



Vice President for Academic Affairs

April 27, 2006

Dr. Dorothy Zinsmeister
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia
270 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334-1450

Dear Dr. Zinsmeister:

I am pleased to offer Dr. Lyndasu Crowe as Dartton College's nominee for the 2006 Regents' Teaching Excellence Award. Dr. Crowe's passion for teaching is as evident in her compassion for her students as it is in the rigorous design of her courses. She establishes high standards for her students' learning, and then does whatever is required to motivate each of her students to exceed those standards. Her dedication to teaching has made her a role model for instructional practice across our campus, but it is her efforts to continuously improve her teaching that makes her such a worthy candidate for the Regents' award.

Dr. Crowe's commitment to her students is clearly evidenced in her student evaluations. Averaging between 9.8 and 9.9 on a 10 point scale, Lyndasu has had the highest student evaluation average in the Division of Science and Mathematics for each of the last six years. Her students' written comments, both voluminous and praising, generally focus around thanking Dr. Crowe for motivating them to want to learn the content, and for making them believe that they could succeed in a challenging course.

In response to the needs of students in fast-track healthcare programs, Lyndasu designed and taught the first hybrid course at Dartton College, Anatomy and Physiology for the Healthcare Professional. One year later this course was available in a completely online format, and was soon followed by online versions of Anatomy and Physiology I and II. Lyndasu has taken great pains to develop these courses to be at least as rigorous as our on-campus offerings, and in many cases the online versions may actually be more demanding. Yet the strength of her reputation as an excellent instructor guarantees that Lyndasu's online courses will fill quickly on registration day.

One of Lyndasu's most recent teaching efforts involved bringing her online material back into the on-campus classroom. With a set of laptops provided through a grant from HP, Lyndasu piloted a course design to implement technology in the classroom. Due to the

success of her pilot, HP has invited her to submit a follow-up proposal to replicate her design in other courses across our campus.

Lyndasu uses a wide variety of assessment tools in her courses. Her online and on-campus courses make extensive use of online quizzes to provide quick, consistent, and almost daily feedback to students. This is balanced with multiple tests, lab assignments, and a semester long portfolio. Lyndasu was one of the first users of portfolio assessment at Darton College, and has offered faculty training sessions in its use. It is not uncommon to find students in Nursing IV (taken two to three semesters after Anatomy and Physiology) who still carry their A&P portfolio to class.

The bottom line for Lyndasu is the student. When they asked for a space to study A&P models outside of lab time, she spent two weeks of her summer cleaning out a biology storage room and creating our A&P study room. When they asked for online classes, she wrote them. When they call her at midnight and ask her to explain the path of blood through the heart, she does it.

True dedication to teaching can't be instilled into a faculty member, it has to come from within. In Dr. Crowe's case it is abundant, and Darton College is proud to nominate her for the 2006 Regents' Teaching Excellence Award.

Dr. Joan Darden
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Darton College

Reflective Statement on Teaching and Learning

Lyndasu B. Crowe, M.D.

As a first grade teacher fresh out of college, one day I was quite frustrated with my students. I asked a fellow teacher, whom I admired and trusted immensely, “Why don’t they get it? I’ve been teaching the same thing every day for two weeks. We can’t move on until they learn it. What’s wrong with these kids?” This very wise woman replied, “Lyndasu, you can’t teach them the way you want to teach, you must teach them the way they want to learn. If you continue to teach these students the same material using the same methods repeatedly with no success, you have to wonder who the slow learner is.” I can still hear her voice speaking those words to me sometimes as I teach adults the intricacies of Anatomy and Physiology. The concept is as true now with adults as it was twenty-nine years ago with first graders.

I spent nineteen years out of the classroom, and often longed for the chance to teach again. Finally, the opportunity presented itself, and I accepted a Biology position at Darton College, teaching Anatomy and Physiology. I spent hours reading the texts, studying the latest research, and preparing for class. I had the first three chapters laid out and ready to teach before I ever met my students. You could see the excitement radiating from me as I made my way to the classroom. I was ready to once again become an ambassador of knowledge.

I went home and cried that first night after class. How could I have been so unprepared for what I found there? The students hardly even looked at me. Their eyes were frantically moving from the overhead to their notebooks, and the roar of pencils scratching paper was deafening. Had they heard a word I had said? The students were so meticulously copying each word from the overhead and checking the spelling twice that I had to wonder if they had even noticed I was lecturing. Then, after years of silence, I heard her words again, and I realized that I could not teach the material in the way I had been preparing for weeks; I had to teach in a way these students could learn.

I had broken the first rule of teaching, know your audience. I came to the realization that a community college presents a number of unique challenges and opportunities. My students were diverse in many ways, including their preparedness for college work. I knew early on that each student would require individual attention. And if I wanted to be successful as an instructor, I must be willing to put forth the time and effort to give it to them. I had to do more for them than explain the mechanisms of the human body. I needed to identify and remove the barriers keeping these students from true learning and ultimate success.

I pulled out my syllabus to read the description of the class. “Anatomy and Physiology for Healthcare Professionals is a one semester survey course designed to prepare you for your selected allied healthcare major. This fast paced course assumes that you have a basic background in biology and chemistry. We will have 4 hours of lecture in the classroom and 2 hours in the lab each week. You are expected to come to class prepared.” I needed to find out if these expectations matched my audience.

Analysis of the Fall 2000 Class of 28 students:

- 15 had been out of school more than 3 years
- 9 had been out of school more than 10 years
- 7 had never had a chemistry course
- 3 could not afford to buy the book for at least 2 weeks

My expectations did not match the class. I developed a plan for that first semester. I typed up my lecture notes and made copies for each student. I asked the students to “prepare” by reading over the lecture notes before the next class. When class met again I passed out highlighters and colored pens to each student. I used "ELMO", the digital display device that communicates with the projector, to highlight and illustrate my lecture, asking my students to highlight and illustrate on their notes.

A student’s success in a course begins with understanding what it is they need to know and how to put it in a form that they can learn. The understanding of what they need to know begins with a link. Once the student knows the vocabulary in context, the difficult concepts seem to fall into place. Knowing the path of blood through the heart is paramount for understanding how the heart functions. I designed a simple foldable that allows the student to write the structures on both sides and turn it in an endless loop. Last semester one of my anatomy and physiology two students said “Did you know that the aspirin commercial is wrong? I have heard that jingle a hundred times, but I would have not ever known it was incorrect had I not learned that path of blood through the heart.”

My Christmas break was spent converting those typed outlines into WEBCT. I entered the next semester armed with a new weapon, web based classroom support pages. The first day of class I met wide eyes, but now they were looking at me. Spending this first day talking about how to prepare for class and administering a survey was the best investment I ever made in the future success of a class. As I reflected on the day, I knew the demographics had not changed from last semester, but the confidence of the instructor and students had changed dramatically. Each semester that has followed, there have been more notes, quizzes, interactive activities and video clips added.

A student’s success in a course depends on the delivery of the material in a learning style that fits that student. Once the note taking task was conquered, I was able to again focus on my audience. Each class includes students with varied learning styles, requiring a varying array of presentation styles for the day’s material. I believe allowing for group collaboration to adapt the information to a different style can have a long lasting impact on a student’s learning. I became known as the teacher headed to class with the box. Each student had a folder, and each folder was grouped with three other students that had been identified as having varied learning styles. My box also contained an assortment of craft tools and anatomy models. I presented, they collaborated, and we all learned. I cleaned out a supply closet, collected the stored models, and the study room was created. I ordered specimens to dissect, added more models to our collection, and minimum passing criteria for lab exams were instituted. I searched websites of the most common transfer institutions for our science majors and polled the nursing and allied health faculty on our campus, identifying the importance of each of our common course syllabi

objectives, and our curricula was aligned. I petitioned for laptops, internet connections and ADAM software and my lab became digitally enhanced. The students moved from relying on one presentation style, to multiple methods of learning. Brooks, J. and Brooks, M. (1993) *In Search of Understanding: The Case for Constructivist Classrooms*, ASCD explains that information is retained at different percentages when different learning methods are used. If lecture is used, only 5% of the information is retained, followed by 10% retained when reading; 20% when audiovisual is used; 30% when demonstration is used; 50% when a discussion group forum is used; 75% when students practice by doing; and 90% of the information is retained when the students teach others or make immediate use of the learning. It takes a combination of these methods to teach anatomy and physiology most effectively.

A student's success depends on the ability of the instructor to assess the learning. I teach to the objectives in each course, and I test what I teach. However, exams are not the only method of assessment. WEBCT quizzes give immediate feedback to the students and allow me to not only see if they have understood the material, but also if they are working in the course. They seem surprised when I not only give them a grade on their exam, but also let them know how long they have spent using the supplements and how they scored on their quizzes. A's for on an on campus student is typically accompanied by 1500+ hits on their webpage, while failing students typically have less than 500. The use of portfolios allows for an organized snapshot of the students' daily work and growth throughout the semester. It gives another important piece of information for the awarding of a final grade. Like other successful assessments of learning, it works if the students have a clear understanding of what and how they are to complete the portfolio. The students are given examples and my grading rubric.

A student's success in a course also depends on the ability of the student to have access to the instruction. The biggest challenge I have faced in my teaching career was the creation of anatomy and physiology for healthcare professionals hybrid, followed by anatomy and physiology one, anatomy and physiology two, and anatomy and physiology for healthcare professionals online. It was time to once again reflect. "Lyndasu, you can't teach them the way you want to teach; you must teach them the way they want to learn. If you continue to teach these students the same material using the same methods repeatedly with no success, you have to wonder who the slow learner is." These potential students have varying reasons that prevent them from attending class on campus, including full time jobs, families, no vehicle, no money for gas or a combination of obstacles. The pedagogy changes have been successful. WEBCT is ready for the adaptations. The only thing left is my commitment.

The students have again risen to the challenge. Last semester I taught anatomy and physiology II classes using the same WEBCT notes, quizzes, labs, and exams for my on campus lecture class, the computer enhanced class, and the online class. The lab exams differed in the online class; I used pictures of pinned specimens, models, and illustrations. The most significant difference in the three classes was a decrease in withdrawals: fewest in the online, followed closely by the computer enhanced class.

With the acquisition of a large workforce development grant by our nursing department to deliver the didactic portion of the nursing major online, I must again reflect on my philosophy of teaching and learning. I have developed the WEBCT courses, but how do I feel about another instructor delivering them? If I am truly the teacher I profess to be, I will have influenced my colleagues, instilling in them respect for varying teaching and learning methods, and a commitment to Darton College's students and mission. I wonder what my mentor from my first year of teaching would have advised. She would probably tell me that while I can teach my students well, I can't teach them all. The way to broadening the number of students I can reach is to become a mentor for other instructors. I know that my students have been touched by her inspiration of me, and now I have the opportunity to pay it forward.

Condensed Curriculum Vitae
Lyndasu B. Crowe
Darton College
Albany, Georgia 31707

EDUCATION

Doctor of Medicine

University of Santiago, Dominican Republic March 1985

Medical Clinical Rotations

University of Connecticut School of Medicine January 1983 to March 1985

Master of Science, Education

Georgia Southwestern College May 1982

Bachelor of Science, Education

Georgia Southwestern College May 1977

EXPERIENCE

Darton College

Assistant Professor of Biology

Teaching:

August 2000 to Present

Anatomy and Physiology One

Anatomy and Physiology Two

Anatomy and Physiology for Healthcare Professionals

ROTECH

Medical Policy Analyst for Physician Education January 1999 to August 2000

HealthStar Inc.; Georgia Division

Vice President; Patient and Physician Education Specialist January 1990 to December 1999

HealthStar Inc.; Oklahoma Division

Vice President; Patient and Physician Education Specialist January 1990 to December 1999

MedStar Rental and Sales

Vice President; Site Manager; Policy Analyst January 1988 to December 1999

The Learning Tree

Owner/Kindergarten Teacher May 1979 to July 1981

Miller County Elementary School

Teacher; Kindergarten and First Grade September 1977 to May 1979

EXTERNAL GRANTS FUNDED

Improving Teacher Quality grant of \$18,000 to provide a seven-day workshop for twenty Southwest Georgia middle and high school life science teachers. 2003.

Eisenhower grant of \$19,000 to provide a five-day workshop for twenty Southwest Georgia middle grades science teachers. 2002.

ADVISORY PANELS

Flint Riverquarium, Education Committee, 2003-Present

University System of Georgia, Math/Science Consortium, 2002- 2005

Thronateeska/Darton College Science Education Consortium 2002-Present

PTK Advisor 2002-2005

Women in Science Advisor 2005-Present

PRESENTATIONS

Edventures in Science K-12 Outreach Programs

Numerous programs at area schools and Darton College 2001-Present

Southwest Georgia Center for Women at Darton College: Lunch Learning Series

Breast Cancer: What you always wanted to know from your doctor
2004 October

NISOD International Conference on Teaching and Leadership Excellence

Establishing Relationships: Science, Mathematics, K-12, and College
Humanizing Online Learning May 2004

Southwest Georgia RESA Science Consortium

Life Science: Inquiry Teaching of the Respiratory System March 2003
Animal Adaptation: Using the Scientific Method March 2002

AWARDS

2006 Darton College Teacher of the Year

2004 Associate Marshall for Spring and Fall Commencement

2004 NISOD Excellence Award

2004 Darton College Community Service Award

2004 Darton College's nominee for the Regents' Hall of Fame Faculty Award

Who's Who Among America's Teachers: 2002; 2003; 2004; 2005

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

Learning Focused School Improvement Model Certification 2005; 2006

RTK Basic Awareness and Chemical Specific Training 2000-2005

Georgia Science Teachers Science and Leadership Conference 2004

NSF Outreach conference 2003; 2004

University of Georgia's Teaching and Learning Conference 2001

Hewlett Packard Higher Ed Invitational Conference 2004

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Association of American Medical Colleges Health Professions Advisor; 2003-Present

EPAAC Science Taskforce; 2004

PRISM Invitational Faculty Rewards Symposium; 2005

Merck Science Camp Coordinator; 2006 Instructor; 2001-2005

Discovery Camp Instructor; 2002-2004

P-8 Science Consortium; 2003

Grant Reviewer: Improving Teacher Quality Grants Program; 2003

Program Coordinator for Genetics Update Conference: 2003

Courses and Programs Developed

Edventures in Science K-12 Outreach Programs

Anatomy and Physiology One Online

Anatomy and Physiology Two Online

Anatomy and Physiology for Healthcare Professionals Online

Anatomy and Physiology for Healthcare Hybrid

Anatomy and Physiology Study Room

3-D Anatomy

Brown Bag Lunch Continuing Education across the Campus