

Reviewed by
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For faculty who continually try to improve the quality of their teaching for an increasingly diverse student population, the thought of going on-line to find teaching materials can seem like a daunting and time consuming task that never quite makes it to the top of the "to do" list. Indeed, given the number of demands placed upon faculty, and the amount of time required when searching for usable material on-line, educators may forgo this endeavor in favor of tried and true teaching methods used in the past. However, for faculty who find the time to venture on-line there is a vast array of teaching tips, strategies, and evaluations available for use. This article will attempt to reduce the amount of on-line search time required of educators by reviewing six sites that offer a myriad of resources. The web pages were selected from a long list of quality sites and are not intended to be an exhaustive list of available resources. An overview of each site is provided with attention given to specific areas that have valuable resources, as well as areas that individuals should avoid.

One of the most comprehensive websites reviewed is located at the Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence located at Carnegie Mellon University (<http://www.cmu.edu/eberlycenter/overview.htm>). The goal of the center is to "help both faculty members and graduate students improve teaching practices by gaining an understanding of cognitive and educational teaching and learning and by reflecting, practicing, and receiving feedback on course design and classroom performance." While many of the resources available at this site were aimed at helping teachers at Carnegie Mellon University and subsequently not applicable to outside viewers, there is also a wealth of material useful to all teachers. Once at the Eberly Center web site the user is encouraged to visit the links to Faculty Support, Graduate Student Support, Common Problems & Related Links, and Teaching and Learning Resources. Two of the most beneficial resources available at this site are the "Common Problems and Related Links" and "Teaching and Learning Resources."

The "Common Problems and Related Links" section is organized as a series of questions and on-line training modules designed to answer each of a number of questions. For example, one "question" states, "My students write very poorly and I would

like to help them become more proficient.” By following the available links, the reader is directed to a seminar which has 14 handouts including topics such as: an overview of the writing process, developing writing assignments, guidelines for efficient grading of writing assignments, and characteristics of clear criteria for writing. In addition to the section on common problems the reader is encouraged to peruse the “Teaching and Learning Resources” section. The resources section has a wealth of checklists, seminar handouts, sample syllabi, and assessment tools that faculty and teaching assistants may use to improve their teaching in areas such as: beginning a course, learning about different student audiences, enhancing out of classroom learning, conducting ongoing assessment, developing you teaching, and training and working with TA’s. Another very attractive feature of this section is the number of evaluation forms available in both PDF and Binhexed Mac MS Word version. The downloadable forms target different types of classes including laboratory, lecture, project, and studio courses. Additionally, for faculty who supervise teaching assistants, there are number of evaluation forms designed to assess their performance.

Carnegie Melon provides another service to web viewers by featuring links to a number of other university sites. Included among those sites is University of Nebraska-Lincoln (<http://www.unl.edu/teaching/Teachtips.html>). For teachers searching for current best practices in education this site has one of the most comprehensive lists of useable teaching tips available. The teaching tips link leads to a cache of information including step by step planning of a college course, syllabus construction, things to do on the first day of class, learning students names, 101 things to do in the first three weeks of class, and teaching students to take better notes. Each one of these topics is then covered in considerable detail and provides numerous resources to the reader. “Faculty Services” is an additional link that can be followed from this site. While the majority of these resources pertain only to faculty of that institution, following the site to the section on teaching portfolios will reward the reader with rich and useful information. Topics include how to pull together comprehensive and meaningful data that reflects one’s teaching style and philosophy. The reader is also encouraged to examine the information available in the resource room and internet resources. The resource room provides citations for books and materials on a variety of interesting topics, and the internet resources cover teaching resources, teaching and technology, outcome assessment, WWW links to resources on teaching and learning, ERIC resources, professional journals, and professional associations. One large advantage to this site is that all of the links were functional at the time of the review, indicating that the site was well maintained and updated regularly.

Similar to the resources available from the UN-Lincoln site is the Teaching and Learning Center at Eastern Washington University (<http://tlc.ewu.edu/index.html>). The areas that are particularly helpful at this site are the sections on “What’s New,” Teaching Issues, and available links available at the site map. Under the “What’s New” section, it was interesting to review the upcoming conferences dedicated to teaching. This section is updated regularly, so provides an easy way to stay abreast of upcoming events related

to teaching. As with the previous sites the section devoted to teaching issues is useful because it provides links to other resources. Unfortunately, however, not all of the reviewed sites were active. Therefore, an individual interested in a particular topic may find himself or herself searching on-line for references that cannot be accessed. Nonetheless, the majority of links about teaching issues provide valuable information and Eastern Washington University has done a particularly nice job of linking to other university web sites that offer organized information on teaching tips, strategies, effectiveness, common problems, faculty development, planning or revising courses, and conducting a teaching goals inventory. Readers are particularly encouraged to go to the Faculty Development Teaching Tips Index which links to the Honolulu Community College web site (<http://www.hcc.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/teachtip.htm>). Located here is information that may be particularly useful in planning and teaching courses. Eighteen topics include, among others, teaching techniques, course design, communication, instructional assessment techniques, human development, how people learn, motivating students, dealing with difficult behaviors, and dealing with stress.

The Eastern Washington University site also directs the readers attention to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill web site (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/ctl/index.html>) for information related to the "First Day of Class: A Day of Opportunities Missed." The reader will find that this topic is one of 20 short monographs covered in the on-line publication entitled "For Your Consideration." The publication is intended to provide reflections as well as specific suggestions for how to improve teaching. "For Your Consideration" can be located from the home page by opening the publications link. The only drawback of the newsletter is that readers may be required to search for information relevant to the specific topic they are exploring.

Within the publications link at the UNC-Chapel Hill site there are also instructor handbooks entitled "Teaching at Carolina" and "Teaching for Inclusion." These two downloadable manuscripts have valuable information for almost any college instructor. "Teaching at Carolina" has three sections that faculty may find particularly helpful including information on course planning and teaching, evaluation issues, and instructional roles. The second manuscript, "Teaching for Inclusion: Diversity in the Classroom" is focused on the student population at UNC but has excellent information related to developing inclusive environments for individuals of different gender, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, age, and ability. Before leaving the UNC site the reader may also want to follow some of the links provided under the resources for teachers. Of particular interest was the link to Duke University's Center for Teaching, Learning, and Writing (<http://www.ctlw.duke.edu/>). Faculty will be well served to direct their students to this site for unbelievable information related to writing.

Similar to the UNC page, the Chemeketa Community College (<http://terra.chemeketa.edu/faculty/op/index.htm>) site offers links in their Teaching Tips section that cover 13 different topics such as active/student centered learning, critical think-

ing, and how to get students active from the start. The majority of the links were active, helpful, and provided information that was easy to find. A review of the Chemeketa Community College links led to the discovery of a commercial site that is well worth exploring. The National Teaching and Learning Forum (<http://www.ntlf.com/>) is an on-line version of a publication intended to "offer subscribers stimulating insight from colleagues eager to share new ways of helping students reach the highest levels of learning." A full subscription to the magazine cost \$39.00 for 6 issues. However, after skimming the on-line journal, special features, and resources sections, there was excellent information on a number of topics that did not require a paid subscription. The feature article for each issue of the forum is available to non-subscribers free of charge and covers a variety of topics such as radical course revisions, the pros and cons of implementing technology in the classroom, and collaborative learning in a virtual classroom. The "Supplemental Material Archive" of this site is also worth visiting and may be particularly helpful in finding answers to somewhat obscure questions such as, "Who owns what faculty create?" Finally, it is worth noting that National Teaching and Learning Forum may also serve as an outlet for publishing manuscripts related to the scholarship of teaching.

Conclusions

By reviewing the web sites of universities and organizations across the United States one is reminded of how difficult a task it is to keep up with the dynamic and complex field of education. However, the resources available on-line may help to offset the demands of the teaching profession by providing numerous tips, resources, and ideas that can easily be downloaded and implemented in the classroom. While individuals may become frustrated with trying to sort through all of the masses of information available on-line, the reader is encouraged to find a few well-maintained sites that may provide some hidden treasures. The web resources reviewed in this article may be the start of one such list.