Gender inequality is also challenged by female characters breaking stereotypes in relationships and in professions. Advertising on the DVD cover for the film promotes *Giant* with the following quote attributed to 1956 *Time* magazine: "The most effective declaration against racial intolerance ever shown on the screen. Best Picture of the Year" (Stevens). And indeed, *Giant* was nominated for nine Academy Awards including Best Picture and won the Oscar for Best Director which went to George Stevens, as well as being nominated for Best Motion Picture at the Golden Globe Awards for 1957 (IMCb.com, Inc. *Giant*).

Giant was the film selected for my second Intercultural Communication class comprised of seven females and four males. This 1956 film, which predated the MPAA ratings, shows several relationship stories as the generations progress in differing cultural contexts. The movie begins with the wealthy, genteel Maryland fox hunting family's daughter, Leslie, marrying a working cattle baron from Texas, Bic. Leslie does experience culture shock upon her move to Reata, the huge cattle ranch in Southwest Texas owned by Bic and his sister. Later, Leslie and Bic's son eschews ranch work and becomes a medical doctor who marries a Mexican nurse in pre-1950s Texas. Family and friend's stereotypical prejudices are pictured about the marriage.

Amidst the relationship plotlines, the setting is primarily a wealthy Texas working cattle ranch, Reata, of hundreds of thousands of acres where roundups take place, oil wells are drilled, and outdoor barbeques serve as the social and political dinner parties of the region. This is not just a relationship movie, but also a cowboy western. There are clearly two sides of the tracks pictured: the haves who were the cattle barons and the have-nots comprised mainly of persons of Mexican culture on the cattle barons' property. The Mexicans employed in the household of Reata were invisible workers until Leslie actually spoke with them instead of ordering them about their jobs. And Leslie also pushes the bounds of gender equality of the time as she challenges

stereotypical gender roles while husband Bic portrays the patriarchal traditional power-holding male head of Reata ranch. I will not give a spoiler about the final twenty minutes of the story, but they might be the most stirring of the movie and call into question attitudes toward prejudices and stereotypes when it comes to family. Lessons are to be learned.

An outstanding supplement to *Giant* is the PBS-distributed, 90-minute 2015 documentary entitled, *Children of Giant*, which returns to Marfa, Texas, where the movie *Giant* was shot sixty years before (Galan, 2015). Surviving cast, crew, and residents who were a part of the original production are interviewed on camera about their memories and perspectives on many themes including racism and segregation depicted in the film. Behind the scenes production footage from *Giant* and historic video clips about the production along with film historian commentaries lend new perspectives to life in Marfa at the time *Giant* was being filmed. *Children of Giant* is a thought provoking documentary which links the magic of film to the real world and shines a light on differences—diversity—within the cultures of the United States.

Spare Parts

The 2015 MPAA-PG-13 rated film, *Spare Parts*, looks at four Hispanic male high school students, who were living as undocumented immigrants in Arizona (IMDb.com, Inc. *Spare Parts*). None of the students in my classes had seen the film. I supplemented the film by using the 2014 popular book, *Spare Parts: Four Undocumented Teenagers, One Ugly Robot, and the Battle for the American Dream*, by Joshua Davis. The power of the Davis text is to further detail the real lives and real events of the four teenagers and the events that inspired the film. After the completion of the film, I showed authentic photographs of the real students, and I read parts of the book to the students informing them what happened in the lives of the four after the events described in the book and movie were over.

Based on a true story of four real Arizona immigrant teenage males, the movie tells the story of an Arizona high school robotics club formed with the four male students and an Hispanic faculty member advisor who had a background in engineering. The main character is Oscar, a top ROTC student who finds out the Army will not accept him due to his lack of U.S. citizenship. Oscar sees a poster for the 2004 MATE Robotics Competition held at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The poster showcases the potential of student scholarships for college and prestigious job internships.

Oscar takes this information back to his high school and proposes the Robotics Club to an unenthusiastic newly hired faculty advisor, Mr. Cameron. Three other students become Robotics Club members by invitation and some other not-so-socially accepted means of club membership. However, all four members do have in common that they are students at the same high school and that each was brought to the United States by his parents as young child. Using the contributions of each student member from their personal strengths and abilities, the group works through continuing issues to become a team where members work together and begins to trust each other under the leadership of Oscar and Mr. Cameron.

The film chronicles how the robotics team struggles to build a submersible robot for the MATE Competition with no budget, no experience in robotics, and no one believing in the team or its mission. With the advisor's oversight, the submersible robot, named Stinky because of the smell of the glue used to hold the PVC pipe construction together, becomes a reality. Through trial and error Stinky is perfected. Raising their own money for robot parts and the trip to Santa Barbara, the Carl Hayden Community High School Robotics Team with Mr. Cameron travel to the competition.

Once there, the team members decide that they would rather fail in the college bracket than lose in the high school competition, so they sign up for the collegiate contests against schools

such as MIT, Virginia Tech, and Duke. The film takes the viewer to the MATE event with the robotics team as the competition unfolds. Once again, no spoiler here; however, I will assert that your students will not only be interested, but will also be inspired by the story in and behind the film. I believe that my students learned valuable lessons from the film, just as the students experienced valuable lessons within the film.

I showed this film to the 41 students, (22 females and 19 males, in my COMM 3200 Small Group Communication classes this semester to demonstrate some small group concepts and principles such as teamwork, synergy, Tuckman's group development phase theory, and conflict resolution methods in groups. At the same time, themes from this film integrate diversity into the class curriculum as the classes observed the barriers and living conditions these immigrant students and their families faced in their daily lives. After seeing the film, students in my classes also identified the positive results that can come from deep diversity in groups. The topic of immigration, legal or illegal, is a current one, and seeing this newly released film helped inform students of the realities of how immigration status can impact lives. More than one student expressed that they liked or enjoyed the film.

Students in both small group communication classes were assessed on their essay answers to discussion questions about the movie. They were asked to apply previously discussed specified concepts and theories in class to the *Spare Parts* film. The grade results from the two classes were thirty-one "A's", eight "B's", and two "C's". Clearly this movie resonated well as a learning experience for the students in my classes.

The Gods Must Be Crazy

The final movie I will discuss is the 1980 PG-rated comedic allegory, *The Gods Must Be Crazy*, which takes place in Africa where members of the bushmen culture of the Kalahari Desert try to make sense of an unexpected "gift from the gods" (IMDb.com, Inc. *The Gods Must Be Crazy*). When a pilot drops his empty glass Coca-Cola

bottle out the window of his small plane crossing Africa, the bottle seems to miraculously fall from the sky into the lives of a San bushmen community which has no referent for it. When competition to possess the bottle leads to rare conflict within the once peaceful community, bushman Xi determines that the gift should be returned to the Gods, and he begins his travels with the bottle to return it to the generous gods.

His journey intersects with the lives of a White biologist researcher and White school teacher in oftentimes hilarious ways. Viewers learn about the bushmen family life and ways of knowing, so when Xi, played by an authentic bushman named N!xau (yes, that spelling is N!xau), navigates places, happenings, and people in his travels, the viewer can experience those instances through the eyes of the bushman aided by the narrator of Xi's thoughts in the film. This often results in humorous to hilarious to thought-provoking responses from the viewer. When a band of terrorists kidnap the school teacher and her class, the viewer must wonder just what characters are truly "uncivilized" as Xi and the bumbling biologist join forces to save the kidnapped school children and their teacher.

There is a lot to like and learn in this simple film. With a running time of only 109 minutes, the film can easily be shown in 2 75-minute class periods with spare time to be used for discussion and observations from the class. (Uys) *The Gods Must Be Crazy* won Most Popular Film at the Montreal Film Festival and Best Foreign film at the Young Artist Awards (IMCb.com, Inc. *The Gods Must Be Crazy*). None of the students in my intercultural communication class had seen the film.

To supplement *The Gods Must Be Crazy* and to reinforce the reality and knowledge of the San culture of the bushmen of the Kalahari, I recommend the GALILEO/Films On Demand video, *Last of the Bushmen*. This 2004, 51-minute documentary shows the past and present lives and speculates about the precarious future of the San bushmen of the Kalahari and the Hadzabe people of Tanzania. The film explores

methods of making fire, cooking, building huts, preparations for a hunt with poison tipped arrows, and documents the amazing phonetic clicks of the San and Hadzabe languages. Archival footage shows the history of these cultures which are threatened by ethnotourism today (*Last of the Bushmen*). *The Gods Must Be Crazy* and *Last of the Bushmen* make a case that global cultures and cultural practices are unique and fragile and may vanish without understanding, study, appreciation, and careful maintenance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper addressed five feature films, suggested criteria for their use, and provided ideas for supporting classroom materials in the collegiate classroom to help students appreciate and explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. Trailers for the five feature films, *Lawrence of Arabia*, *The Education of Little Tree*, *Giant*, *Spare Parts*, and *The Gods Must Be Crazy*, are available on YouTube. The cinematic experience can humanize “the other” in diverse cultures, picture cultural events in history, portray diverse practices and worldviews, and be a visual catalyst to enhance learning about global cultures and diversity. So take the minds of your students to the movies for a memorable cinematic learning experience!

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Integrating the Capstone Experience: From Negotiations to Grants

Bagie M. George

Abstract: Currently there is a wide variation in the structure and content of capstone courses. Ideally, a capstone course should provide students with an experience that encompasses aspects of previous courses. One of the keys for the development and execution is the integration of student knowledge from previous courses in the degree track. In addition, careful consideration of the discipline learning goals should be taken into account. This paper provides an overview of integrated methods practiced in a capstone experience. These methods (taking sides, debates, negotiations, grants, critical reviews, etc.) are applicable across a multitude of disciplines and can be integrated seamlessly into most courses.

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Introduction

Generally a capstone course integrates course knowledge to a level that promotes innovation and novel investigation. However, the capstone course varies in structure and content because it is discipline-driven and/or program-specific (Duston et al 1997; Johnson & Halabi 2011; Kennedy & Hasslebrock 2013). A capstone course should provide students with a vehicle that promotes reflection and evaluation of the collective concepts learned in their years of college, whether in chemistry, genetics, social sciences, economics, mathematics, or literature. A capstone course should transport concepts learned from the sterile/controlled environment of core classes and challenges these concepts in an arena that facilitates the incorporation of other ideas from other courses. These ideas can either serve to support or challenge the concepts being used – most times shedding light on weakness in the concept and/or impracticalities often encountered in the professional arena.

Although most capstone courses lack standardization across the disciplines and

institutions there seem to be a few standard pillars. One is that a capstone project allows students to draw from previous concepts and skills acquired during their academic careers (Miller 2013; 1993). Another is that the course activities should incorporate and represent concepts from previous courses (Wagenaar 1993). The capstone course is in a unique position because of its fundamental pillars. Unlike most courses, the capstone course benefits from numerous parameters and pressures that drive implementation and topic selection. Political issues, popular views, and economic pressures constantly influence the topics examined in the capstone course.

Generally most of the core courses are confined to specific parameters and experience very little influence by the aforementioned. The influence experienced by the pressures mentioned have for the most part being a welcomed and accepted protocol that augmented the evolution of a diverse repertoire of topics examined in the capstone course. The diversity of topics created by the combination and fluidity of pressures has served well in promoting the



integration and implementation of different tools from courses students have completed prior to the course. More importantly, each group of students will address the same topic with a different strategy and subsequently propose a different goal. This should culminate in an experience that should bridge their college experience and translate as they move into the global community.

In general, many institutions express interest in developing a capstone course (Johnson & Halabi 2011; Kennedy & Hasslebrock 2013). These range from an interdisciplinary approach to a multi-course approach in which students take a capstone course in each year of study (Ellingson et al 2012; Duston et al 1997). Nevertheless, very few institutions provide a framework that could address the diversity required of a capstone course. As a result student could develop weak bridges between concepts learned in the program of study. It is the intent of this paper to present practices that may provide a foundation that could give rise to uniformity in the capstone curriculum.

Practices

Capstone Project

The pinnacle of a capstone course is usually a project. One vehicle that may augment interdisciplinary approach is the preparation and assembly of a grant. The preparation of a grant is almost a required skill in the current academic climate for all post-baccalaureate programs. Therefore this project can be modified for and catered to specific capstone courses. Modifications were fashioned to assure and facilitate completion in a one-semester course. There are presently two main components of the grant writing exercise, the written portion of the project and the presentation portion of the project. The grant writing portion is further subdivided into a section which promotes and develops collaboration with a designated group and a section that emphasizes the individual effort. The collaborative (group focus) section includes: Research Design & Methods section, Schedule section, Budget section, and Literature Citation

section. The individual student concurrently assembles their Curriculum Vitae (CV) section, Aims section, Literature Review section, and Literature cited section.

For the CV section, students will be advised of protocols that define this section, which include the need to keep the information relevant to the grant being submitted. Items that should be considered include the following:

- Name
- Address
- Education (including classes that are relevant to grant)
- Research Experience
- Presentations
- Publications
- Awards and Grants
- Professional Memberships
- Activities (clubs, committees, extra-curricular).

The Aims section is defined by its being the segment of the grant that focuses on the goals of the present proposal. In addition, the Aims section includes an ethical and moral impact section. Here students elaborate about the ethical and moral impacts of their research on the global community. The Aims section also includes an economical and political impact section. The economic impact section describes the economical impact research proposed. The political impact allows the student to explore and explain any science policies that may influence new science policies. Finally, the Literature review section and the References section complete the individual portion of the grant. The Literature review section of the project provides a platform that nourishes the individual's interest and facilitates an understanding of present knowledge.

The other section promotes the development of collaborative skills in the grant writing process. The initial portion consists of the



Research Design & Methods section, which includes but not limited to experimental design, experimental protocol, preliminary data, and statistical analysis. A schedule and budget followed by a literature cited section complete the collaborative portion of the grant. The schedule would present a generalized timeline of the experiment, while the budget provides a detailed list of items that would need to be purchased. These include but are not limited to vendor's names, item numbers, prices, quantity, and explanation of use.

In addition to the written portion this project requires that students present their project to the class in a formal presentation. Students would present a summary of their written grant. The presentation should be a minimum of 20 minutes. Afterwards the presenters will answer questions posed by the audience. The audience will be required to summarize each grant received and provide reasoning on the acceptance or rejection of the grant.

Critical review

This assignment is designed to expose students to peer constructive criticism which is a skill that is often overlooked in the academic setting. Initially the students present a summary of the topic or project. Immediately afterwards the audience provides critical analysis of the presentation. The audience is required to provide at least one constructive criticism comment and one positive comment. The audience then follows up with an interactive discussion about the presentation. During the audiences input the presenters are not allowed to engage with the audience. This is intended for two main reasons; the review of grants are somewhat mirrored here, in addition it also allows for the presenters to gain a better understanding of their presentation style and overall project acceptance.

Taking Sides

The "Taking Sides" activity allows for students to present both sides of a selected topic and is a variation of a debate. There are two main

elements that encompass this activity. Once topics are assigned, two articles are required of the individual student or group, one that supports the topic and one that opposes. Articles will be posted for the class to access on the on-line learning system. After about two weeks the student group would present the topic to the class. The presentation should have an introduction to the topic, giving supporting side evidence, and opposing side evidence lasting about 30 minutes. After the presentation the group will lead the audience in an engaging presentation/activity related to the topic. Active engagement of all audience members is a requirement.

Debates

Debates allow for the "defending" of one side of an issue. This is a common activity; however, the key is that it should be very structured. This structure allows for a formal setting, where a series of constructive and rebuttal speeches are given from each side. Each debater should collect a minimum of three sources on the topic to be debated. Sources should be peer-reviewed articles, books, newspaper or magazine articles, or approved sources from the instructor. The debate is usually restricted to 40-50 minutes. The rest of the time is allotted for questions from the audience.

Debaters need to provide the instructor with a list of references and notes on the day of the debate. Debaters should discuss the impact on the environment, the economics, the politics, and the biology when applicable. During the speeches once the timer sounds debaters may complete their sentence. However, if the timer is ignored and the debater continues the team will lose points. Audience members will be required to ask one question. On the day of the debate, computers or other electric devices will not be allowed.

Negotiations

Negotiation skills are part of every day life. This skill is often weak or lacking in the senior student population. Furthermore, they struggle

with developing a solution to an issue and identifying the needs of the other sides. These skills are developed and reinforced throughout this exercise. Once a topic is selected the class is divided into four equal groups. Each group represents a specific entity that has a stake in the given topic. In addition, each group is given a set of instructions highlighting the directional approach of the group and negotiation points. Each group would also be provided with the “needs” of their constituents they are representing and the parameters that they must adhere to so to support their constituents.

In the first round of negotiations emphasis is given to their opening statements. This should include the introduction of the group and group’s perspective on the topic. The second round should focus on brainstorming and agreeing upon a resolution. Upon completion of the two sixty-minute rounds students then submit a final paper highlighting the resolution and final agreement.

Conclusions

Academic courses are constantly evolving in response to academic advances in the field. The technologies and theories in the field take time to find themselves as the central topics of study in undergraduate courses. These practices if implemented into a capstone course allows for a true interdisciplinary integration. In addition, the adaptable nature of these practices allow for the integration into almost all disciplines. In theory the ultimate goal of the capstone course is to complete the bridge and solidify the connections within the program of study. It is the goal of the

course to promote the kind of integration that leads to the growth of an individual who will engage and produce in the immediate and global communities.

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Journal Submission Guidelines and Editorial Policies

1. Faculty members (and professional staff) may submit the following:

- Book reviews on scholarly works on higher education administration or issues, college teaching, or adult learning published within the last two calendar years.
- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning research. This is defined as a study in which an activity, strategy, approach, or method that reflects best practices or evidence-based research is tried in the classroom. The faculty member sets up an intervention, executes it, and assesses the impact, employing quantitative or qualitative methods. Articles should indicate that IRB process was followed where applicable, with documentation.
- Literature review that synthesizes, in a relevant and interesting way, the evidence, theory, and/or research on a particular aspect of higher education, college teaching, adult learning, brain research, etc. Professional staff could write about issues in student services or advising, for example.
- Essay of personal reflection of a classroom incident or phenomenon with an evidence- or theory-based approach to interpreting the incident or phenomenon.
- Articles should have applicability across disciplines.

2. Style Sheet

- Submissions should be in APA VI format and Times New Roman 12 pt. font. Use APA guidelines in terms of margins. The writer should try to preserve his or her anonymity as much as possible. The editor will redact the name of the writer from the document's title page before sending to reviewers.

3. Review Process

- The submissions will be peer reviewed by three faculty members, whose identity will be known only to editor and not to each other. One member of the review committee will be a faculty member in general discipline represented in the article, one will be a faculty member with an advanced degree in education, and one will be drawn from the advisory committee or other volunteer reviewers.
- Articles will be returned to the writers in a timely manner with an indication of rejection; conditional acceptance (revise and re-submit, with suggestions for doing so), and accepted (possibly with request to edit or make minor changes). A rubric will be used for assessing the articles. It will be available to potential submitters upon request. If none of the members approves the article, it will be rejected. If one of the members approves the article, it will be considered a conditional acceptance. If two approve it, it will be returned for the necessary editions and published when finished. If three approve it, it will be published as is or with minor corrections.

4. Submissions should be sent as Word files to btucker@daltonstate.edu

5. Published articles will appear in the *Journal for Academic Excellence*, which will be available on the Center for Academic Excellence's website and thus accessible by Internet searches.