Center for Teaching and Learning

Progress Report on Activities

July 1, 2004 - July 1, 2005

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Mission and History

Founded in 2002, the Center for Teaching and Learning at the Michael D. Eisner College of Education, California State University, Northridge (CSUN), serves as an enduring site for educational change and development. It is the mission of the Center for Teaching and Learning to keep CSUN at the forefront of cutting edge innovations in preparing teachers, educational administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, and other school-related personnel.

The Center for Teaching and Learning has an initial charge of exploring the work of Dr. Mel Levine and his organization the *All Kinds of Minds* nonprofit institute, as well as investigating the impact of the institute's *Schools Attuned* professional development and service delivery program on student learning outcomes, teacher knowledge and instructional practices, and systemic school change.

The creation of the Center for Teaching and Learning, as well as the position of Executive Director and The Eisner Chair of Teaching and Learning, was made possible by a generous gift received from The Eisner Foundation in spring 2002. Michael D. Eisner, CEO of The Walt Disney Company, his wife Jane, and their sons Breck, Eric, and Anders, have greatly assisted at-risk children and their families through their numerous contributions to non-profit organizations in the Los Angeles and Orange County areas of Southern California.

Report of the Executive Director

The Center for Teaching and Learning at the Michael D. Eisner College of Education, California State University, Northridge (CSUN), has continued to fulfill its mission of exploring innovative programs that impact the preparation of teachers and school related professionals. As outlined on our website (http://www.csun.edu/education/ctl/), faculty continue to join the ranks of Center Fellows and Associates; important educators have been added to a growing list of nationally recognized experts contributing to the transformation of teacher preparation efforts at CSUN; and an ever widening professional community has been established that embraces a strengths-based perspective of family and student empowerment.

Consistent with previous annual reports, this document offers a review of activities and accomplishments of the Center over the past year. Each section is organized according to the original initiatives specified in the Gift Grant Agreement between The Eisner Foundation and California State University, Northridge, as authorized on March 21, 2002.

Some of the highlights of this report:

- Center Fellows have been engaged in a series of activities to explore possible intersections between Dr. Levine's work and learning-related aspects of psychological counseling and career counseling. A variety of CTL events and projects during 2005--2006 focused on issues and processes that relate to the psychological/emotional and career experiences of undergraduate and graduate college students who struggle during the postsecondary education experience.

In order to ensure direct and open communication with all strategic partners, the Executive and Assistant Directors participate in ongoing meetings and phone conferences with the Dean of the Michael D. Eisner College of Education, Philip Rusche, the Executive Director of the Etta Israel Center, Michael Held, the CEO of All Kinds of Minds, Mark Grayson, and other notable educators, administrators, physicians, and school related personnel.

Looking forward, Center Fellows and Associates will continue their work towards the establishment of a fully functioning Learning Achievement Center, incorporating a transdisciplinary service delivery model with a primary goal of interprofessional preparation of professionals at the university (including, for the first time, school psychological services as delivered by an intern in the School Psychology program)

As always, we welcome feedback—specifically associated with this report, or generally connected to our long-term efforts. Please address questions, comments, and suggestions using our associated email account at centertl@csun.edu .

Michael E. Spagna
July 2006

Appendices

APPENDIX A

L.I.F.E. Scale developed by Barker and Goodwin (2006)

Questions without constructs identified

1. I get confused when someone gives me a long set of instructions all at once.

2. I have trouble completing tasks that require a step-by-step process

3. Dividing my time across projects is difficult for me

4. I usually do not notice that I am running behind in completing a task until it is too late to get it done on time.

5. When I tell a story, people say the sequence of the story is hard to follow.

6. When there are a lot of steps in a problem, I sometimes feel confused

7. I think even if I were to study about how a computer works, I could never really understand it

8. I have difficulty noticing differences between different shapes.

9. When I don't use a computer, my essays tend to look neat

10. I like building models (airplanes, cars, trains, etc.).

11. I like doing jigsaw puzzles.

12. My backpack is usually full of things I don't really use.

13. If my bicycle pedals were not working correctly, I'd not know how to assess what was wrong

14. If I were to make a clay object, I'd probably not know much about how it would look until I'd finish.

15. My handwriting is easily readable.

16. I play most sports well, after I have been shown how.

17. I don't learn dance steps easily.

18. I am fast and accurate when I use a computer keyboard

19. I have trouble catching things when people toss them to me

20. I am a neat eater.

21. People often can't read my writing.

22. I understand information best if I am told rather than shown

23. I understand information best when are supplemented by pictures or charts

24. Understanding how things work comes easily to me

25. I form opinions about most things

26. I like to analyze things

27. When given an assignment or a problem to be solved I prefer to be given as few instructions as possible

28.   I enjoy sitting with a group and throwing out new ideas, not matter how far-fetched those ideas are

29.   When given an assignment my preference is for exact instructions to be given to me rather than have me figure out what I should do

30.   When given a task or a problem to solve I generally like to think about the various steps before I begin work

31.   I understand the importance of rules and have little difficulty applying them to my everyday life

32.   I generally have difficulty understanding what the rules are whether in math or grammar

33.   I generally arrive at solutions or conclusions quickly needing only a few bits of information

34.   I generally find it easy to concentrate and stay focused in class

35.   I usually complete assignments on time

36.   I find that the quality of my work and my behavior towards others is relatively consistent over time

37.   I find it easy to determine what is important to know for a test

38.   I find it is easy for me to shift from one activity to the next

39.   I find that I have difficulty maintaining focus on tasks long enough to complete the assignment

40.   Before I go out, I prefer to complete my work

41.   Before engaging in a task I generally will stop and think about possible outcomes

42.   Deadlines are generally troublesome for me

43.   I make it a habit to check over my work before I hand it in

44.   It is easier for me to have directions or explanations said to me rather than written

45.   Writing my ideas down is easier for me than speaking about them

46.   I seem to say the wrong things with friends, but I don't realize it until it's too late.

47.   While I'm reading the bottom of the page I often forget the stuff at the top of the page

48.   I tend to act in ways people like

49.   In the middle of a math problem (e.g. long division) I often forget what I intended to do.

50.   I often have trouble knowing if people are joking or serious, angry or not angry.

51.   I speak to my professors the same way I speak to my family.

52.   Some people think I boast too much.

53.   When I 'm writing I can't remember the rules of grammar or punctuation.

54.   People tell me my comments or behavior is often insensitive to others' feelings.

55.   I do terribly on tests when I have to recall a list of something.

56.   When I'm with friends or co-workers I often am making a joke about them but they think I was being mean.

57.   When I'm with people I don't know what to say.

58.   I often forget something immediately after I read it – even if it was interesting.

59.   I have trouble holding parts of a thought or math problem together while I'm thinking about them.

60.   People like me all the time.

61.   People say I have trouble sticking to a topic

Questions with constructs identified

1)   I get confused when someone gives me a long set of instructions all at once. (seq aw; reverse)

2)   I have trouble completing tasks that require a step-by-step process.(seq aw; reverse)

3)   Dividing my time across projects is difficult for me

4)   I usually do not notice that I am running behind in completing a task until it is too late to get it done on time. (temp seq ord—time mgt; reverse)

5)   When I tell a story, people say the sequence of the story is hard to follow. (temp seq ord.—output, perc., mem., aw.; reverse)

6)   When there are a lot of steps in a problem, I sometimes feel confused

7)   I think even if I were to study about how a computer works, I could never really understand it. (spatial output;higher spat. Think.; reverse)

8)   I have difficulty noticing differences between different shapes. (spatial perc; reverse).

9)   When I don't use a computer,my essays tend to look neat (consistent spacing, margins, etc.). (spatial output)

10)   I like building models (airplanes, cars, trains, etc.). (higher spat. Thinking, material mgt., spat. Out.)

11)   I like doing jigsaw puzzles.(higher spat. Thinking, material mgt., spat. Out.)

12)   My backpack is usually full of things I don't really use. (mater. Mgt. ; reverse)

13)   If my bicycle pedals were not working correctly, I'd not know how to assess what was wrong. (higher spat. Think. ; reverse)

14)   If I were to make a clay object, I'd probably not know much about how it would look until I'd finish. (previewing in neuromotor activities;reverse)

15)   My handwriting is easily readable.(graphomotor;reverse)

16)   I play most sports well, after I have been shown how. (Gross motor prod., Body Pos. sense, Outer spatial processing)

17)   I don't learn dance steps easily. (Gross motor prod.; Gross motor mem.)

18)   I am fast and accurate when I use a computer keyboard (fine motor)

19)   I have trouble catching things when people toss them to me(fine motor;

20)   I am a neat eater. (fine motor).

21)   People often can't read my writing. (graphomotor; reverse)

22)   I understand information best if I am told rather than shown (hoc – verb. concept)

23)   I understand information best when are supplemented by pictures or charts (hoc – non-verb. concept)

24)   Understanding how things work comes easily to me (hoc – process concept)

25)   I form opinions about most things (hoc – critical thinking)

26)   I like to analyze things (hoc – critical thinking)

27)   When given an assignment or a problem to be solved I prefer to be given as few instructions as possible (hoc – creativity & brainstorming)

28)   I enjoy sitting with a group and throwing out new ideas, not matter how far-fetched those ideas are (hoc – creativity & brainstorming)

29)   When given an assignment my preference is for exact instructions to be given to me rather than have me figure out what I should do (hoc – creativity & brainstorming)

30)   When given a task or a problem to solve I generally like to think about the various steps before I begin work (hoc – problem –solving)

31)   I understand the importance of rules and have little difficulty applying them to my everyday life (hoc – rule use)

32)   I generally have difficulty understanding what the rules are whether in math or grammar (hoc – rule use)

33)   I generally arrive at solutions or conclusions quickly needing only a few bits of information (hoc – reasoning & logical thinking)

34)   I generally find it easy to concentrate and stay focused in class (attention – mental energy)

35)   I usually complete assignments on time (attention – pacing)

36)   I find that the quality of my work and my behavior towards others is relatively consistent over time (attention – performance consistency)

37)   I find it easy to determine what is important to know for a test (attention – saliency determination)

38)   I find it is easy for me to shift from one activity to the next (attention – focal maintenance)

39)   I find that I have difficulty maintaining focus on tasks long enough to complete the assignment (attention – focal maintenance)

40)   Before I go out, I prefer to complete my work (attention – satisfaction level/facilitation – inhibition)

41)   Before engaging in a task I generally will stop and think about possible outcomes (attention – previewing)

42)   Deadlines are generally troublesome for me (attention – pacing)

43)   I make it a habit to check over my work before I hand it in (attention – self-monitoring)

44)   It is easier for me to have directions or explanations said to me rather than written (language – receptive)

45)   Writing my ideas down is easier for me than speaking about them (language – expressive)

46)   I seem to say the wrong things with friends, but I don't realize it until it's too late. (soc. cog – topic selection/convers. tech)

47)   While I'm reading the bottom of the page I often forget the stuff at the top of the page (memory – idea maintenance/active working memory)

48)   I tend to act in ways people like (soc. beh. – self-marketing)

49) In the middle of a math problem (e.g. long division) I often forget what I intended to do. (act. working mem – idea maint./soc beh – social concept)

50) I often have trouble knowing if people are joking or serious, angry or not angry. (social conceptualization)

I speak to my professors the same way I speak to my family. (soc. concpt – code switching)

51) Some people think I boast too much. (soc. beh – self-marketing)

52) When I 'm writing I can't remember the rules of grammar or punctuation. (memory – long term/pattern recognition)

53) People tell me my comments or behavior are often insensitive to others' feelings. (soc cog – self-marketing/conversational tech)

54) I do terribly on tests when I have to recall a list of something. ((memory – recall)

55) When I'm with friends or co-workers I often am making a joke about them but they think I was being mean. (soc cog – conversational tech)

56) When I'm with people I don't know what to say. (soc cognition – conversational tech)

57) I often forget something immediately after I read it – even if it was interesting. (memory – idea maintenance)

58) I have trouble holding parts of a thought or math problem together while I'm thinking about them. (memory – active working memory idea main/task component main)

59) People like me all the time. (soc cog – soc information processing)

60) People say I have trouble sticking to a topic (soc cog – topic selection/maint)

L.I.F.E. Project Initial Pilot Research Consent Form (Barker & Goodwin, 2006)

As you all are probably aware, we have recently been very excited to have been developing a set of questions and an interview to be used with students to help them identify their learning styles--their strengths and challenges as learners. We are at a stage at which we have a set of questions and now we need some people to answer them and then talk with us briefly about them. We'd like to ask you all to be our first guinea pigs--I mean research assistants. Seriously, you could definitely consider yourselves research assistants (it would be exactly what you would be; we'd like your feedback regarding the instrument). But you will also, hopefully, acquire some valuable information about how you learn. Another important issue for you to know is your results would be kept confidential. Your participation is not for the purpose of validating the questionnaire, so there would be no need for us to hold onto your results. Finally, and this is perhaps the most important piece: there is absolutely NO OBLIGATION to participate in this and if you DO participate you will be free to discontinue your participation at absolutely any time. The questionnaire will take about 15-20 minutes to complete. We'd like to discuss your results with you. The discussion would take about an hour, maybe 2 hours. The discussion is actually a pretty important part of our process that you will be helping us to develop by your participation.

I will leave the questionnaire in your mailboxes. If you do want to participate, please just fill it out asap and leave it in the envelope in Alan's mailbox. If you have any questions don't hesitate to ask any of the three of us.

Corinne, Bruce and Alan