SHORT WORKSHOPS AND RESOURCES FOR INTEGRATING COMMUNICATION INSTRUCTION INTO COURSES

March 31-April 2
April 7-9
Celebrate with us!
The Cain Project in Engineering and Professional Communication is celebrating the conclusion of ten years of operation with a series of workshops and events. Faculty, post-docs, and graduate students are invited to attend workshops about using materials on oral presentations, writing, and visual design available to all in a new OWL-Space tool, on Connexions, and on a Web site.

Free lunches
The first fifteen persons to register for any noon workshop will receive free box lunches from Stone Mill Bakers. Contact Julia Amborski at cainproj@rice.edu to register for any workshop and claim a lunch if the workshop is held at noon.

Why integrate communication instruction into your courses?
Interactive lectures, short writing assignments, reports, oral presentations, group projects, and posters can help students explore, analyze, and summarize their work. Expect better papers and presentations from them, too!

New Communication Folder Tool on OWL-Space
The Communication Folder taps an archive of materials that will fill your course communication folder instantly and support student projects. Come learn about using these materials in the short workshops listed in the table on the next page and in the descriptions that follow.

EXTRA!
Special sessions on writing and editing for post-docs, grad students, and undergrads on April 14-16 from 4 to 5 p.m. Recommend these to your students and advisees.

To register for workshops send an email to cainproj@rice.edu.

SCHEDULE OF WORKSHOP SESSIONS

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Session Descriptions

Overview of Cain Project Materials in Connexions, OWL-Space, and the Web.
March 31 (M), April 1 (T), 12:10 p.m., April 7 (M), noon – Sewall Hall (SH) 303
New resources from the Cain Project will be available campus-wide in July 2008. A new Communication Folder Tool in OWL-Space plus an archive of resources available for writing, oral presentations, and visual design can be added to your course account with a click of the mouse. The materials will also be available on Connexions at http://cnx.org.

Integrating Communication Instruction into Courses: Sample Strategies and Syllabi
March 31 (M), April 9 (W), noon – Sewall Hall (SH) 305
The best kind of communication instruction for achieving your course goals depends on the structure and strategy of your course. This session introduces sample syllabi and explains how to integrate feedback for your students by requiring work with writing mentors and presentations coaches.

Designing Clear Communication Assignments: Samples from Several Courses
April 1 (T), 12:10 p.m. – Sewall Hall (SH) 305
Giving your students a clearly written assignment will produce a better product and save time for both them and you. You will have to field fewer questions; they will spend less time wondering what you expect; and evaluation can be more direct. In this workshop, we will discuss the basics of assignment design and then evaluate several examples of assignments for written and oral work, both graduate and undergraduate from a variety of courses.

Introducing Intercultural and International Communication for Projects Abroad
April 2 (W), noon – Sewall Hall (SH) 303
Students who are planning to conduct collaborative projects in traditionally structured societies are often unaware of their own cultural assumptions and specialist vocabularies, and they need techniques for listening, negotiating, and recognizing cultural differences. Seven modules now on Connexions prepare students for working with individuals in non-US cultures.

Giving Feedback on Students’ PowerPoints
April 2 (W), noon – Sewall Hall (SH) 305
PowerPoint can be a powerful tool in oral presentations. Knowing how to design good slides is more than just mastering the software, however. Learn how to help your students
• Select information to present
• Organize slide content logically
• Highlight the main points of the talk
• Display text, data, and figures effectively
We will review evaluation forms for PowerPoint presentations and apply them to student work.

Integrating Discussion Groups into Large Lecture Classes
April 2 (W), 2:00 p.m. – Sewall Hall (SH) 307
Is it possible to foster student discussion in a large lecture class? How do you promote active learning when you have over 150 students in the classroom? In this workshop, Dr. Mike Gustin and Dan Wagner will discuss how they successfully integrated small group discussion into their Introductory Biology course. Workshop participants will learn how to
• Ensure students come prepared for discussions
• Foster the participation of all group members
• Work with trained discussion group leaders
• Evaluate the effectiveness of the process

Giving Feedback to Students on Their Oral Presentations
March 31 (M), 3:30 p.m. – Sewall Hall (SH) 307
April 8 (T), 3:30 p.m. – Herring Hall 100
What distinguishes an exceptional student presentation from one that’s merely okay? In this workshop we will identify and discuss the features of effective technical presentations. You will be given tips on how to help your students to
• Analyze audience and identify a common interest
• Organize the talk for easy accessibility and comprehensibility
• Deliver with confidence
• Wrap up well
• Respond to questions
We will discuss approaches to providing feedback, review presentation evaluation forms, and discuss videotaped segments of student presentations.

Managing Groups and Teaching Collaborative Writing
April 1 (W), 3:30 p.m. – Herring Hall 100
Students can learn more when they interact to share and evaluate their ideas. This workshop focuses on aspects of group assignments and collaborative writing that can help students organize literature reviews, analyze issues, and present a unified paper on the work they have done together.

Instructing about Plagiarism and Paraphrase
April 2 (W), 3:30 p.m., April 7 (M), 2:00 p.m. – Sewall Hall (SH) 307
Plagiarism is now easier than ever because of readily accessible electronic sources. This workshop will show you how to help your students both recognize and avoid including plagiarism in their own work so that they don’t violate Rice’s Honor Code. Also, because plagiarism is often viewed differently by other cultures and is therefore sometimes accidental, it will become increasingly important to alert your students to plagiarism issues as Rice doubles its percentage of international students.
Giving Feedback on Written Work
April 7 (M), noon – Sewall Hall (SH) 307
How can we help students write better each time they prepare a paper? Feedback on writing has several purposes: macro-level guidance on how to help meet readers’ expectations about argument, evidence, and proportion as well as micro-level suggestions about how to express complex ideas and visuals. Correction of errors was once the focus in writing feedback. However, process feedback helps students learn more about the process of planning and editing writing work. Suggestions to students about how to improve their own writing as well as allowing revisions also develop sophistication and attention to quality.

Improving Students’ Writing with Cain Project Modules on Clear Writing Style
April 9 (W), 3:30 p.m. – Sewall Hall (SH) 307
This workshop introduces instructors to the Clear Writing Style Modules and reviews key principles for editing technical papers. Students will be introduced to the resources available for students who want to improve the quality of their technical papers through revision.

Designing Communication Assignments to Facilitate Feedback and Professional Assessment
April 7 (M), noon – Sewall Hall (SH) 305
Accreditation requirements of various academic accreditation bodies now emphasize learning outcomes rather than institutional inputs such as facilities, faculty qualifications, and so on. Many fields now rely on student written work and oral presentations to demonstrate students’ knowledge. Building guidance for students and appropriate criteria for assessment into an assignment helps students achieve appropriate goals and help expert evaluators recognize key features. Moreover, using consistent criteria facilitates cross-course comparisons and pre/post evaluations of value added. Sample forms for evaluating written work and oral presentations will be discussed.

Introduction to the Method Behind the Style Modules
April 8 (T) 12:10 p.m. – Sewall Hall (SH) 305
The University of Chicago approach to giving students greater command over their writing has helped thousands of students and faculty. The method introduced by Joe Williams (Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace) and championed by Williams and Greg Colomb (The Craft of Argument) focuses students on the agent and action of each sentence and the assumptions, evidence, and limits on the claims of their argument. Jessie Dubresil has applied Williams and Colomb’s basic principles to new examples from science and engineering texts in modules for the Cain Project. This session introduces the method and the materials on Connexions, including assessment and feedback forms.

Coaching Dissertation Students on Thesis Writing
April 8 (T), 12:10 p.m. – Sewall Hall (SH) 303
Dissertation students may be unfamiliar with dissertations as a genre and have difficulty understanding what sort of document they need to produce. They also may be uncertain about how to manage the writing process. Faculty members can help students produce chapters more efficiently by rethinking the types of feedback they give students. Samples of student work and feedback included.

Interactive Lectures and Short Writing
April 8 (T), 2 p.m. – Herring Hall 100
April 9 (W), noon – Sewall Hall (SH) 303
What is the average attention span of your students? How can you keep them engaged during lectures? Interactive lectures and short writing assignments not only solicit student involvement, but they can also provide feedback on the depth of students’ knowledge and help guide how you cover course material.

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Conversation about Your Course Plans
Want to discuss integrating communication instruction into your course with the Cain Project modules? Sign up for an appointment on Tuesday, April 1 at 2:00 p.m. In Herring Hall 100. Send an e-mail to Cainproj@rice.edu to request an appointment.