

# Humphreys College

## NEWSLETTER SUPPLEMENT

WINTER QUARTER

MARCH 2011

### HOW TO SUCCEED IN COLLEGE: THE FIRST TEN YEARS

BY STANISLAV PERKNER, DIRECTOR OF THE LIBRARY AND LEARNING CENTER

*Ten years ago, then the Chair of the Liberal Arts Department Jess Bonds approached me with an idea to extend Humphreys Library services. How about going beyond the traditional tutoring and offering small-group workshops open to anybody? No registration required... Soon, the College Catalog listed a new department: the Library and Learning Center.*

#### LEARNING HOW TO RUN A LEARNING CENTER

The original plan was to encourage students to seek extra help at two critical points of each quarter: the beginning, when the new arrivals sometimes struggle with the rigors of academic life, and then just before finals. A generous offer came from Professors Rowena Walker and Ann Bauermeister – to run regular Saturday morning seminars open to those who



wished to learn more about algebra and human biology. Prior to that, Cynthia Becerra and Linda Rahmoller had offered similar weekday sessions focused on job-search skills. The core idea was to keep the sessions open as additional



learning assistance provided by volunteering instructors.

The Learning Center director was then asked to turn those occasional efforts into regular sessions. Before long, they became known as the “How to Succeed in College” quarterly series. Initially, students were invited to talk about time management, learning styles and similar nuts-and-bolts topics. Almost all weekly sessions were moderated by the director-in-charge himself.

#### WHERE TO START?

Soon, some instructors recommended that something should be done to improve the communication skills of students. It required talking about other issues related to college-level research. The Library served as a natural repository of the traditional printed resources—both books and journals—and started to be used as a computer-driven research center.

The beginnings were rather slow. Attendance was sometimes sporadic. Once, no one showed for a workshop titled “Are You an ESL Student? A Special Session.” The session instructor, a life-long English learner himself, enthusiastically ready to share his wisdom, was discouraged. Jess Bonds, wearing a poker face, consoled him: “Most likely, your ESL students did not understand the abbreviation... Try harder!”

Eventually, some instructors started to advise their less-than-successful students to seek help. Some of them even offered a modest extra credit. E-mail made it easy to inform each participating instructor about his or her students’ workshop participation.

Besides writing and researching skills, some students started to ask for assistance in mathematics. The workshops titled *Overcoming Math Anxiety* or *How to Become a Better Math Student* have been offered almost every quarter, featuring Rowena Walker, Leslie Walton, Lisa Kooren, Samantha S. Yem, Holly Nash, and Felix Cano.



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## HOW TO SUCCEED AS A WRITER AND SPEAKER

The workshops attempting to improve students' communication skills have been linked to various writing assignments – from short-essay answers composed in a classroom setting through literature reviews and position papers to substantial research-based papers. Gradually, the



core of each quarterly series has become three research paper-related presentations: *Know Your Library and Web Resources*; *Prewriting, Drafting, Composing, and Revising*; and *Documenting*. With the full development of sophisticated computer programs, students appreciate Linda Rahmoller's instruction on the formatting of their term papers.

During the entire decade, the writing sessions serve as an opportunity to keep advising students in academic documentation requirements. Originally, it was the Modern Language Association (MLA) style; gradually, with the introduction of the graduate program in Education and the Criminal Justice classes, the American Psychological Association (APA) rules started to replace the MLA standard. Several times a quarter, some teachers prefer to invite the Learning Center instructor directly to the classrooms so that everybody receives the same MLA or APA instruction. The latest communications skills assessment studies seem to confirm that Humphreys' students are becoming more aware of the academic research expectations.

The workshops also explain to the newly arriving students the *anti-plagiarism rules*, stressing prevention of an unintended plagiarism. The participants learn about the purpose and learning value of TurnItIn.com, the leading academic plagiarism detector, utilized by both Humphreys teachers and students to ensure academic integrity.

Occasionally, the writing workshops venture into more specific fields including the *mass media formats* or *creative writing*.

To cultivate students' oral communication skills was the main goal of the following workshops: "*Butterflies*"? *How to Cope with Stage Fright and Fear of Public*

*Speaking*; *Classroom Presentation Strategies*; *Seven Rules of a Successful Oral Presentation*, *The Power of Public Speaking*; and *The Art of Conversation with Charles Wiley*.

## WELCOME TO HUMPHREYS' CYBER CAFÉ

In 2005/2006, Humphreys College offered its first online courses. Learning Center workshops started to instruct students in the new delivery system and its learning environment with the initial help of Jim DeCosta and Kevin



Van Dewark (the so-called *Cyber Café* sessions offered by Jim DeCosta were first to cover online learning strategies). Gradually, the workshop schedules included topics approaching various aspects of distant education: *The Elements of Your Online Course*; *Read to Learn: How to Impress your Online Instructor*; *Best Writing / Reading Strategies for Your Online Course*; *Textbook Thinking: A Way to Study in Your Online Course*; and *Studying Online: The Art of Effective Note Making*.

The move from traditional learning to web-enhanced and online instruction formats has required instructors to pay more attention to students' reading skills. Workshops titled *How to Read to Learn*; *Before You Open Your Textbook*; *What—and Why—to Read in College*, or "*Carved in Sand*": *How to Enhance our Memory* have been designed to make students better readers.

## ON FIRST-NAME BASIS WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY

Even before the introduction of non-traditional instruction, Learning Center's workshops ventured into the unmarked waters of web-based research. Among those presentations, frequently offered by Richard Hunt, Lead Learning Center Tutor, with the occasional help of Darwin Sarnoff, UOP's Professor Emeritus, have been some of the following:

*Beyond Google: What You Really Need to Know*, *How to Search the Internet: Your*



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*Virtual Reference Library, Finding it Online: Search Engine Strategies, It Ain't Necessarily So: Evaluating Web Resources, Know your Library and Web Resources, Living with Computers: "Is Google Making Us Stoopid?", Wikipedia or Britannica?: New Trends in Academic Research, Blogs and Blogosphere in Academia, the Future of Reading in the Era of the Internet, and the ABC of Database Searches – especially EBSCO, WilsonWeb, and ProQuest.*

### CRITICAL THINKERS MAKE GOOD PROFESSIONALS

One of the key learning outcomes of Humphreys' programs has been critical thinking. In the course of the decade, its understanding has been addressed from various angles in the workshops on research methods, techniques, and procedures, on the evaluation of traditional and web resources, and in a variety of stand-alone sessions titled, for example, *Critical Thinkers Make Good Professionals, Critical Thinking and Your Professional Development, Covey's Habits of Highly Effective People, or Three Steps towards Creative Thinking.*

### FROM MATRICULATION TO GRADUATION—AND BEYOND



About five years ago, the Learning Center joined its efforts with the Admissions Office and renewed the Humphreys tradition of *the new student orientations*. The quarterly sessions have been an opportunity for the Admissions Director Santa Lopez-Minatre and her associates (Lisa Kooren, now

the Director of the Modesto Campus, and Chiyo Miyai) to walk new students through the administrative and fiscal requirements of the College; they are usually joined by the representatives of Humphreys' faculty, including the deans, department chairs, and program coordinators.

The basic orientation sessions are supplemented by more specialized workshops offered during regular college quarters. Some of them deal with everyday demands of student's life (*From High School to College: Making the Transition; You're a College Student: How to Organize your Time Effectively, Understanding your Learning Style, Managing your College Life: Survival Skills, Your Financial Security: Challenges and Choices, Please*

*Leave me Alone: How to Study Effectively, Test Anxiety and How to Overcome It, Taking Classroom Exams: Objective and Essay Test, Before the Finals: A Writing Clinic, and Classroom Etiquette and Online Netiquette—and Beyond*).

Another category addresses more substantial issues, for example, *College Years as a Unique Opportunity for Your Personal Growth, Your College Experience as a Part of Your Future, On the Transition from Undergraduate to Graduate Studies, How to Study for Complex Exams – LSAT, CBEST, or Law Bar.*

A similar goal—to look beyond the years spent at Humphreys—fulfills another set of regular presentations offered under the umbrella of the Learning Center's weekly workshops. This cooperation started six years ago with an offer from the Job Placement Officer Chiyo Miyai to prepare quarterly presentations titled *Job Market Today and Tomorrow*. Temporarily, her series was conducted by Lisa Kooren, and upon her move to Modesto, Chiyo



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### STUDENTS AND THEIR COLLEGE: FROM INFORMATION EXCHANGE TO SHARED GOVERNANCE?

Since Humphreys College is a commuter school, it is not easy to establish a continuously functioning student representation. The Learning Center's workshops are attempting to serve as one of the feedback channels connecting the college leadership with its student population – and vice versa.

These workshops are typically presented by College deans and academic chairs (Cynthia Becerra, Jess Bonds, and Robert G. Humphreys Jr.). Lately, they have included such topics as



*Humphreys Students and Alumni in the Mirror of Institutional Research, Associate Dean Cynthia Becerra about Student*

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*Retention, Why We Study Shakespeare at Humphreys: General Education Component of your Education, Humphreys College in Retrospective and Perspective, College-level Ways of Learning Assessment, How Do We Measure Your Academic Progress?, On the Transition from Undergraduate to Graduate Studies, Behind the Scene: Your Instructors and Their Job, and "Accreditation 101": Why Do Students Care.*

A broader exposure of Humphreys students to various topical issues of higher education, nationally and internationally, has been offered by several workshops presented under the rubrics "Beyond the News" or "Let's Think about It" (for example, *The Presidential Election Year and the Prospects of American Higher Education, American Higher Education Today and Tomorrow, National Trends in Higher Education: "Public Good" or "Private Gain"?*, or *American Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century*).

In the course of the years, various workshops would convey information about the College's programs – both traditional and new, including the latest additions of the



Nels B. Fransen and L. Patrick Piggott, all deans and academic department chairs, and program coordinators.

From time to time, the workshop organizers give an opportunity to the college alumni or current students, especially the library assistants, to make presentations or moderate sessions (Janette L. Rossell, Anthony Johnston, Jamie Segura, Raquelle Deyto, Anne Poggio-Castillou, Tatiana Raigoza, Janet Marx, Ahmad Majid, and others).



Graduate Program in Education and the Undergraduate Program in Criminal Justice. Among the regular guest speakers have been deans of Humphreys' Law School (Dean Emeritus

## NOT ONLY NUTS AND BOLTS: EXPLORING THE FRONTIER OF KNOWLEDGE

Gradually, in the course of the decade, it became clear that the workshops carry the potential to offer more than the instruction about the elements of academic work. It led to the development of three types of a "series within the series": "Beyond the News", "Let's Think about It", and "Exploring the Frontier of Knowledge." All three could be subtitled: What you do not find in your college textbooks.

The first of them offers an opportunity to link Humphreys' curriculum to *the latest political events*, especially those that are in the center of mass media attention: *the local, state, and national elections, political party platforms and new citizen movements about education; the red-blue divide and its consequences in the education field; or the political jargon and journalese.*

The presentations of the second type—"Let's Think about It"—pay attention to the broader issues of the era, for example, to *the generational shift between the Baby Boomers and the Millennials, the national trends in higher education, the media potential to serve as college-level study resources, or the impact of computers upon the communication skills of the youngest generation.*

So far, a series of presentations subtitled "Exploring the Frontier of Knowledge" has aimed at the latest discoveries and methodological issues of several disciplines relevant to Humphreys' academic profile: *Genetics; Biomedical Engineering, and Environmental Science* (Felix Cano), *Early Childhood Education* (Kimberly Clark), *Educational Psychology* (Barbara Coulibaly), *Education of Adults* (Linda Rahmoller), *Technology Management* (Kevin Van Dewark), *Philosophy and Theology* (Rowena Walker); and *Constitutional Law* (John Schick).



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### MEET YOUR TEACHER FOR A CONVERSATION

Every quarter, a series of Tuesday afternoon workshops turn into an informal group of participants with a core of regulars, supplemented by those who just step in. After several years, it became clear that each quarterly cycle should progress to a special closing point. It initiated a series of rather informal “Conversations.” Some of them were hosted by Humphreys students. So far, the students have had a chance to meet Cynthia Becerra, Bruce Bodine, Jess Bonds, Richard Chabot, Jim DeCosta,

Robert G. Humphreys Jr., L. Patrick Piggott, Linda Rahmoller, Kay Reindl, Rowena Walker, Jason Wolins, and Pamela Wood. The Spring Quarter session, linked to the 115<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the College, will offer a Conversation with its third President, Robert G. Humphreys.



### DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY: THE OPEN ENROLLMENT RULE

The regular Tuesday workshop has been offered every quarter, twice a week – between 2:00 p.m. and 2:50 p.m. for day students, and between 5:15 p.m. and 6:05 p.m. for their evening classmates; the late afternoon session was added in 2003. Overall, it represents about 65 sessions per academic year. The average attendance is about 12 students per session. The Learning Center e-mails the weekly roll sheets to individual instructors. Some of them grant extra credit when the workshop’s subject matter meets the course outcomes. Sometimes they ask students to submit a brief report. Frequently, individual students are advised to attend to overcome certain weak points in their college skills.

Overall, the open enrollment contributes to a cooperative, rather relaxed atmosphere. The workshop participants need not to register; they are not required to attend Tuesday sessions regularly. No graded testing is taken place. Visitors are welcome – including occasional family members and high school students.

From time to time, workshop participants are surveyed about the educational value of the series. Typically, most of them plead for additional instruction in research documentation (MLA and APA); lately, they wish to learn more about database search techniques and online learning strategies.

Some of the workshop themes found their way to the pages of the *College Newsletter*, when a presentation would inspire the speaker to turn it into an article or a book review.

### THE TEAM

None of this would be possible without a team of volunteers. It includes not only almost all regular faculty members of the past decade but also a dozen of adjunct instructors – Phyllis Berger, Michael Duffett, Rollin Coleman, Raymond Harter, Richard Hunt, Kerry Moquett, Holly Nash, Don Van Noy, Randy Rahmoller, Julie Walker, Leslie Walton, and Catherine Webster.



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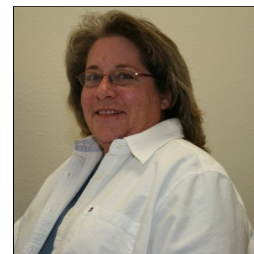
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In the course of the last several years, a similar cycle of workshops is emerging in the Modesto Campus, benefiting from the involvement of both full-time and part-time faculty. They too complement the well-established individualized tutoring.

### WHAT'S NEXT?

With the growing Humphreys' population in an increasingly competitive environment, the Learning Center must stay abreast of the curve. Its workshops evolved from small-group irregular gatherings into firmly established sessions offering twice a week opportunities to talk about new phenomena—e.g., online instruction or database searches—along with the obvious matter. The attendance

is showing just a slow improvement. The link between the classroom assignments and workshops' subject matter could be stronger. Should the students enrolled in some of the remedial courses be required to participate in Tuesday workshops? How about offering a quarterly certificate to the regular workshop participants? Would it make sense to return to the selective Saturday morning "emergency sessions," as practiced in the past by Professors Walker and Bauermeister? Should the Learning Center keep inviting some high school students, who contemplate joining Humphreys, to attend? How shall we incorporate the workshops into the emerging STEPS Program, focused on student retention?



Humphreys College Library and Learning Center, Open Workshops  
**HOW TO SUCCEED IN COLLEGE, SPRING 2011**  
No Registration Necessary • Ask for Extra Credit

**WELCOME TO HUMPHREYS: NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION**

Hosted by Santa Lopez-Minatre and Chiyo Miyai  
Wednesday 4/6, 12:45 - 1:30 p.m. or 5:15 - 6:00 p.m., in the Library

**WRITING CLINIC I: YOUR RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC AND RESOURCES**  
Stanislav Perkner, Tuesday 4/12, 2:00 - 2:50 p.m. or 5:15 - 6:05 p.m., Room #202

**WRITING CLINIC II: HOW TO SEARCH ONLINE DATABASES**  
Richard Hunt, Tuesday 4/19, 2:00 - 2:50 p.m. or 5:15 - 6:05 p.m., Room #202

**WRITING CLINIC III: COMPOSING AND EDITING YOUR PAPER**  
Stanislav Perkner, Tuesday 4/26, 2:00 - 2:50 p.m. or 5:15 - 6:05 p.m., Room #202

**WRITING CLINIC IV: DOCUMENTING YOUR PAPER (MLA AND APA)**  
Stanislav Perkner, Tuesday 5/3, 2:00 - 2:50 p.m. or 5:15 - 6:05 p.m., Room #202

**THE ELEMENTS OF YOUR ONLINE COURSE**  
Jim DeCosta, 5/10, 2:00 - 2:50 p.m., Room #202

**WHY DO WE STUDY SHAKESPEARE AT HUMPHREYS? THE GENERAL EDUCATION COMPONENT OF YOUR COLLEGE EDUCATION**  
Cynthia Becerra, 5/10, 5:15 - 6:05 p.m., Room #202

**THE ART OF NOTE TAKING AND NOTE MAKING**  
Stanislav Perkner, 5/17, 2:00 - 2:50 p.m., Room #202

**ALOs, PLOs, AND CLOs: UNDERSTANDING YOUR COLLEGE CURRICULUM AND ITS LEARNING OUTCOMES**  
Robert G. Humphreys Jr., 5/17, 5:15 - 6:05 p.m., Room #202

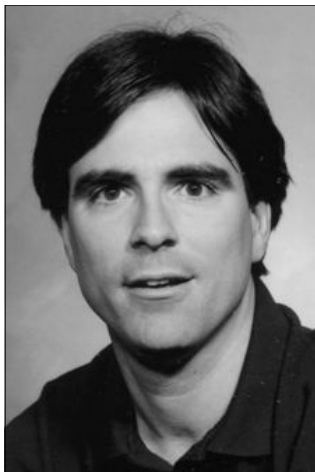
**LET'S THINK ABOUT IT: E-LIBRARY AS YOUR ACADEMIC STUDY SOURCE**  
Stanislav Perkner, 5/24, 2:00 - 2:50 p.m., Room #202

**FROM THE FRONTIER OF KNOWLEDGE: "NATURE DEFICIENT DISORDER": CHILDREN LIVING IN A COMPUTER WORLD**  
Phyllis Miranda, 5/24, 5:15 - 6:05 p.m., Room #202

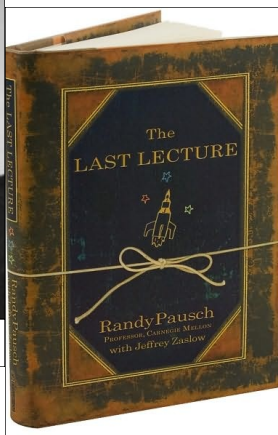
**JOB MARKET TODAY AND TOMORROW**  
Chiyo Miyai, 5/31, 2:00 - 2:50 p.m., Room #202

**IN CONVERSATION WITH... ROBERT G. HUMPHREYS, COLLEGE PRESIDENT**  
Hosted by Stanislav Perkner, 5/31, 5:15 - 6:05 p.m., Room #202

TWO TRAGIC STORIES LEAVING A STRONG MESSAGE



Randy Pausch (1960-2008)



A couple of years ago, a memoir of Computer Science Professor **Randy Pausch**, *The Last Lecture*, became one of the bestselling non-fiction books of the year. It spent 85 weeks on the New York Times Bestseller List. The memoir, translated into 46 languages, was based on the famous 76-minute presentation, “Achieving Your Childhood Dreams,” he delivered at Carnegie Mellon University while suffering from a terminal case of pancreatic cancer. The video, which is available at <http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~pausch/>, has been seen—so far—by about 13 million viewers on YouTube. Shortly before his death, 47-year-old Pausch was listed by *Time* as one of the World’s Top-100 Most Influential People.

His *Last Lecture* has been read by many Humphreys students, especially by those enrolled in the Master’s Program in Education.

Last year, American academia lost another renowned member prematurely. **Tony Judt** (1948-2010) was Professor in European Studies at New York University and Director of NYU’s Erich Maria Remarque Institute. In 2008, Judt was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig’s Disease. From October 2009, he was paralyzed from the neck down. He was nevertheless able to give several public presentations from his wheelchair ([http://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=tony+judt&aq=f](http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=tony+judt&aq=f)).

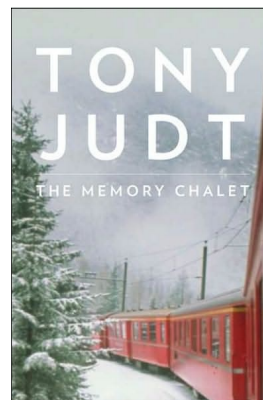
A year ago, he wrote a short article about his condition, the first of a series of memoirs published in *The New York Review of Books*. A collection of those chapters was published by Penguin at the beginning of this year:

By my present stage of decline, I am... effectively quadriplegic... And there I lie: trussed, myopic, and motionless... alone in my corporeal prison, accompanied for the rest of the night only by my thoughts. ... My solution was to scroll through my life, my thoughts..., my memories, mis-memories... that I can employ to divert my mind from the body in which it is encased... And it is true that this disability has its enabling dimension: thanks to my inability to take notes or prepare them, my memory—already quite good—has improved considerably. (*The Memory Chalet*, Chapter 2)

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Professor Tony Judt (1947-2010)

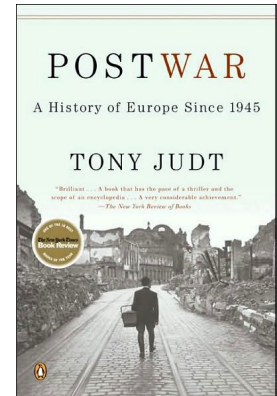


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Humphreys Library owns Judt's main work, published for the first time six years ago – *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*. He spent a decade at Emory, Oxford, Stanford, and Vienna, where he taught political theory, learned Czech, and met many European historians. The resulting book became a runner up for the Pulitzer Prize for General Non-fiction. In the year of its release, *Postwar* won the Council on Foreign Relations Arthur Ross Award for the best book on international affairs. "Judt's magisterial narrative covers the politics and economics, the culture, and the intellectual ferment of the era," said *Foreign Affairs* Editor James F. Hoge. "This will be the definitive history of modern Europe for some time to come."



Picture by: John R. Rifkin/  
The Penguin Press



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