

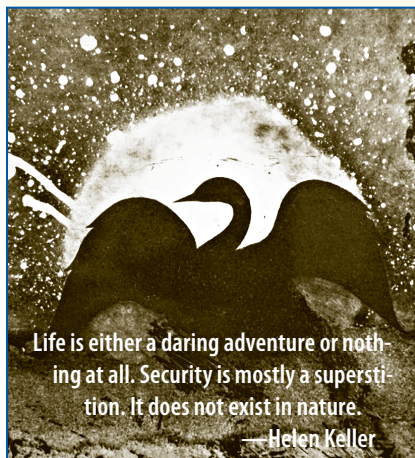
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### What's Your Genius?

Philosophy becomes poetry and science imagination, in the enthusiasm of genius.

— Disraeli



Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all. Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature.

—Helen Keller

"Phoenix", copperplate etching, Penny Shrawder

## How GEGA Super Charges Learning

Andrei Aleinikov, Ph.D. Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and International Academy of Genius, Monterey, California

"Each child is a precious individual with a 'peculiar bent of genius' (Plato) that is not to be despised"

—Dr. Aline Wong, Senior Minister of State for Education, Singapore

### A Genius idea

In my practice of teaching teachers (professors) how to teach creatively and become the best teachers, or "genius teachers," I always refer to TESA: Teacher Expectations - Student Achievements (Martin, 1973; see also Cotton, 1989 on Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson's study Pygmalion in the Classroom (1968), at <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/4/cu7.html>).

So simple! Hats off to salute the originators of the experiment which proved that high expectations from teachers bring much higher learning results!

Now, if expectations work like that, why don't we use this regularity for extremely positive changes in the process of education? Why don't we transform TESA into GEGA: Genius Expectations: Genius Achievements?

### Here Is How It Works

As the founder of Geniusology, the science of genius (Aleinikov, 2003, 2004) and the designer of the Genius Education Methodology (GEM, already dubbed by media "the GEM of Education"), I explain to my students that there is a genius in every individual.

Then I debunk the five traditional myths about genius.

*continued on page 2*

## For the Love of Teaching

Who inspires you to be your best when teaching? For me, it is great memories of several awesome teachers whose positive influence has lasted a lifetime. Those men and women whom I place in my personal pantheon of excellent teachers all share several immutable characteristics.

They all inspired me to think in new categories about the subject, and how it is integrated into the larger world of work and learning, and they boosted my personal appraisal of my own potential and capabilities.

They were all inspiring, tough, fair, knowledgeable, optimistic, caring, and confident, but not arrogant. They were giving, but never condescending, and fascinatingly capable and accomplished individuals.

In a nutshell, they loved teaching and learning, and it showed. Take a moment as you begin a new term to remember and appreciate those who taught you so well, and endeavor to match their expertise and dedication.



TFS Publisher,  
Jack H. Shrawder

Geniuses are:

- Born not developed
- Recognized in childhood
- Superior people who are talented in everything
- Crazy
- Accidental (see Chapter Two in *MegaCreativity: Five Steps to Thinking Like a Genius*, Aleinikov 2002)

### A New Definition, A New Classification

After exploding the myths, I introduce a new definition of genius and a new classification of geniuses that now includes not only scientific (like Kepler and Newton), artistic (like Mozart, Shakespeare, and Michelangelo), and technological (like Archimedes and Edison) geniuses, but also the:

- Existential Genius (like Jewish people—collective genius)
- Communicational Genius (like Oprah Winfrey)
- Business Genius (like Bill Gates)
- Teaching Genius (like Maria Montessori)
- Athletic Genius (like Michael Jordan)
- Cooking Genius (As Abraham Maslow once said, “A first rate soup



To see things in the seed, that is genius.  
—Lao-tzu

is more creative than a second rate painting.”)

- Organizational Genius (like Napoleon)
- Financial Genius (like George Soros, who earned one billion dollars in one day)
- ...and even the Learning Genius.

Next, I allow my students to ponder what type of geniuses they want to be... And finally, I start the class with a new vision that sends them out of the gate running instead of learning at a sloth's pace by boarding the slow boat to China.

Intellectuals solve problems;  
geniuses prevent them.

—Albert Einstein

### Expect Genius Results

So when I expect a genius answer from my students in the classroom, what do you think I will get? If I expect them to study and learn like geniuses, how do you think they will study? If I expect my teacher-students—as teachers—to see a genius in every child, what do you think they will see?

### Reaping the Genius Harvest

This approach:

Made my 12-year-old student Michaela McFarland a discoverer of the new Law of Conservation. That's the level of Kepler and Newton (see <http://www.eworldwire.com/pressreleases/18364>).

Helped my trainees from the “Genius in Every Child” class (who were pre-selected as incorrigible and doomed to fail) to prove they can pass all exams

(see the article on 100% success of 13 Singaporean teenagers, at <http://www.humiliationstudies.org/news-old/archives/000039.html>); [the other link leads to an apparently unrelated article; this one goes to the author's Singapore study—AG]

Made my teachers from the “Genius in Every Teacher” program the best teachers in the country (Diane Goh, President's Teaching Award, top teaching honor in Singapore);

Made my young co-author a Learning Genius (Suzanna Ramos, the only graduate student in the history of the State University of New York to receive both the President's Medal for Outstanding Graduate Student and the Outstanding Thesis Award

### Expectations Drive Outcomes

This is how a brilliant idea brings brilliant results!  
Genius Expectations Yields  
Genius Achievements!



The first and last thing required of  
genius is the love of truth.

—Goethe

**For more inspiring ideas** by Dr. Andrei Aleinikov and the other TFS Partner Authors see “The Solutionary” 100s of practical, easy-to-apply ideas from TFS in one, 540-page teaching-idea resource. To purchase go to: <http://www.netmemberservices.com/members/tfs/cart/inv.php?catid=2>

**Need answers to questions about tests, testing, and best, test-question formats?** TFS has the answer. See Testing QuickStudy, TFS web site.

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## How to Quickly Build Online Class Cohesion

Angela Payne, MBA, A+, MOS  
Assistant Professor of Office Administration  
TFS Partner Author  
Southwest Community College  
Memphis, Tennessee

**H**ere's how to build class cohesion quickly and easily right at the start.

[This tip could be easily adapted to a traditional class too.] First, require that each student post a personal introduction listing at least five of their "favorite things" (i.e., restaurant, movie, vacation, etc.).

Next, require each student to respond to at least one classmate's favorite-thing posting. In addition, you should respond to each and every student individually via e-mail.

Here's what I might write: "Thanks for posting your introduction. I definitely can relate because Mexican restaurants are one of my favorites too."

A personal response:

- Adds a personal touch to the e-mail.
- Allows the students to see that you share something in common.
- Lets students know that you actually read their postings.

Even if you find little in common with a particular student's favorite things, you always can relate them to someone else that you know.

For example: "Thanks for posting, my (co-worker/son/best friend) also enjoys sky-diving." Everyone usually has something in common when people share their favorite things.

Bottom line: This assignment builds unity as students begin talking and sharing among themselves and with you.



## A Survival Exercise for the Google Age

Howard Rosenthal  
Professor and Program Coordinator of Human Services  
St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley  
St. Louis, Missouri

**S**everal years ago a professor told me a fascinating story.

She had asked her students to write a paper on prehistoric animals. When she received the papers, nearly every one was filled with misinformation. And virtually every paper in the class was packed with the same misinformation!

Since the professor knew that a coincidence like this was outside the realm of chance, she searched for prehistoric animals on Google, and the first hit on the search was the smoking gun. Indeed, the site housed a goldmine of facts; unfortunately, however, the college students did not read the small print: The site was composed by sixth-graders who were giving their opinions about what prehistoric animals were probably like.

Instead of just telling this tale of woe, let your students experience this phenomenon firsthand. Give them an assignment or extra credit to find at least one web site related to your course that appears to be legitimate, but is disseminating incorrect facts.

Then, make certain that every student shares his or her findings with the class.

Finally, remind your students always to check the source of the web site as well as the author's credentials.

And when everything else fails, read the textbook.



### QuickTip Contest Winner

## Mystery Guest, Sign In Please

Barbara J. Weiner, M.S., MT(ASCP, FL BCLP), CLS(NCA)  
TFS Partner Editor, Distance Learning and Technology Melbourne, Florida

**A** weekly visit from a mystery guest, in the form of a historic figure, will be a popular addition to your online classroom.

A shared class activity like this is just the ticket to squash cyberspace lonesomeness.

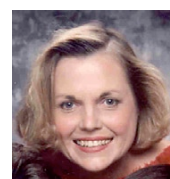
For example, John Dewey once visited a graduate education cyber-class. Did you know that he was once a high school principal in Pennsylvania? No? Neither did the graduate students in this online course!

You can designate a weekly meet-the-guest time period, but make it both short and as convenient as possible. During this event the "guest" converses with students who can attend. In the conversation, the mysterious visitor incorporates clues into the prepared script, which eventually ends in revealing the identity of this "mystery guest."

Best-use strategies include making this an optional activity, and awarding points for participation.

Be sure the "mystery guest" is someone fairly obvious for the field of study. Give the visitor a unique cyber-persona, including a sense of humor. How? Complete brief research on the individual to learn if he or she had an unusual hobby, unique lifetime achievements, or a quirky family dynamic.

All of these will enhance the guest's enigmatic aura, and beckon students to return to meet the next guest.





## Essay Writing 101: Don't Stump the Chump!

Stuart Tichenor  
TFS Partner Author  
Oklahoma State University, Okmulgee  
Htichenor@okstate.edu

One of the thorniest obstacles to teaching freshman essay writing is convincing student writers to consider the informational, contextual, and organizational needs of their audience.



### Writing That's Fun Gets Done

Fortunately, I've discovered two astonishingly simple success strategies for teaching this point:

- Write for the "Ignorant Reader";
- And "Don't Stump the Chump."

### Getting in the Audience's Head

The "Ignorant Reader" means writing to an audience that may share few commonalities with the writer. For example, below are topics with which I have high familiarity, but most of my students don't:

- The early McDonald's slogan "Thousands Served"
- Super Bowl III and the New York Jets
- Kennedy and King assassinations
- Gasoline selling for 29 cents per gallon
- The Vietnam War and hippie culture
- The Beatles appearing live on The Ed Sullivan Show (in black and white, of course)
- The minimum wage being raised to \$1.25

Once students understand the persona of the Ignorant Reader and the probable differences in their and the Reader's experiences, they can proceed on

to essay planning with the goal of "Don't Stump the Chump."

In order to do this, they first create a thumbnail sketch of who they are and what they know.

For example, they can create a personal list of power-experiences that gives them special expertise and knowledge. A student's list could include:

- Music they listen to.
- Video games they play.
- The name brands of clothes they wear.
- Cool places they hang out.
- Television shows they watch.



*For writing success: feed the ignorant reader and don't stump the chump!*

### Write with Confidence

This list constitutes a solid jumping-off point for students to pick a familiar topic and begin the essay development process.

Since they are to assume that their audience is unfamiliar with (ignorant of) their chosen topic, they are urged to rely on the tried-and-true 5W-1H content checklist—the Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How of the essay.

Using 5W-1H method allows them to plug in specific information and details that helps to fully explain their

topic and support their main idea. Furthermore, approaching essays in this manner requires students to narrow their topics to a manageable scope, so the results are much better.

However, they must pass the second phase of essay writing by writing clearly and concisely enough that they don't "stump the chump" (or the instructor), or confuse the ignorant reader.

These teaching strategies have helped my students write successfully about a amazing array of essay topics, including:

- Geo-caching
- Cheerleading camp
- MMORPGs (massively multiplayer online role-playing games)
- Creating web pages
- Traveling in Paris
- Hunting white-tailed deer
- Heavy metal bands
- Vegetarianism
- Serving in the military in Iraq

These are certainly topics in which I have no expertise, so I can accurately play the role of an ignorant audience member, able to evaluate their writing and provide constructive feedback.

This method engages students because they enjoy flexing their knowledge muscles and writing in more comfortable topical areas where they are the expert.

### Generalizing from Their Writing Experience

Class discussions generally reveal, and I like to point out, that anyone can qualify as a member of the "ignorant-reader audience," because of the normal limits of one human's experience.

Therefore, virtually anyone can be "stumped" by an essay that fails to provide the needed information to render the topics accessible and understandable.

*Writing is both mask and unveiling.*

—E.B. White

**A Brilliant Ideas  
Contest Winner**

## From Strangers to a Learning Community

Kay Roof-Steffen  
TFS Partner Author  
Chair, Department of Humanities  
Muscatine Community College, East-  
ern Iowa Community College District  
Muscatine, Iowa

**A** former student spotted me recently at a restaurant.

She took me aside and said, "I was in your class about 11 years ago, and I wanted you to know I still have that card we did.



It's in my desk and occasionally I get it out to remind myself of who I was then—and how much about me has changed. And, Mrs. Steffen, it's like you said: It does make me feel good—even after all these years."

The Self Disclosure Card, as I've labeled it, is an activity assigned early in the semester in my Professional Communication classes. Creating and presenting the card serves many benefits.

Teachers in a variety of disciplines can use this activity to encourage students to contemplate course-relevant information, as well as demonstrate common ground among themselves.

We do this early, because our first unit is intrapersonal communication: self-concept, self-esteem, and disclosure. I hand out an 8 x 11 sheet of colored cardstock (have several colors to allow students a choice, as some

visual learners prefer brighter colors; those more analytical or introverted will choose gray, buff, or white). Next I explain the objectives of our activity. (Yours might differ from mine.) I find it's vital to explain how my choice of assignments and topics can benefit every participant.

### The Objectives:

To contemplate who I am, not the roles I play to others.

To visually put on paper specific aspects of myself. Students may use colorful markers, crayons or a pen.

Pencil-written cards are not allowed, as pencil marks fade. Students may attach magazine pictures, photos or other items, like guitar picks, ticket stubs, etc. to the card.



**The first objective:** To contemplate who I am, not the roles I play to others.

By sharing with others, we begin to build community and trust, thereby encouraging meaningful discussions throughout the semester.

Although we see artists emerging through this activity, this is not an art project.

Everyone gets full credit IF they complete their cards and present them on time. If not (they only turn in their cards to me), the most they can earn is half credit. On presentation day we sit in a circle and share cards. We don't take time for questions—those are conversation-openers outside of class.

### The Format

Fold the page in half, so there are four sides. On the front is their name (or a symbol meaningful to them). Inside on the top page are two categories: "What I WANT to spend more time on" (note that the word "want" does not mean "should" or "need"); and "Personal Coaching," or what I could tell myself right now to get or stay motivated toward my goals.

Inside bottom includes: "My Interests," or "What I Care About." The back of the card requires a bit more thought: "What Not Everyone Knows About Me" (but is still part of who I am).

I do encourage everyone to date and keep this card—in a desk or dresser—as a reminder of who they were at this point in their lives.

One way to build self-esteem, according to researchers at the University of Texas Counseling and Mental Health Center, is to "remind yourself of your strengths and achievements."

On their website (<http://www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc>), they recommend keeping mementos of "accomplishments you

are proud of where you can see them." I believe in this.

The student mentioned above was one of many who have reminded me of this activity. It is something that has, indeed, continued to benefit learners well beyond their time in my class.



## The Amazing Personal Response Journal Enriches Learning

Joe Antinarella  
Assistant Professor of English  
Assistant to the Academic Dean  
Tidewater Community College, Chesapeake Campus, Chesapeake, Virginia

**W**riting personal responses helps us explore key points in a reading or enhance the meaning of a text or a verbal lesson. The following are directions for students.

Record, review, and share your responses. They will help you learn new information, formulate questions, and retain key points. Use at least three of the suggestions below to guide you in your written reflective response to a lesson or a reading selection:

### Reactions and Impressions

Record these after your first reading or immediately after a lesson. These can be in any form—free writing, notes, lists, stream of consciousness, etc. Reflect and comment on why you feel as you do about specific items in the text or lesson—primary points, new ideas, or significant connections.

### Quotation

Choose a line or phrase that possesses significant meaning for you. Focus on worthwhile commentary or some insightful

sentence. Choose several lines in the text or lesson if appropriate—discuss your selections as they relate to your existing views or apply them to real-life scenarios. Make a personal connection and/or interpret the quotation.

### Vocabulary

Highlight significant words that need interpretation, interest you, or that you think are important as they relate to the subject. Consider words that make you think deeply and discuss significant thoughts you have on how it relates to a central meaning presented in the text or lesson.

### Questions

Pose a few thoughtful questions about the reading or lesson that require further analysis, definition, application or clarification. What questions do you need answers to immediately about the reading or lesson? Are there unresolved questions?

What are your hypotheses, wild guesses, or answers to these questions?

### Smart Remarks

Make some honest comments about the subject, events, ideas, or connections the text/lesson presents. This could take the form of criticisms or comments that confirm points in the reading. Why are you bothered or reassured by what you've read or learned? Do

your remarks reveal something you can discuss further?

### Sample Journal Entries based on "Those Winter Sundays" by Robert Hayden

#### Vocabulary Entry

There are a few word choices in this poem that I like the "feel" of:

- "blueblack cold"—I could picture the house dark and freezing in the dead of winter
- "cracked hands that ached"—what a great way to describe a man of physical labor whose hands have paid the price over the years.
- "chronic angers"—a clever way to let the reader know that the house wasn't the happiest place to live; anger was a common occurrence.

#### Quote Entry

"No one ever thanked him"

This quote made my heart sink thinking of all the things my father does for me. My dad is a man of few words, and I can count on one hand the number of times that he quietly uttered the words, "I love you." As a child, I suppose I felt a lot like the writer of the poem—confused.

#### Smart Remarks Entry

This father likes to order his kid around. He should chill out, and maybe his son would appreciate him a bit more. As children, though, we take for granted many of the acts that our parents do for us.

Our parents do their best to provide us with everything we need. Even the simple things they provide like a home to live in, clothes to wear, and food to eat go virtually unnoticed.

I guess we ought to realize the efforts our parents go through just to provide us with the simple necessities. Is it part of their job description?



*Highlight significant words that need interpretation, interest you, or that you think are important.*



## Success Through Action: Bonus Gold Section

Success requires action. Here's how to get the most benefit from the success concepts in this issue...What's the big Idea?

### Big Idea 1. How GEGA Super Charges Learning, pp. 1-2

Explore your expectations that may well determine the ultimate outcomes of your class.

#### Class Expectation Clarification Inventory

Carefully define and express your expectations:

- ☐ Specify as sharply as possible your expectations of your students potential to learn:

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- ☐ List the top five learning outcomes that you expect to achieve with this class:

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- ☐ My expectations for my personal level of performance as an instructor are:

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- ☐ I can best communicate my expectations to my students by...

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- ☐ You need to know what students expect of you. How can you facilitate students sharing these expectations? Develop a plan:

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### Big Idea 2. How to Quickly Build Online Class Cohesion, p. 3

#### Prepare a plan to build cohesion quickly.

- ☐ Make a list of sample favorite things that your students could share via email or in a traditional class during a short icebreaker exercise:

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### Big Idea 3. A Survival Exercise for the Google Age, p. 3

#### Prepare an brief assignment to demonstrate the verification needed when doing online research.

Write your idea for an assignment or extra credit activity with the objective of finding at least one web site related to your course that appears to be legitimate, but is disseminating incorrect facts.

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### Big Idea 4. Mystery Guest, Sign In Please, p. 3

#### Weekly Mystery Guest Class Energizer.

Plan now for a weekly visit from a mystery guest, in the form of a historic figure, from your discipline. Name your guest for each week.

Wk 1 

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Wk 2 

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Wk 3 

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Wk 4 

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Wk 5 

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Wk 6 

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Wk 7 

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Wk 8 

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Wk 9 

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Wk 10 

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Wk 11 

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Wk 12 

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Wk 13 

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Wk 14 

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Wk 15 

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Wk 16 

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## Big Idea 5. Essay Writing 101: Don't Stump the Chump! p. 4

**Prepare a writing assignment that** requires student writers to consider the informational, contextual, and organizational needs of their audience.

The article suggests ideas to help your students formulate ideas to help the “ignorant reader,” the audience with few commonalities understand the essay. Create three ways to explain and demonstrate to your students the idea of writing for an audience unfamiliar with the topic:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Next relate your ideas on how not to “stump the chump.” Plan three ways to teach this idea with thought examples and demonstrations.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Big Idea 6. From Strangers to Learning Community, p. 5, Contest Winner

**Prepare a self disclosure card for yourself to show as a sample for your class. Schedule this ice-breaker exercise as early in the class as possible. Your will need enough 8.5 x 11” colored, cardstock sheets so that each student can have one. Can be obtained at an office or art supply store or .com.**

List self-disclosure ideas you can show on your card.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_

## Do You Know the Six Critical Success Factors of Good Teaching?

1. Leadership
2. Course/Class Management
3. Context and Content Analysis
4. Communication
5. Instructional Design
6. Evaluation and Testing

What is a Critical Success Factor? A CSF designates a job skill or knowledge area that is so essential to success that failure to master the techniques and principles that describe the particular factor will mean desired outcomes will not be produced.



Look for the Critical Success Factor targeted by each TFS article in header bar of each page.

## Good Teaching Vocabulary: frangible

\FRAN-juh-buhl\, *adjective*:

*fragile or easily broken*;

Winning students’ trust is the often the most frangible part of the beginning of each course.

## Two Growth Questions that Can Change Your World!

Memorize these two powerful improvement questions and then answer each after every class or online session:

- What did I do right this time?
- What can I do better next time?

Your answers applied to your teaching (or any other life task) today will affect your job performance and personal growth tomorrow.

## Would You Like to Be Published?

**Your Colleagues Need Your Brilliant Ideas**

**W**hy not tell the world how you did it? Whether you have a quick tip or a longer article, just keep your writing on target, condensed, and accessible to part-time faculty. While *TFS* is a professional journal, please don’t take the humanness or the humor out of your writing just because we serve an academic audience. We look for writing that is positive, energetic, inclusive, and designed to help instructors improve teaching and learning.