

Friday @ the Center: October 5, 2007

Day of Common Learning News

Jürgen Moltmann has invaded our campus, and he hasn't even arrived yet. Check out the display of Moltmann's books at the bookstore and pick up your own copy of one of these groundbreaking works of twentieth-century theology. At the DCL website (<http://www.spu.edu/depts/csfd/dayofcommonlearning.asp>), you can watch "Moltmann Moments" on SPU iTunes and also start planning which of the many outstanding afternoon sessions you will attend. Did you know that we can find hope in art, science, fantasy literature, Bruce Springsteen, and even politics? And that Moltmann was selected as the most influential major theologian of the last 100 years in the online "World Cup of Theologians"? See <http://www.bracketmaker.com/tmenu.cfm?tid=168068>.

Congratulate SPU Rhodes Candidate Nick Jacobson

The Center is pleased to announce that Nick Jacobson, a 2007 SPU graduate who majored in History and French, has been endorsed by the SPU Rhodes Scholarship Committee as a candidate for the highly competitive Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford University. A University Scholar who was awarded the President's Citation in 2007, Nick plans to pursue a degree in Medieval Studies with a focus on Christian-Muslim interaction. His application is now being considered by the Rhodes Selection Committee of District 6. The SPU Rhodes Scholarship Committee this year was made up of Michael Hamilton, History; Ken Himma, Philosophy; and Bill Purcell, Communication.

Teaching Tips: Getting Students to Read

This quarter's pedagogical series (adapted from The Idea Center's Paper #40) will focus on ways to encourage students to do course reading as well as to help them improve their reading skills. Students' failure to complete reading assignments and inability to read at a college level is a frequent complaint of faculty, both at SPU and around the country. The National Survey of Student Engagement (good 'ole NESSIE) shows that students think there is a weak relationship between doing course reading and academic success. Some SPU statistics from last year are intriguing: 12% of our first-year students self report coming to class "often" or "very often" without completing the reading, while 65% report "sometimes" coming to class without completing the reading. However, 21% of seniors report coming to class "often" or "very often" without completing the reading. Why do they stop reading? While reading abilities are an important factor, research demonstrates that course structure, organization, and pedagogy also affect compliance, so a multidimensional approach is needed. We'll examine a number of options during the next several weeks.

RefWorks Reminder

Remember RefWorks training sessions in the Library Classroom, main floor: Tue, Oct. 9, 1 pm; Thurs, Oct. 11, 9:30 am and 1 pm; and Fri, Oct. 12, 11 am. RefWorks is an online, web-based tool that allows the user to create a personal database to store and organize research information and citations. RefWorks also will create in-paper references in a plethora of different styles: APA, Chicago, MLA, and many more.

Enjoying fall,



Susan

Susan VanZanten Gallagher
Professor of English
Director, Center for Scholarship and Faculty Development