

# ACCP Academy Teaching and Learning Newsletter

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Editor: Thomas D. Zlatic, Ph.D.

## Sorensen to Present Webinar Elective

ACCP is pleased to announce the first Academy Webinar: “A Nexus of Management and Leadership – Leading Successful Projects,” presented by Todd D. Sorensen, Pharm.D. Dr. Sorensen will examine the basic elements of successful project management, applicable to all areas of practice—in the classroom, in the clinic, and in administrative roles. Participants will gain insights into effective action plans, project implementation, and leading initiatives focused on creating change.

This 2-hour Webinar is available for elective credit in the ACCP Teaching and Learning Certificate Program.

In addition, the workshop can satisfy one elective requirement for the ACCP Academy in the Leadership and Management Certificate Program and in the ACCP Academy Research and Scholarship Certificate Program.



Normally, two electives are offered at each ACCP meeting, but at the ACCP/ESCP International Congress on Clinical Pharmacy held last April in Orlando, only one elective was on the schedule. Thus, there is no charge for those currently enrolled in the Academy who were full-meeting registrants in Orlando. Non-Congress registrants may participate for a fee: ACCP members, \$89.95; nonmembers, \$119.95.

The Webinar will take place on Wednesday, July 29, 2009, 7:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). Participation in the Webinar is limited to 250 registrants, so register early at <http://www.accp.com/meetings/w-acad09>. Registration closes July 28, 2009, at noon (Eastern Time).

*“I like a teacher who gives you something to take home to think about besides homework.”*

Lily Tomlin

## Don't Forget the Students! Making Your Course Syllabus Learner Centered

Brenda L. Gleason, Pharm.D.  
St. Louis College of Pharmacy

We have all been there. The semester start is just around the corner, and you need to develop your course syllabus. Frantically, course meeting schedules, content topics, required textbooks, and policies and procedures are gathered and crammed into the syllabus. But, where are the students?

It is all too easy for teachers to get so caught up in teaching that they forget about student learning. Because much of the course planning and development manifest themselves in the syllabus, course syllabi should be learner centered.

What is a learner-centered syllabus? The concept is simple. Rather than an approach emphasizing our teaching and expecting students to adapt, a learner-centered approach places the students and their ability to learn at the center of what we do. This means that rather than focusing on course content, the *process* of student learning becomes paramount. A learner-centered syllabus, then, lays out the process of student learning in the course.

To create a learner-centered syllabus, think about the following:

1. **The Big Picture**—what do you want students to be able to do because of your course?
2. **Practice Opportunities**—what homework assignments and in-class activities should be used to provide students with opportunities to practice course outcomes?
3. **Performance Criteria**—what does a good performance look like? What criteria constitute a successful performance of ability outcomes in the practice opportunity?
4. **Feedback**—How can self, peer, and/or expert formative feedback and assessment be used to help students improve their performance?

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*Editor's note: The ACCP Teaching and Learning Academy Newsletter is a quarterly electronic publication initiated to publicize ACCP Academy updates, to provide resources and tips that can enhance teaching, and to serve as a means of exchange for those involved in the ACCP Academy Teaching and Learning Certificate Program (TLCP). You are invited to contribute by suggesting ideas for content and by providing short items of interest. Please send your suggestions and comments to Wendi Sirna, ACCP Project Manager, at [wsirna@accp.com](mailto:wsirna@accp.com).*

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*“The first duty of a lecturer: to hand you after an hour’s discourse a nugget of pure truth to wrap up between the pages of your notebooks and keep on the mantle-piece forever.”*

Virginia Woolf

Once you have contemplated these four steps, be sure to include these items in your syllabus—describe course outcomes, practice opportunities, performance criteria, and how assessment feedback will be used.

In addition, as you are creating a learner-centered syllabus, consider delineating the students’ responsibilities in the course. Likewise, describe your role and responsibilities in the course. In the learner-centered paradigm, students are not passive learners—they are engaged, active participants in their learning. Your role is to facilitate student learning, not merely to dole out course content. The goal is to shift responsibility for learning to the student.

To help shift responsibility, seek shared power and create a sense of community with your course syllabus. If possible, provide students with opportunities for choice, such as determining reasonable due dates for course assignments. Doing so increases their sense of control over their learning. Make an intentional effort to create and maintain an environment conducive to learning. You can do this by fostering collaboration and cooperation among students, displaying interest in student learning and success, and making learning relevant. Also important for creating a positive learning environment

is to be mindful of the tone used in your syllabus. For example, when demarcating course policies, be sure to avoid a harsh tone and severe reprimands. Be aware of your use of bolding, capitalizing, and underlining in the syllabus.

Developing a learner-centered syllabus is not easy; however, a learner-centered syllabus is of great use to students, allowing them to see the “roadmap” for the course—the process of their learning in the course. So, when you develop your course syllabus, it is critically important not to forget your students.



## Improving on True or False

At the Assessing Student Learning symposium presented in Orlando, Deb Sturpe provided tips on constructing reliable objective tests. Those interested can find further insights in Mary E. Piontek, “Best Practices for Designing and Grading Exams,” available at [http://www.crlt.umich.edu/publinks/CRLT\\_no24.pdf](http://www.crlt.umich.edu/publinks/CRLT_no24.pdf). Also included are guidelines for creating assessment rubrics.

## Input on TLCP Electives

To earn a certificate from the ACCP Teaching and Learning Academy, participants must complete five elective workshops, in addition to the four required sessions. At each spring and fall ACCP meeting, participants can select from two electives that cover more in-depth matters related to teaching and learning. If you have topics in mind that you would like to explore in an elective at future meetings, send your ideas to Wendi Sirna at [wsirna@accp.com](mailto:wsirna@accp.com).

## Upcoming Workshops

The following 2009 Annual Meeting courses are available for credit toward the ACCP Academy Teaching and Learning Certificate Program. For complete information on the 2009 Annual Meeting, visit [www.accp.com/am](http://www.accp.com/am).



### Saturday, October 17

8:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Basic Training for New Clinical Faculty and Preceptors (required prerequisite module)

### Monday, October 19

1:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.

Implementing Teaching and Learning Strategies (required module 2)

### Tuesday, October 20

10:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

CliniCATs: Classroom Assessment and Active Learning for Experiential Education (elective)

### Tuesday, October 20

3:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.

I Can’t Believe They Did That: Enhancing Student Professionalism in the Classroom and Clinic

## ACCP White Papers

Newly released ACCP papers on interprofessional education and student professionalism are available online at <http://www.accp.com/report/index.aspx?iss=0709&art=11>.

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