Dear Faculty,

Greetings!

I know everyone has been enthusiastically busy. There has also been a great deal of productive activities coming from the Office of Faculty Development. I would like to once again take this opportunity to thank all the past and current faculty development workshop and Lyceum presenters and participants. I encourage all faculty to come and join us. The workshops not only provide us with valuable information on teaching and learning, but also an opportunity to fellowship with colleagues to share and discuss our ideas in a professional and engaging environment.

I would like to share with you highlights of topics that have been presented and will be taking place during the spring semester in this issue and upcoming issues. If you are interested in presenting a faculty development workshop or Lyceum Series, please call me at ext. 2134. Also, other off campus faculty development opportunities are available. We are members of New York University Faculty Resource Network (FRN) and Professional and Organizational Development (POD). Both organizations offer exceptional faculty development seminars, symposiums and workshops on teaching and learning. Please visit their websites for up-coming events. B-CU faculty development activities are on this website http://www.cookman.edu/facultyStaff/facDevCtr/wrkshp_series.html.

Comments from faculty and student on teaching and learning are welcomed and will be published in the Faculty Development Newsletter Cat Tales. Please forward to freckled@cookman.edu.

Wishing everyone a continued blessed semester.

Deborah L. Freckleton
Director of Faculty Development.
Classroom Civility

Start with an effective syllabus
Your syllabus is your contract with the student for that course. Be sure it includes your expectations for classroom behavior, and your approach to dealing with inappropriate behavior. Clearly written expectations regarding classroom conduct are an important first step in setting the tone for a positive educational experience.

Model the behavior you expect
Our behavior in the classroom should be a model for the behaviors we expect from students. It is difficult to be credible in enforcing classroom standards when we have not adhered to those standards ourselves.

- Begin and end class on time
- Return papers and exams in a timely fashion
- Arrive for each class prepared
- Treat students with respect
- Behave professionally at all times

Communicate
At the foundation of all effective relationships is effective communication. Use a variety of skills and strategies to keep the lines of communication open in both directions. Try to connect with students at the outset of class by learning their names, gathering some basic personal information, and being available before and after class to speak with students on a one-on-one basis. Destructive conflict is much less likely to occur when a positive relationship is present. Remember that conflict is an inevitable part of relationships and can be instructive if handled appropriately.

When problems do occur, keep these suggestions in mind:
- Deliver your message in an assertive manner, rather than aggressively or non-assertively.
- Try not to become defensive if your authority is challenged.
- Attempt to handle sensitive issues in a private conversation rather than in the presence of other students. This conveys respect for the student.
- Be a good listener. Often the student’s most important need is to be heard.
- Remember that the student needs to feel some sense of control in the situation as well. Give him or her responsibility for helping solve the problem when possible.
- Allow students to vent feelings appropriately.
- Don’t over-personalize the matter. Often the origins of the student’s feelings and behavior lie in other aspects of his or her life.
- Don’t argue with students. Allow them to express their views as long as they present them respectfully.
Assessing Student Learning

American Association of Higher Education

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE FOR ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING

1. The assessment of student learning begins with educational values. Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement. Its effective practice, then, begins with and enacts a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and strive to help them achieve. Educational values should drive not only what we choose to assess but also how we do so. Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about.

2. Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time. Learning is a complex process. It entails not only what students know but what they can do with what they know; it involves not only knowledge and abilities but values, attitudes, and habits of mind that affect both academic success and performance beyond the classroom. Assessment should reflect these understandings by employing a diverse array of methods including those that call for actual performance, using them over time so as to reveal change, growth, and increasing degrees of integration. Such an approach aims for a more complete and accurate picture of learning, and therefore firmer bases for improving our students' educational experience.

3. Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes. Assessment is a goal-oriented process. It entails comparing educational performance with educational purposes and expectations—these derived from the institution’s mission, from faculty intentions in program and course design, and from knowledge of students’ own goals. Where program purposes lack specificity or agreement, assessment as a process pushes a campus toward clarity about where to aim and what standards to apply; assessment also prompts attention to where and how program goals will be taught and learned. Clear, shared, implementable goals are the cornerstone for assessment that is focused and useful.

4. Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also an equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes. Information about outcomes is of high importance; where students "end up" matters greatly. But to improve outcomes, we need to know about student experience along the way—about the curricula, teaching, and kind of student effort that lead to particular outcomes. Assessment can help understand which students learn best under what conditions; with such knowledge comes the capacity to improve the whole of their learning.
Assessing Student Learning (continued)

5. **Assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic.** Assessment is a process whose power is cumulative. Though isolated, "one-shot" assessment can be better than none, improvement is best fostered when assessment entails a linked series of activities undertaken over time. This may mean tracking the progress of individual students, or of cohorts of students; it may mean collecting the same examples of student performance or using the same instrument semester after semester. The point is to monitor progress toward intended goals in a spirit of continuous improvement. Along the way, the assessment process itself should be evaluated and refined in light of emerging insights.

6. **Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved.** Student learning is a campus-wide responsibility, and assessment is a way of enacting that responsibility. Thus, while assessment efforts may start small, the aim over time is to involve people from across the educational community. Faculty play an especially important role, but assessment's questions can't be fully addressed without participation by student-affairs educators, librarians, administrators, and students. Assessment may also involve individuals from beyond the campus (alumni/alumnae, trustees, employers) whose experience can enrich the sense of appropriate aims and standards for learning. Thus, understood, assessment is not a task for small groups of experts but a collaborative activity; its aim is wider, better-informed attention to student learning by all parties with a stake in its improvement.

7. **Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.** Assessment recognizes the value of information in the process of improvement. But to be useful, information must be connected to issues or questions that people really care about. This implies assessment approaches that produce evidence that relevant parties will find credible, suggestive, and applicable to decisions that need to be made. It means thinking in advance about how the information will be used, and by whom. The point of assessment is not to gather data and return "results," it is a process that starts with the questions of decision-makers, that involves them in the gathering and interpreting of data, and that informs and helps guide continuous improvement.

8. **Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.** Assessment alone changes little. Its greatest contribution comes on campuses where the quality of teaching and learning is visibly valued and worked at. On such campuses, the push to improve educational performance is a visible and primary goal of leadership; improving the quality of undergraduate education is central to the institution's planning, budgeting, and personnel decisions. On such campuses, information about learning outcomes is seen as an integral part of decision making, and avidly sought.
9. **Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public.** There is compelling public stake in education. As educators, we have a responsibility to the publics that support or depend on us to provide information about the ways in which our students meet goals and expectations. But that responsibility goes beyond the reporting of such information; our deeper obligation—to ourselves, our students, and society—is to improve. Those to whom educators are accountable have a corresponding obligation to support such attempts at improvement.

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Dr. Aysar Sussan, Assoc. Prof./Dept. Chair, International Business (left)
Current Faculty Presenters

Kaduabu Ajongbah, Instructor of Education

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Current Faculty Presenters

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Pictures of other presenters in next issue.

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