

## Friday @ the Center: May 9, 2008

### Spring On-Line Course Evaluations

On Monday, faculty will be notified about the beginning of this quarter's on-line course evaluation process. At that point you will be given the opportunity to change evaluation forms, add your own course-specific questions, or remove a course from the evaluation process. During the Winter quarter, the overall student completion rate of evaluations was 34%, fairly equally distributed among class levels—from doctoral to first year students. However, what was striking was the fact that **42 faculty (out of 268 participating) had a completion rate of over 70%**, many in more than one class. With one exception, these were all full-time faculty. How can you achieve their success?

- Repeatedly talk about the importance of the process and the way you value and use student evaluations.
- Give class participation points or extra credit for completing the evaluations—on the honor system, by having individual students turn in their confirmation emails, or if the class as a whole achieves a certain rate of participation.
- Schedule a class in a computer lab during the evaluation period and give them 15 minutes to complete the evaluations.
- Ask anyone who is able to take a laptop to class on a certain day. It is likely that you will get at least enough computers for half the class to fill out the evaluation at a time. Give the other half some other assignment to work on for 15 minutes and then switch tasks.
- Read some student comments from a previous evaluation and explain how they informed the current course.
- Verbally highlight a particular issue on which you would appreciate feedback: note that there will be a course specific question on this topic on the evaluation: students' view of one of the texts, feedback on the big group project you assigned, the strengths and weaknesses of the small group assignments, etc.
- Remind the students that it typically takes about 10 minutes to complete the evaluation form.
- Remind them orally at least three times over the final week of class about the process.

### Grant Writing Myths: #6 (last in our series)

**Myth 6: "Grants are awarded to those applicants with the greatest need."** Henson says, "Most grants go to applicants whose proposals seem most likely to deliver services and meet the agency's goals better than all other applicants. So, instead of focusing on your needs, focus on your strengths can meet the grant agency's goals. What unique attributes do you, your institution, and your region have that can be used to excel at meeting those goals?" Gallagher adds, "Everyone has needs; only a few have strengths. Many calls for proposals want an identification of a problem. Be sure and provide that, but identify the problem so that you can explain how your research, writing, interpretation, or program can work toward solving that problem." ("Debunking Some Myths About Grant Writing," by Kenneth T. Henson, *Chronicle for Higher Education*, 2003).

### May Grant Advisor Available

The May edition of *The Grant Advisor* can now be accessed through on-campus computers at <http://grantadvisor.com/tgaplus/>. It contains 20-25 full program reviews and over 300 listings of grant and fellowship programs. If it generates any possibilities or ideas, contact Laura Lundahl ([Lundahl@spu.edu](mailto:Lundahl@spu.edu)), our academic grant writer, for an initial conversation about your ideas and the grant writing process.

### Erickson Undergraduate Research Conference Today!

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual Erickson Undergraduate Research Conference begins this afternoon at 3 p.m. in Otto Miller Hall. Posters and presentations will showcase the outstanding research contributions SPU students are making in the fields of Biology, Biochemistry, Chemistry, Computer Science, Engineering, Mathematics and Physics. Dr. Larry Wall, SPU alum, will deliver the keynote address at 4:30 p.m. Please join in this celebration of student research.



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