



Literature Circles: They're Not Just for Freshmen Anymore

Virtually all of the published literature on Book Clubs or Literature Circles concentrates on using the common reader as a tool of engagement for students. It should go without saying that students are not the only stakeholders who benefit from the idea of sharing insights and knowledge gleaned from reading a thoughtful, insightful text on a subject that touches the lives of all human beings. Faculty Book Clubs, those informal, small group (6-12 faculty members) discussions of a common text can be instrumental in helping faculty with a common cause, such as realizing the Quality Enhancement Plan emphasis on critical thinking across the curriculum. These miniature common reader experiences allow for all participants to find the applicability of theories to their discipline, and for educators of all subjects to discover the implications that critical thinking concepts can have in their classes.

To this end, the Center for the Advancement of Faculty Engagement will be introducing a Book Club Series into its menu of professional development options. The first text chosen for reading is *This Is Your Brain on Music: The Science of a Human Obsession*, by Daniel J. Levitin. A Professor of Psychology and Behavioral Neuroscience who runs the Laboratory for Musical Perception, Cognition, and Expertise at McGill University, Levitin is also a record producer, musician, and writer, with additional appointments in Music Theory, Computer Science, and Education. His unique background makes him well-suited for the study of why human beings both love and need music in their lives. The text, purposefully devoid of music theory jargon, is a fascinating account of current music psychology that any individual who listens to music will understand. Levitin explains what music is, how it operates on the brain, and what it does to the "mind," using examples that range from Bach and Beethoven to Mahalia Jackson, The Eagles, and The Sex Pistols. Using a genial, often humorous persona, he explains concepts such as pitch, harmonics, and gesture, so that even the layperson can understand them. His main goal, however, is to examine why we love the music we do. The book was made into a PBS special that aired in 2009.

The CAFÉ will work with Ellender Library to make copies of this book available to faculty interested in joining the Book Club.

Message from the CAFÉ Director

Welcome to the Center for the Advancement of Faculty Engagement, or to what we on campus affectionately call the CAFÉ. Since being named the director of the CAFÉ, I have been re-vamping its web pages, which can be found at www.nicholls.edu/CAFE. I've included a calendar, which includes dates for CAFÉ workshops, Master Advisor workshops, and Blackboard training sessions. The CAFÉ is certain you'll find something on the menu to your preferences. Other additions include the PowerPoint presentations from the Master Advisor workshops, articles of interest on various aspects of teaching, publication outlets, and informative links on the H1N1 virus.

For the upcoming spring semester, The Faculty Development Committee is working on a schedule of CAFÉ activities, some old and some new. Old activities will include having Blackboard training sessions on various areas. New activities will include starting a book club. Also on our agenda is re-structuring Faculty Institute, among other items. If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me at Ext. 4402 or via e-mail. My address is lori.soule@nicholls.edu.

—Lori Soule, CAFÉ Director and Chair, Faculty Development Committee

Soule Kitchen Menu for Fall 2009

Wednesday, October 21, 1:30-2:20 p.m., Elkins 209 (UC Computer Lab)	Master Advisor Workshop: "Now It Can Be Told": Advising Advice from Winners of Excellence in Academic Advising Award (Facilitators: Ms. Cathy Richard, Instructor, University Studies, Dr. Michele Robichaux, Associate Professor, Biological Sciences, Mr. David Zerangue, Director of Transitional Programs and Instructor of Mathematics, and Dr. John Lajaunie, Professor, Finance)	Tuesday, November 10, 1:30-2:20 p.m., Elkins 209 (UC Computer Lab)	Master Advisor Workshop: "Jazz at the Bookstore": Helping Our Students Understand Bookstore Policies (Ms. Brenda Haskins, Executive Director, Auxiliary Services, and Ms. Angelle Caillouet, Bookstore Manager)
Monday, October 26, 1:30-2:20 p.m., Elkins 209 (UC Computer Lab)	Master Advisor Workshop: "Whisper Not": Using Blackboard as a Communication Tool for Advising Student Organizations (Ms. Cynthia DuBois, Assistant Professor/Librarian, and Ms. Sabrina Laurent, Coordinator, Women's Resource & Services Office)	Wednesday, November 11, 3:00-4:00 p.m.	CAFÉ Workshop: Going from a face-to-face class to online: What is needed (Dr. Ianna West, Assistant Professor of Mathematics)
Tuesday, October 27, 2:00-4:00 p.m., (211 Elkins)	CAFÉ Workshop: Twitter 101: What are all those tweets about? (Dr. Lori Soule, Director of CAFÉ)	Tuesday, November 10, 2:30-3:20 p.m., Elkins 209 (UC Computer Lab)	Master Advisor Workshop: "Strangers in the Night": Advising Students Interested in Hybrid or Online Classes (Ms. Becky LeBlanc, Instructor, Languages and Literature)
Monday, October 26, 2:30-3:20 p.m., Elkins 209 (UC Computer Lab)	Master Advisor Workshop: Beveling those "Brilliant Corners": Advising Students for the Honors Program (Facilitators: Dr. John Doucet, Director of University Honors Program and Interim Head of Biological and Agricultural Sciences, and Ms. Jennifer White, Assistant Director of University Honors Program and Professional Advisor, University College)	Monday, November 16, 1:30-2:20 p.m., Elkins 209 (UC Computer Lab)	Master Advisor Workshop: Orchestrating an Advising Session: Setting the Stage (Facilitator: Ms. Cathy Richard, Instructor of University Studies)
Monday, November 2, 1:30-2:20 p.m., Elkins 209 (UC Computer Lab)	Master Advisor Workshop: "Old Folks" (Relatively Speaking): Working with Non-Traditional Students (Facilitators: Dr. Angela Alexander, Director of Upward Bound and Assistant Professor of University Studies, and Mr. Rodney Hodges, Instructor of University Studies)	Monday, November 16, 2:30-3:20 p.m., Elkins 209 (UC Computer Lab)	Master Advisor Workshop: Syncopation: General Education (Facilitator: Dr. Patricia Gabilondo, Head of General Studies and Associate Professor of English)
Friday, November 6, 10:00-11:30 a.m. (211 Elkins)	CAFÉ Workshop: Using Jing and DimDim in Your Classes (Dr. Cynthia Vavasseur, Assistant Professor of Teacher Education)	Tuesday, December 1, 1:30-2:20 p.m., Elkins 209 (UC Computer Lab)	Master Advisor Workshop: "Take Me to the River": How to Advise Students Who Seek the Path of Least Resistance (Facilitator: Mr. Rodney Hodges, Instructor, University Studies)
		Tuesday, December 1, 2:30-3:20 p.m., Elkins 209 (UC Computer Lab)	Master Advisor Workshop: The Decorum Forum: How does one keep proper professional distance from students? For example, should we have coffee or lunch with students? Do we risk being too professionally distant, too cold, too indifferent?
		Thursday, December 3, 9:00-5:00 (140 Peltier)	Campus Technology Virtual Conference

Current Members of the Faculty Development Committee

Lori Soule, Chair, Computer Science
 Claire Bourgeois, Communications Disorder
 Tony Fonseca, Ellender Library
 Ray Giguette, Computer Science
 Melissa Goldsmith, Ellender Library
 Ross Jahnke, Art
 Norman Norris, Teacher Education
 DesLey Plaisance, Math
 Sherry Rodrigue, Academic Computing
 Connie Sirois, Languages & Literature
 Stephen Triche, Teacher Education
 Anita Tully, Languages & Literature

Expand Your Critical Thinking Terminology!

Critical Information Literacy is the theoretical framework behind the method of accomplishing a research task. It differs from resource-based instruction in that it eschews point-of-use methodology. By deemphasizing the procedural components of information literacy (the steps used in researching published literature), it brings to the fore the critical consciousness of information mining. In other words, rather than having students mired in the single use application of specific, assignment-based searching, which teaches nothing beyond the single method, critical information literacy emphasizes the nature of information and inquires as to our assumptions about it, and examines the philosophies behind how it is categorized to foster critical thinking as to how it should be retrieved and applied most efficiently.

Newsletter staff: Tony Fonseca, Managing Editor; Melissa Goldsmith, Editor; Lori Soule, Editor. The statements and opinions included in these pages are those of the newsletter staff only. Any statements and opinions are not those of Nicholls State University or the University of Louisiana System.