

UCF's QEP Office has an Inter/National Reputation for Excellence

**"No brag, just fact." Walter Brennan as
Will Sonnett in *The Guns of
Will Sonnett (1967-69)***

The University of Central Florida's QEP/Information Fluency Office has developed an excellent national and international reputation. Six years ago, the University Libraries and the IT&R division submitted the white paper that became UCF's QEP project. Since the appointment of Dr. Martha Marinara and Dr. Chuck Dziuban as QEP Co-Directors, it has been important for this project to involve the entire campus. The mission was to include students, faculty, administration, and professional staff with large and small, funded and unfunded projects. Information Fluency has had an impact, not only on the UCF campus, but well beyond our community. UCF's QEP has received much attention at national conferences, most especially the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Annual Conference (where it was called "The Poster Child" in 2007) and EDUCAUSE. Through the IF Web site, the co-directors have been contacted by faculty from colleges across the country and have assisted faculty and staff from universities in Canada, China, Japan, and Sweden who are attempting to incorporate information literacy skills into their curriculums.

Following are selections of comments concerning the UCF Quality Enhancement Plan and the influence the UCF QEP office has had on Information Fluency at the national and international levels.

Interdisciplinary Approach

"Today's college students might be impressively technologically literate, but mounting evidence suggests that students do not use technology effectively to help them with key 21st century skills, such as how to conduct on-line research, think critically about information, and use information ethically to accomplish their goals. UCF's Information Fluency (IF) Initiative targets the critical skills that affect educational attainment, workforce readiness, and lifelong learning. What impresses me most about UCF's IF initiative is its unique, multidisciplinary approach, instilling in students both a foundation in information skills, research, and communication as well as more advanced, discipline-specific IF skills in the disciplines that participate in the program. I have cited UCF's IF initiative in several of my publications and in recommendations to other colleges and universities as a model of a successful campus-wide approach to improving students' 21st century skills."

**Irvin R. Katz, Ph.D., Senior Research Scientist,
Center for Foundational and Validity Research,
Educational Testing Service**

Leading the Charge

"The information age creates immense pressure on students and faculty to evaluate and use the vast amount of data, information, knowledge and wisdom that floods their lives. More than ever, evaluating written, digital, auditory, and visual evidence requires an agile community where multiple perspectives build a framework for information fluency. This requires a transformation in the way we think about the creation, use, and delivery of information in its many iterations. The University of Central Florida is leading higher education in examining how to integrate a comprehensive culture of information fluency into teaching and learning and is viewed by its peers as the expert in this seminal area of research and practice."

**Susan E. Metros, Ph.D., Associate Vice Provost
and Deputy CIO, Professor of Visual Design and
Clinical Education, University of Southern
California**

A New Era

“The confluence of technology, information and disruptive globalization have brought us to an age where the information we teach today is obsolete tomorrow, and the jobs entering students will seek upon graduation have not yet been invented. That profound change mandates educators to find and promote new approaches to learning and the skills that will help students and citizens meet and master the challenges of this new era. To that end, the University of Central Florida’s QEP Information Fluency Initiative has been, in my view, among the most comprehensive and penetrating efforts to acknowledge and, more importantly, rigorously address an urgent need.

The impressive Information Fluency projects UCF has developed range from first-year projects to professional schools. The analysis that guided the project strategy was a comprehensive cross-institutional effort that engaged UCF leadership and the integration of information gathered from multiple sources and multiple instruments. The work included campus-wide focus groups, national survey results, and employer feedback. The resulting series of supported grants cut across disciplines in ways that have helped to define *Information Fluency* even as they have helped students expand their skills. The development of learning modules for the array of sub-literacies—technology, library search skills, etc—has been just one of many significant outcomes of the UCF project. From the design and development of new facilities, such as smart classrooms, to the provision of focused services for faculty and the substantial commitment of resources is, to my knowledge, an unparalleled recognition and comprehensive response to an urgent need.”

Gary Brown, Ph.D., Director, The Center for Teaching, Learning, & Technology, Washington State University

UCF’s Information Fluency Office has reached national and international prominence because of its vision and scope, the continued focus on 21st century literacy skills, and its interdisciplinary approach.

The interdisciplinary approach to the UCF QEP came after discussions with the members of the National Advisory Board and the Co-Directors. Dr. Susan Metros said that to have the greatest impact, we should “sow flowers.” Her intent was a wide range of participation across the campus. Wide range participation is exactly what we received by offering Enhancement Grants of \$1,000 to academic and library faculty, student support professionals, and staff who are willing to design projects that will enhance student learning in the area of Information Fluency.

Digital Wisdom

“In a culture of acute semantic slippage (the ‘information’ we’re overwhelmed by is mostly data; the ‘knowledge’ we manage, mostly just information), what can be said of the brave souls who push the other way? Not content with ‘information literacy’, they want to insist on ‘information fluency,’ pointing to an active application, creation, and production. This is not just brave, but necessary. If we are content just to let the information wash over us, all we’ll get is a bath. Marc Prensky, who gave us the distinction between ‘digital natives’ and ‘digital immigrants’ says in a recent article that the distinction no longer matters. What we must all strive for is ‘digital wisdom,’ which is both the capacity to use digital resources prudently and the capacity to become genuinely wiser by such use. It says a great deal about the well-established IF initiative at UCF that it not only was striving to cultivate digital wisdom before the term was coined, but that it has, by being so foresightful, so ahead of the curve, achieved demonstrable success in attaining just that for students, faculty, and staff involved.”

George Otte, Ph.D., Director of Instructional Technology, Graduate Center Programs in English, Urban Education and Technology & Pedagogy, The City University of New York (CUNY)



SURC Team, 2009 Spring Ethics Bowl

Since the inception of grant funding in 2006, the IF office has given out 54 Enhancement Grants. Those who have participated include: Rosen College of Hospitality Management, Sociology, Political Science, Center for Distributed Learning, LINK, SARC, UCF Libraries, Sophomore & Second Year Center, doctoral programs in Public Affairs, Nicholson School of Communications, Psychology, Molecular Biology & Microbiology, Digital Media, English, Journalism, First Year Advising and Experience, Upward Bound, Physics, History, IST, WebCT, Communication Sciences and Disorders, Biology, Health Professions, Modern Foreign Languages, National Writing Program Advisory Board, Marketing, Reading First, Career Services & Experiential Learning, College of Education, Student Success Center, Transfer and Transition Services, Information Technology and Resources and CD&WS.

Evidenced by the number of departments, colleges and schools participating in the Information Fluency Initiative at UCF, we are, indeed, one of the leading research universities embracing the tenants of the Quality Enhancement Plan and making a difference on campus and beyond. Dr. Marinara and Dr. Dziuban, as well as others working with the IF Initiative, have presented at 27 different national conferences. By the end of May 2009 over 100 faculty members will have participated in the IF Track at the Karen L. Smith Faculty Center For Teaching and Learning Summer Faculty Development Conference.

In addition to the Enhancement Grants, there were also 6 Engagement Grants/Pilot Projects funded through the IF office. These recipients shared \$46,000 dollars over a 3-year period. Participants included the Department of Philosophy, College of Nursing, SLS 1501 (SDES), The Burnett Honors College, Digital Media and Regional Campuses. Combined these projects have involved numerous faculty and staff, and have reached over 8,000 students at UCF both on the main campus and attending the regional campuses in Brevard County and Palm Bay. UCF is grateful for those who are leading the Information Fluency Initiative and for those who have participated in many ways.

For additional information on the Engagement and Enhancement Grants and to read the reports from those who have completed their grants, go to the IF web site at www.if.ucf.edu.



The Burnett Honors College and the UCF Libraries are pleased to announce the winners of UCF's Second Annual Information Fluency Award. The prizes were awarded based on each student's research process and information fluency skills, rewarding Honors students who develop exemplary methodological and scholarly approaches to the research needed for their papers and projects.

In the upper division, Stephanie Rash, Political Science major, won \$500 for her paper, *A Study of Nigeria: Health*. Dr. Bruce Wilson, Associate Professor of Political Science, is the supervising faculty member. Karlie Schaefer, Psychology and Sociology major, won \$500 in the lower division for her paper, *Bullying in School Today*. Dr. Cecelia Rodriguez Milanés, Associate Professor of English, is the supervising faculty member.

Pictured above are Barry Baker, Director of UCF Libraries, Stephanie Rash, Karlie Schaefer, & Dr. Alvin Wong, Dean, Burnett Honors College.



The Eth-X Men—2009 Spring Ethics Bowl

Below are some of the projects funded with Engagement Grants from the Office of Information Fluency. This is a sample of the 54 projects that have been funded.

Enhancing Information Fluency in a Freshman Pre-College Seminar

Dr. Ana C. Mack & Ms. Jennifer Wright, Student Academic Resource Center

Information Fluency in the Online Environment: A Proposal to Enhance a Large Section of American National Government

Dr. Kerstin Hamann, Dr. Hutch Pollock, & Dr. Bruce Wilson, Political Science

Undergraduate Research as a Means to Promote Information Fluency

Dr. Ken Teter, Molecular Biology & Microbiology & Ms. Heather Engleking, Career Services

Integrating Information Fluency in a Pre-Collegiate Program

Ms. DeLaine Priest, Student Success Center—Upward Bound Program

Freshman Explorations: Living/Learning Community

Mr. Christopher Quintero & Ms. Chelsea Worthington, First Year Advising & Exploration

Project Access: Providing Students with Hands-On Experience with the Freedom of Information Act

Dr. Rick Kenny & Mr. Rick Brunson, Nicholson School of Communication-Journalism Division

"Fun" Interactive Online IF Self-test

Ms. Lori Allison, Center for Distributed Learning

Enhancing Political Sociology Experiences through Information Fluency

Dr. Ida Cook, Sociology

Exploring Effective Methods to Reduce Variances of Students' Information Literacy Levels Regarding Knowledge and Skills in Personal Finance

Dr. Tadayuki Hara, Rosen College of Hospitality Management

Integrating Information Fluency into the Summer Bridge experience

Ms. Sandra Macaulay Leon-Barth, Student Academic Resource Center

Information Seeking Behaviors of UCF Undergraduate Students

Mr. Jason Martin, UCF Libraries

New Media/New Assessment Strategies in English

Dr. Barry Mauer & Dr. Tison Pugh, English

Critical Thinking about Sources of News Information

Dr. Shannon Whitten, Dr. Karen Mottarella, & Dr. Jeff Bedwell, Psychology

International Centre for Research Synthesis and Policy

Dr. David Boote, Cr. Chad Nye & Dr. Jamie Swartz, Communication Sciences & Disorders

Social Bookmarking Enrichment of GEP Science Writing

Dr. Thomas Bruekner, Physics

Enhancing Information Fluency for the History Methods Course

Dr. Robert Cassanello & Dr. Spencer J. Downing, History

Online in Your UCF Future

Ms. Karen Cobbs, Information Technologies & Resources

Applying Cognitive Science to Improve Critical Thinking: Developing a University-wide Resource for Research and Practice in Information Fluency

Dr. Stephen Fiore, Philosophy & Institute for Simulation & Training

National Writing Project Advisory Board: Articulating Information Fluency Goals to Enhance Undergraduate Transition Programs

Dr. Jeffrey Kaplan, College of Education

Financial Literacy Campaign

Ms. Michelle Ku, Ms. Fritzlaine Powell, & Dr. Kerry Welch, SDES & Office of Student Financial Assistance