

Friday at the Center: February 20, 2004

David Brooks Coming to SPU

Want some insight into the so-called Generation Y that you meet every day in the undergraduate classroom? Mark your calendars to hear David Brooks, author of *Bobos in Paradise* and op-ed columnist for *The New York Times*, who will speak on "Why Go to College?" on April 27, 2004, at 1 p.m. in Upper Gwinn Commons. All faculty and students are invited to this event, so you may want to incorporate it into your course syllabi for next quarter, if appropriate. For background, you can read (and/or assign) Brooks' extended essay on the nature of contemporary college students, "The Organization Kid," which appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, April 2001. The essay can be downloaded from the OAA webpage (<http://www.spu.edu/depts/aao/>).

Summer Faculty Theology Course

Any faculty member is welcome to enroll for this summer's Lilly SERVE faculty course in Christian Doctrine, taught by Randy Maddox from June 21-July 2. Aimed at those who have had little prior academic study of theology, the course's goal is to nurture a basic understanding of the central doctrines of the historical Christian Church, their interrelationships, and their ethical implications. Significant time will also be devoted to discussing the implications of Christian doctrine for the variety of disciplines in the university. Participants will receive book, a daily lunch, and a \$500 stipend. For more information see <http://www.spu.edu/depts/csf/programs/summer.asp>.

Plagiarism: The Series

This quarter's focus on teaching considers plagiarism, with a cumulative list of summary principles.

Principle 1: Educate. Help students understand what plagiarism is.

Principle 2: Prevent by assignment construction. Give specific topics and assigned sources.

Principle 3: Prevent by requiring particular steps in the assignment. Possibilities include a research log, a rough draft, or an annotated bibliography.

Principle 4: Prevent by follow-up strategies. Two strategies for more interactions with the ideas and material of the assignment:

Oral presentations on research papers require that students be familiar both with their research process and their papers' content. It's difficult to present and explain material that you've copied verbatim. Questions about key terms and concepts, whether asked by fellow students or the professor, will also demonstrate the work's integrity, as well as the student's grasp of the material. Many students have been caught out by simple questions like, "What exactly do you mean here by 'dynamic equivalence'?" Or, "This quotation seems slightly out of context. What was Follet's main point in the chapter?"

On the day that you collect the paper, have students write a brief **in-class meta-learning essay** about what they learned from the assignment. What problems did they face and how did they overcome them? What research strategy did they follow? Where did they locate most of their sources? What is the most important thing they learned from investigating this subject? The students who actually did the work themselves will learn more from thinking about their own

processes. Besides obtaining a writing sample to compare with the turned-in paper, you will be able to assess the students' knowledge of their papers. If that knowledge of the paper and its process seems modest or if the quality of the in-class essay diverges strikingly from the writing ability shown in the in-class essay, further investigation is probably warranted.

(ideas adapted from
<http://www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm>)

Happy Teaching!

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