



November/December TLC Events

November

- Using Virtual Classrooms (11/1)
- League of Innovation Roundtable (11/7 and 11/10)
- eCampus: Downloading Your Gradebook (11/14)
- Inclusiveness Series Part 1 of 3: Peru (11/15)
- eCampus: Loading Test Banks (11/16)
- Inclusiveness Series Part 2 of 3: Russia (11/17)
- Inclusiveness Series Part 3 of 3: Mexico (11/21)
- Fun and Games in Accounting (11/29)

December

- No formal workshops

Flags at Half Mast in Memory of
Rosa Parks — November, 2005

Calwald Henry

Teaching Learning Center

The Teaching Learning Center (TLC) nurtures instructional design, critical thinking, and technology skills for faculty at Cedar Valley College. The TLC provides assistance in instructional design and technology in a supportive environment. It also provides a forum for informal faculty discussion.

Promote Student Success through Careful Test Design

According to Professor Richard M. Felder of North Carolina State University, almost nothing offends students more than a test they perceive as unfair. To minimize such perception:

Test on what you teach. Don't limit instruction to straightforward examples and then put high-level problems on tests. People acquire skills through practice and feedback.

Provide a detailed study guide well before each test. Good tests include no surprises. Avoid vague verbs like *know*, *learn*, *understand*, or *appreciate*.

Minimize speed as a factor in test performance. Students need time to stop and think. Would you like your bridge designed by an engineer who thinks and works methodically or by one who was trained to beat a deadline?

Always work through test answers on your "final version." Then revise and try again. Many tests are too long.

Set up multiple-part problems so the parts are independent. Decouple parts of the problem so students who can't get Part (a) can make a new start and show whether they can do Part (b). They can earn some credit. Again, practice before the test.

Design 10–15% of the test to discriminate between A-level and B-level performance. If you have included high level questions on your study guide, use them in this 10–15%.

Be generous with partial credit on time-limited tests for work that clearly demonstrates understanding, and penalize heavily for mistakes on homework. Assignments are the place to sting, but cut some slack in the arti-

cial environment of a test.

Don't deliberately design tests to make the average grade 60 or less. Low grades can demoralize students, who could decide they are in the wrong place.

If you give a test on which the grades are much lower than you anticipated and you believe some of the responsibility is yours, consider making adjustments.

If someone else grades tests, take precautions to assure that the grading is consistent and fair.

Institute a formal procedure for students to complain about test grades. Seriously consider such requests and make adjustments you believe are justified.

Full paper and references at: www.ncsu.edu/felder-public/Papers/TestingTips.htm.

FAQ: Can I "paste" text into Word without disturbing my document formatting?

You can, but not always by pasting.

In Microsoft Office, *pasting* means inserting what you copied, whether or not the formatting matches that of your current work.

If you want copied material to conform to current formatting, go to the *Paste Special* tool beneath *Edit*.

In Word:

1. Copy your selection.
2. Click *Edit* on the Standard Toolbar.
3. Click *Paste Special*. You'll see options for the kinds of material you can paste.
4. Select *Unformatted Text to insert text that will match your current document*.

Example

Using *Paste* from outside this newsletter produces:

FOURSCORE AND SEVEN
YEARS AGO....

Using *Paste Special* from the same clipboard content matches current formatting:

Fourscore and seven years ago....

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HOURS

Monday/Wednesday	9:00-5:30
Tuesday/Thursday	8:00-4:30
Friday	9:00-1:00

HAVE
GREAT
HOLIDAYS

INNOVATION IN THE CLASSROOM



Kudos to Karen Wood for bringing Russia to the November TLC Inclusiveness Series
We'll miss you, Karen!

The Teaching Learning Center

Much more than technology

TLC Web Site Nears One Million Hits

Cedar Valley College TLC Director, Tim Xeriland, reports 998,615 visits to tlccvc.org since its launch during fall semester 2002.

Xeriland says usefulness guided his thinking as he designed the site. The fact that so many of those almost-a-million hits have come from outside the Cedar Valley community indicates success with that goal. Increasingly, other institutions acknowledge Cedar Valley's TLC online resources with academic citations.

For TLCCVC, Xeriland has created more than two hundred Web pages of topics related to teaching methods, educational theory, classroom innovation, and technology. Teacher's Place, Resources, and Downloads are treasure troves for the educator. The site map includes About Us, Ask Tim, Links Pages, Resources, Teaching Tips, Tutorials, and Workshops.

Cedar Valley can expect a TLC pizza party when the magic million occurs!