LEARNING FIRST:
CREATE
COLLABORATE
EVALUATE

ISSUE 2 | 2015
EDITOR’S LETTER

Dear Colleagues,

Aims Community College is committed to providing a quality education for our students. Our institution continues to make substantial investments in teaching and learning. This magazine is one of those efforts. Our annual teaching and learning magazine, Signature, is aimed at providing information about teaching and learning strategies and highlights our important work in this area.

In our inaugural issue, we held a contest for naming the magazine. Many suggestions were made, but overwhelming input was received to retain the name Signature. We are pleased to announce the official name of the magazine is Signature. As such, we invite you to join your education community by putting your signature on quality education here at Aims.

In this issue, you will find articles about Aims’ learning college philosophy and efforts, assessment, and using rubrics, teaching strategies, first year experiences, student service and academic affairs collaborations, continuous improvement, strategic planning, and our new mentorship program. We hope you enjoy learning more about the important work being done at Aims by our faculty and staff.

Please send any comments or suggestions to me at (970) 339-6459 or deb.johansen@aims.edu. I look forward to hearing from you!

With continued excitement,

Deb Johansen

ON NAMING THIS MAGAZINE: The votes are in! “Signature” received the most votes for the name of our teaching and learning magazine.

“The role of the Learning College at Aims Community College is to contribute and shape scenarios that empower learning through discovery, shared learning environments, and construction of knowledge.”

LEARNING COLLEGE VISION STATEMENT
As 2015 commences, I am acutely aware that my time at Aims Community College will come to an end shortly. Before that happens, please allow me to thank you for all the incredible work, dedication, and commitment you have exhibited throughout my tenure.

As I reminisce about the past 12 years, there is an amazing string of accomplishments that clearly reflect the faculty’s strong commitment to learning and to our students. These include the initiation of the Curriculum Committee, the adoption of the AQIP accreditation model and an action project for the Writers’ Community, a strong commitment to the learning-centered philosophy and classrooms, the implementation of statewide gtPathways program, the transition from quarters to semesters, the Faculty Teaching Learning Center, the launch of the new developmental education programs, and continued progress on assessment of student learning.

I have so appreciated the dedication and insight of faculty on Strategy Council, on the Think Tank, and faculty representation at Board of Trustee meetings.

We have been through many challenging times together, including several recessions, and I want to acknowledge and commend faculty leadership who stepped forward to collaborate with administration on meeting these challenging times. I especially want to recognize the department chairs for all of their hard work and efforts to ensure the best learning experiences for Aims’ students.

Without a doubt, if there was a Rose Bowl for faculty you would be the champions.

I am immensely honored to be counted among you all as a colleague. My tenure at Aims Community College has been a wonderful journey, in good part because of you. The challenging and inspiring times with you created memories I will cherish. I am honored and privileged to have served as your CEO and wish you the very best for your continued success.

Sincerely,

Dr. Marsi Liddell, President

As you know, Aims is searching for our next President. This time creates great opportunity in effecting a smooth transition to new leadership. In addition, this time of transition is exciting (and a bit scary) for our college and community. In retrospect, we have come a long way over the last decade under the leadership of Dr. Maris Liddell. Aims is in a good position moving forward in a search for a new president. Our academic programs are healthy. We have quality programs and strong leadership within academics. It is my hope that the next leader understands the health and strength of the institution as a whole. Our hope is that he or she will take us to the next level.

We have a unique opportunity to enhance the strong foundation that we have built over the last decade. I feel assured we will continue to produce quality programs and continue to be collaborative. It is my hope that over the next year, we can strengthen our work in academic and operational assessment through a greater understanding of assessment and the uses of it. Likewise, I feel confident we will continue in our quest for continuous improvement and in our commitment to see initiatives through to completion.

Last year, I spoke of the work we needed to do to bring on qualified faculty. We are engaging in that process and hiring new faculty. Over the next decade Aims will need to continue to consider the addition of quality faculty, in particular, to support new and exciting partnerships with the community.

Aims will continue our efforts in developing K-12 and four-year college partnerships along with strengthening our partnerships with business and industry. One of the new K-12 initiatives is the Early College. This will be a great challenge and opportunity for Aims.

I look forward to our work in creating sustainable programs and in fostering opportunities for programming created in collaboration with our community. Our ability to collaborate is the strength of Aims. I rest assured knowing we have great people with great talent as we look to the future.
The role of the Learning College at Aims Community College is to contribute and shape scenarios that empower learning through discovery, shared learning environments, and construction of knowledge.

AIMS LEARNING COLLEGE VISION STATEMENT

The Learning College movement began in the early 1990s, when Aims Community College, as well as other community colleges across the country decided to enrich their student and teaching-centered values with learning-centered values. According to Terry O’Banion, many consider the father of the Learning College Movement, the Learning College concept places learning first and provides educational experiences for learners any way, any place, any time with an emphasis on active learning.

Aims Community College Embarks on the Journey

Aims Community College is in the 15th year of its continuing journey to become a world-class Learning College. During the spring of 2007, Aims Community College began a transition from a culture driven by full-time equivalent time with an emphasis on active learning.

Aims Community College Continues the Journey

Today, the institution works to shape scenarios that empower learning through discovery, shared learning environments, assessment of learning, and construction of knowledge. The overall Learning College objective is designed to enhance opportunities for students and employees to engage in learning collectively. Over the last year, academic leaders and faculty collaborated to design specific strategies focused on the Aims’ Learning College framework:

- Organizational Culture: Aims cultivates an organizational culture where policies, programs, practices, and personnel support learning as a major priority. The Strategy Council, Student Learning Assessment Team, the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center, and the Curriculum Committee are all focused on improving student learning and the quality of education at Aims through a continuous improvement process. Also, CampusLabs has been adopted to track our learning activities and manage our institutional knowledge. Employees across the college have been working in teams dedicated to creating an implementation plan for the newly aligned strategic directions.
- Staff Recruitment & Development: Aims creates or expands (a) recruitment and hiring programs to ensure that new staff and faculty are learning-centered and (b) professional development programs that prepare all staff and faculty to become more effective facilitators of learning. For example, the New Faculty Orientation and Mentorship programs are focused on preparing our faculty so that they may enhance learning.
- Technology: Aims uses information technology to improve and expand student learning. Our investments in our learning management system and the redesign of our website are examples of how Aims is remaining relevant. Technology is changing at a rapid pace and it is essential that we provide students with the most up-to-date technology so that they will be competitive in the workplace and we will be able to meet students where they are.

Aims is creating strategies to assess and improve learning outcomes, improve assessment processes that measure the achievement of the learning outcomes, and improve our means for documenting the achievement of those outcomes. Our Student Learning Assessment Team, Faculty Assessment Coaches, and Director of Academic Assessment are diligently working to create rubrics for three of our five institutional level student learning outcomes. Likewise, our faculty have been hard at work learning about and creating assessment projects at our Assessment Academy. Our Assessment Academy was held at the beginning of the Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 semesters. It will be held again during the next academic year.

Underprepared Students: Aims creates and expands learning centered programs and strategies to ensure the success of underprepared students. Last year, Aims went through a complete developmental education redesign focused on eliminating the multiple exit points for students. The new model created learning communities and limited the developmental education series to one course. Aims’ tutoring services, AAA courses, and TRIO programs are also focused on helping students stay on their educational journey and complete their program or degree.

The Aims learning initiatives are:

- Organizational Culture
- Staff Recruitment & Development
- Technology
- Learning Outcomes
- Underprepared Students
Based on the work of Terry O’Bannon, a Learning College:

- Creates substantive change in individual learners.
- Engages learners as full partners in the learning process, assuming primary responsibility for their own choices.
- Creates and offers as many options for learning as possible.
- Assists learners to form and participate in collaborative learning activities.
- Defines the roles of learning facilitators by the needs of the learners.
- Succeeds only when improved and expanded learning can be documented for its learners.
- Encourages all employees to identify their role in supporting learning at all levels.

How does Aims Community College promote learning?

Aims Community College promotes the Seven Principles for Good Practices in Undergraduate Education:

- Encouragement of contact between students and faculty.
- Development of reciprocity and cooperation among students.
- Encouragement of active learning.
- Receipt of prompt feedback.
- Emphasis of time on task.
- Communication of high expectations.
- Respect of diverse talents and ways of learning.

Adapted from Arthur W. Chickering and Zelda F. Gamson (1987)

What beliefs does the Aims Learning College embrace?

- Everyone is capable
- Students need clear goals
- Empowerment = Responsibility
- Increased engagement improves learning
- Learning is multidimensional
- Students have multiple learning styles
- People learn from each other
- Success is achieved incrementally
- Diversity improves learning
- Change is good
- Pioneering innovation
- Student involvement
- Open System vs. Closed Process
- Get out of the box
Once upon a time, before the enlightenment, it was common practice to place struggling students into shop class. The idea being that the trade professions were simple, hammer hits nail, nail enters board. Well, that stereotype has just been blasted out of the water.

Enter any of Kyle Cadarette’s automotive and collision technology classes where you will not only see high-tech gadgetry but sophisticated computer technology such as QR codes placed strategically around the shop.

So what is a QR code? If you are from the Facebook or Instagram generation, you will likely know all about them. If not, a QR code is similar to regular barcode (like you find on the back of the mac-n-cheese box). However, while a barcode is intended to be read by a scanner horizontally, a QR code is read both horizontally and vertically, which means that it can store more information in less space.

A barcode can hold about 20 alphanumeric characters, a QR code (which stands for quick response) can hold more than 7,000 characters and can be read faster. Invented by industrial robot manufacturer, Denso Wave company, in 1994, QR codes are now prevalent in the automotive, shipping, pharmaceutical, and medical industries.

QR codes are commonly found on products that are used by the Aims Automotive and Collision Technology programs, such as automotive parts provided by NAPA to containers of Martin Senour Paint. Kyle quickly realized that he could use this existing technology, tweak it a bit, and transform the traditional shop class into a 21st century flipped classroom. Kyle found helpful tutorials and safety demonstration videos on YouTube and from product or tool companies, then created QR codes for the video URLs. Companies like Lincoln Welders have their own videos for Lincoln Welding Equipment that Kyle was able to create links to using the QR codes. Next, he has his students download a free application on their smartphones that reads the QR code. When a student points their phone at the QR code, the app captures the link and a related video opens on the phone so the student can get a quick tutorial about the piece of equipment they are about to use.

A tour through the classrooms and labs reveals QR codes strategically placed all around. For example, a QR code next to the oxyacetylene torch in the welding room leads the student to a video that shows them how to safely set up and adjust the torch. Students even have QR codes in their course handouts. This enables them to watch the videos at home so that they come to lab prepared.

Kyle loves that the QR codes have enabled him to help multiple students at one time in a way that the students are comfortable with, and the students love using technology they are familiar with. Many students today are accustomed to using the Internet for immediate information and this system does just that. Kyle plans gradually to replace the videos he is using with videos produced by the Aims Automotive faculty.

Kyle’s QR system could be used in just about any classroom, but particularly in classrooms that resemble lab settings. Imagine a nursing student watching a video about starting an IV before practicing the skill. Or imagine a chemistry student clicking on a QR code next to their butane torch so they can see the safety procedures to use before lighting it. Kudos to Kyle Cadarette for using learner-centered teaching and current technology to make his classroom fun and effective!
DEB JOHANSEN: We are excited that you have joined the Aims’ family. Can you tell us a little about yourself? What brought you to Aims?

JOHN FULTS: I was born in Denver, Colorado, but was raised in the military, so I moved around quite often. I lived in England for three years. I graduated high school from Minot, North Dakota and received a football and track scholarship to North Dakota State College of Science. After receiving my AA degree, I transferred to Northwest Missouri State University on a football scholarship and finished my Bachelors of Science in Elementary and Secondary Education. My last semester of college, I worked at Tarkio Academy, an intensive treatment facility for violent, drug, and sexual juvenile offenders. I moved back to Denver after college and continued to work with juvenile offenders. In 1998, I was hired by the State of Colorado as a Security Correctional Officer. I worked 16 years for the state, promoting up the ranks to the highest security management level. In July 2014, I was hired and joined the Aims Community College team after seeing a post for a position of great interest to work with juvenile offenders. I have ample resources to find it. If I don’t know the answer, I highly value the ability to continue my work training to understand the full spectrum. If I don’t know the answer, I have ample resources to find it.

DJ: What is your role at Aims?

JP: I am the Student Conduct Officer and Title IX administrator for Aims Community College.

DJ: How can you help faculty and students in the classroom? Can you give us a generic example of a situation that you might be able to assist a faculty member with?

JP: In my role, I provide help by being a support resource for students and faculty that may be having issues in the classroom. I consider my role to be similar to that of a liaison between students and faculty. I assist in sensitive matters to help resolve them in a fair and equitable manner that is consistent with Aims Community College policies and procedures. For example, an instructor might have a student in his or her class who is being disruptive (i.e. texting) and challenging (i.e. continuously questioning subject matter in a way that is disruptive to other students’ learning). The faculty has met and discussed their concerns with the student, but the behavior continues and is beginning to affect the learning environment negatively. The faculty could notify me of the concerns and the steps he or she has taken to address the student issue. I would contact the student to set-up a meeting to help facilitate a solution. I would discuss the faculty’s concerns and review the Aims Community College Code of Conduct with the student. In the meeting, I would also discuss the possible discipline the student could face if he or she continued to act in a disruptive manner. In these meetings, I also make attempts to relate whatever is being discussed to the student’s future and how the decisions he or she makes can affect or follow them throughout their college experience and professional career.

DJ: If a faculty member has a question regarding Title IX, I encourage them to reach out to me directly by phone or email. The subject of Title IX is so broad that it requires more than one annual training to understand the full spectrum. If I don’t know the answer, I have ample resources to find it.

DJ: How can we contact you?

JP: Faculty and staff can contact me at (719) 339-6650. I am located at the Greeley campus in Westview 221, and my email is john.fults@aims.edu.

Aims English Honor Society

Recognized as an Ivy Chapter of Sigma Kappa Delta

Lori Hatchell
Professor, Accounting
2014 Dean-Selected Faculty of the Year

Anne Machin
Professor, Humanities
2014 Faculty-Selected Faculty of the Year (FT)

Leah Schaer
Instructor, AAA
2014 Student-Selected Faculty of the Year (FT)

Phyllis Gosch
Professor, College Prep Reading & English
2014 Student-Selected Faculty of the Year (FT)

Shannon McCasland
Associate Dean, Student Services
Outstanding First-Year Student Advocate Award from the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

Aims English Honor Society

Recognized as an Ivy Chapter of Sigma Kappa Delta

Congratulations to former Instructor of Developmental Education/Reading Jennifer Boland, the 2014 Faculty-Selected Faculty of the Year (PT). All the best in your new adventures!

AAA to Catalyst Program

Selected by the Colorado Commission of Higher Education for the Colorado Completes Campaign as an outstanding student success initiative

Editor’s Interview

with Student Conduct Officer and Title IX Administrator

John Fults

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Professor, Accounting
2014 Dean-Selected Faculty of the Year

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Outstanding First-Year Student Advocate Award from the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition
Walk into Professor Bill Garcia’s American Government class and the first things you will hear are the class rules.

**Rule number 1:** You must have fun. **Rule number 2:** You are the consumer, and I will meet or exceed your expectations. **Rule number 3:** We always clap. From there, things get a little strange. After getting a lesson in how to take notes and how to study for exams, students are asked to raise their right hand and place their left hand on their textbook while they take the oath of office as Legislators. Next, the class, umm…Legislators, make nominations for the President of the United States. After tough questions about the candidate’s stance on issues like the environment, abortion, and immigration, the Presidential election takes place. Of course, the President must give a State of the Union Address. Regardless of whether the Legislators like the speech or not, they all must clap, that’s just common courtesy in politics. However, a BIG clap indicates approval while a little “golf clap” indicates good manners.

Have you ever attended a class where each session starts with the booming voice of the instructor, “All rise for the President of the United States”? Me either, but apparently this one does. I surmise that one particular student in Bill’s class has a very big head by the end of the semester.

Of course, any self-respecting government needs a Supreme Court Justice, so that appointment is next. The following week, the Legislators get to grill the nominee on difficult questions during the Confirmation Hearing. It is a good thing Professor Garcia spends time teaching the class how to dodge those difficult questions artfully. He masters the political art of giving a discourse without giving an opinion. It also doesn’t hurt that there is a copy of The Constitution nearby.

By now the Legislators have all learned how to write a bill (thanks to a series of online games at iCivics.com). Each bill sponsor gets to meet with the President one on one to learn if his or her bill will be vetoed or signed. The lucky ones get to stand next to the President while he/she does the signing and may even get a souvenir pen. The President then gives a statement to the people, explaining his/her decision.

Inevitably, sometime later in the semester, one of those bills that were signed into law will become the subject of a lawsuit. Since Professor Garcia is a practicing lawyer, he knows all about writing a convincing lawsuit with some legal mumbo jumbo thrown in for added fun. Soon, the Legislators and Supreme Court find themselves sifting through the facts of the lawsuit to determine if the Constitution was, in fact, violated.

Three years of law school taught Professor Garcia that the Socratic Method is not a bad idea in education. He has a modified version that he calls “learning friends.” As he says, “It’s like law school without the mean.” Students are asked to fill out a 3 x 5 card on the first day of class with their contact information and answers to questions like, “Where do you want to be in five years?” and “What do you expect to learn in this class?”. Cards are randomly drawn, and the owner of the card is asked, “Do you want to be a learning friend?” Learning friends are then asked tough, on the spot, questions. In eight years of teaching part-time at Aims, only a few students have said “no” because they know it is alright to fail, and Professor Garcia will ensure a soft landing.

Just because this class is a ton of fun does not mean that it is without rigor. Every Legislator must present his or her bill to the legislature in the form of an argumentative essay or persuasive speech. Questions that must be answered include, “What federal problem does the bill solve?”, “Where will the funding from the bill come from?”, “Will other programs need to be cut for this bill?”, and “If so, how can those cuts be justified?”

In addition to giving a State of the Union speech, the President must also defend his/her decision to pass or veto a bill in the form of an argumentative essay or persuasive speech. The Speaker of the House must become well versed in Parliamentary procedure to keep order over all proceedings.

If you assume that Professor Garcia has some sort of double Ph.D. in Education from a hoity-toity East Coast school, you would be wrong. He has no formal training in education but does have a love for political science and learning. He is a graduate of the University of Denver School of Law and has served the last eight years as a Weld County Commissioner.

So where are the PowerPoint lectures? Where are the lecture notes? You will not find them here. This is pure immersion where students either swim or swim. That’s correct, they don’t sink because they know they are safe to fail and are having way too much fun. 😊
DAMION CORDOVA

In my new role, it feels like I am living in a dream because I get to come to work each day at a place I love. I get to work on projects that have and will make a difference at Aims and in the community and I get to work with a wonderful group of people each and every day who all want what is best for the community, the students, and the employees of Aims.

As he states, “The Strategy Council, Senior Leadership and I are like 7-Eleven, always open for feedback. Please send feedback to members of the Strategy Council, Senior Leadership, or me directly via phone, email, or face-to-face. Folks can always stop me on campus and talk to me, which I enjoy.” The Strategy Council and Senior Management have had several sessions in which they have identified and refined action items to improve the college and to meet the Board goals. For example, Senior Management, the Strategy Council and others met on January 26th for a retreat to review the strategic plan and determine what is working, what is not working, and where we are with those activities we planned to roll out in 2014-2015. During the retreat, divisions and departments worked on aligning budget planning with the strategic plan. This annual review of our goals will continue each year as we strive to meet our vision. There is indeed something positive in the air...

If you have ideas or input, please don’t hesitate to contact Damion at damion.cordova@aims.edu or 339-6656.

Damion encourages all employees to continue to visit the Strategic Planning link in MyAims to stay current with the strategic plan and any and all updates to the plan. Recent updates to the strategic plan include publication of all of the activities that support the mid-term and long-term goals. These updates are located under the Strategic Plan Updates link under the Reports & Surveys section of the Virtual Reference manual in MyAims.

Go to the Virtual Reference section of MyAims to find updates to the strategic plan and any and all updates to the plan.
As the college moves forward with its assessment efforts, many employees are learning and reviewing the language around Assessment of Student Learning. One term, that is always part of the conversation, is rubrics. So what is a rubric? How is one used to score or grade student work? How can it become a powerful assessment tool to improve student learning?

What is a rubric? The term rubric refers to an assessment tool that is used as a scoring guide to determine the quality of student work.

A rubric is a scoring guide: a list or chart that describes the criteria that you (and perhaps your colleagues) will use to evaluate (gauge) or grade completed student assignments (Suskie, 2009).

There are multiple types of rubrics and scoring guides (see below). To explore all of these and their differences, please join us this term for a workshop. For now, let’s discuss descriptive rubrics.

A descriptive rubric is a grid or a matrix whose features include criteria, levels, and descriptors. Criteria are the stated objective, performance, behavior, or quality (what counts). These items reside on the first or leftmost column of the rubric. Levels are the range to rate performance. Levels can be the column labels across the top of the matrix. When creating a rubric, it is recommended that you start with a minimum of three levels. The recommendation from many assessment gurus is to use four levels. Using only three levels is often too few and using five creates situations where it is very challenging to articulate the difference between levels. Descriptors are the specific performance characteristics associated with each criterion and level. They indicate the degree to which a performance standard is met. These will be the phrases that fill in each box associated with the correct criteria and level.

How is a rubric used to score/grade student work? To address this question, we must also examine the difference between assessment and grading.

Assessment vs. Grading ... What’s the difference? Frequently, questions are asked about the difference between grading and assessment. While assessment and grading are different, it is important to note they are interdependent. In general, the goal of grading is to examine an individual student’s learning and overall performance. Grading can use effective assessment practices to provide students with a quantifiable representation of their learning through a numerical or letter grade to indicate the extent to which a student has met the instructor’s expectations for a stated set of course requirements. Grades though, not always a reliable measure, are treated often as a substitute for student learning. One issue with grades is they fail to indicate exactly what students have learned and where they still lack certain skills and dispositions. In addition, grading elements like participation and attendance are not direct measures of student learning. Therefore, they should not be included as measures of student learning.

The goal of assessment differs from grading, and its primary focus is to improve student learning. However, grades play a key role in this process as a way to assign measurements to certain tasks. But ... assessment of student learning, holistically, also involves ungraded measures of student learning. Formative assessment techniques, often called classroom assessment techniques (CATs), inform and guide what we do in the classroom day to day. CATs help us to navigate students’ misconceptions, revise lessons on the fly based on students’ understanding, and drive where the lesson should begin the next class meeting. CATs are a fundamental element of assessment that help us to gauge students’ conceptual development and ability to apply what they have learned.

Assessment measures a level of competency the student achieves with respect to meeting learning goals for the class, course, or program. Assessment also focuses on not just the individual student but rather reflects the degree to which all students meet the intended learning goals for the course, program, or major. Assessments are intended to provide descriptive information, so we know more about the student’s ability in relation to the learning goals of the course as a result of the assessment. Moreover, assessment delves much deeper than grading by examining patterns of student learning within a class, across courses, and across programs. This information is then used to improve courses and practices in the classroom.

Some questions to consider in relation to assessing student learning ... Are your students learning? How do you know?

The ability to address these two questions with evidence of student learning gets to the heart of assessment. When designed and used appropriately, rubrics are a dynamic way to provide evidence of student learning. This tool can capture learning as it helps to indicate exactly what students have learned and where they still lack certain skills and dispositions. To effectively do so, the rubric must be reasonable, relevant and aligned with intended learning outcomes. Rubrics help to show progressions in learning as well as documenting what outcomes students have achieved.

How can rubrics become a powerful assessment tool to improve student learning?

Rubrics can become a powerful assessment tool to improve student learning, but it requires engaging students and having them examine their learning. In higher education, the most common use for rubrics is grading student work. Rubrics can provide faculty with a format to quickly, objectively, and consistently assign grades to student work products. But rubrics also provide faculty with a frequently untapped opportunity. They can help to drive student learning and achievement not just by clarifying learning goals and expectations, but also by empowering learners. When students are trained on how to use a rubric, they can help students self-regulate and self-improve as well as inspire higher student performance. If students are able to make judgments about the quality of their own work, they can use this information to inform their revisions and corrections prior to submitting work for grading.

“Feedback that focuses on self-assessment and self-improvement is a form of intrinsic motivation.” (Huba and Freed, 2000)

Once students see where to focus their efforts, they will know how to improve. Using rubrics on multiple assignments provides students with the information needed to reflect on their learning patterns allowing them to be more self-aware students. For rubrics to become an integral part of the learning process, students must learn to use rubrics as tools for self-assessment.

Note: Creating a well-designed functional rubric takes time and practice. For assistance in creating or revising rubrics, look for professional development offerings in the Aims Daily. If you would like immediate assistance with developing or revising a rubric, please contact Shelly Ray Parsons, Director of Academic Assessment, at shelly.parsons@aims.edu.

REFERENCES

The goal of assessment differs from grading, and its primary focus is to improve student learning.

Shelly Parsons, Director of Academic Assessment, at shelly.parsons@aims.edu. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. (Huba and Freed, 2000)."
In our current climate of economic growth, it is not uncommon to hear talk of investments. We talk about investing in our 401Ks, new campus programs, buildings, and especially students. As the Director of our Faculty Teaching and Learning Center, I am particularly interested in investment in faculty. One major investment we made this year was the creation of the New Faculty Mentor program.

While it is common for faculty at Aims to have advanced degrees in their subject area, few have direct experience with teaching or knowledge of the andragogy required for active student learning. Although Aims requires all new full-time faculty to complete a series of courses on education theory and practical application in the classroom, the primary objective of the mentor relationship is the reinforcement of these new skills and development of teaching methodology that utilizes the learner-centered philosophy. Additionally, the mentor program is designed to provide new faculty with a confident and trusted coach.

I am so proud of the investment our mentors and our administration have made in our faculty and student learning.

Mentors were selected following an application process and trained in learner-centered methodology. While it may seem contrary to common sense, new full-time faculty were paired up with a mentor from a different academic department. This arrangement helped to create a safe atmosphere for new faculty. Mentors observed their mentees on at least three occasions during the semester and provided them with real-time constructive feedback and suggestions for effective teaching. Mentors and mentees met weekly as well. New faculty learned quite a bit about classroom management, teaching methodology, and assessment, but also about the unique culture here at Aims. We are hopeful the pilot mentor program will continue to grow.

This massive project would not have been possible without buy-in from Senior Management and the financial backing from the institution. I am so proud of the investment our mentors and our administration have made in our faculty and student learning.

The program acted as a buffer from the overwhelming demands of a professor’s first semester. It was great to be able to analyze and process what was going on with another person before moving back into action.

Chelle Castello (Mentee)
spent the first month after accepting a full-time English/Humanities position at Aims in a state of elated, albeit nervous, anticipation. I wondered: What classes would I teach? How would it feel to be full-time compared to part-time? What expectations would I have to meet? And, how would I adapt to a new college and its culture? Yet, I also reveled in the sense of accomplishment, of having “made it.” I had earned a coveted job in a part of Colorado where I already lived. And, after several years in the unpredictable world of adjunct teaching, I would soon enjoy a newfound sense of professional security and institutional commitment—all from the vantage point of my very own office to boot!

And, then, in late May, one of my chairs, Tony Park, cheerfully telephoned to let me know he had assigned my Humanities course for the fall: World Mythology.

“Oh, #$&%!” I thought while murmuring a sort of newbie, professional acceptance on the phone. “World Mythology?!” I knew next to nothing about the subject, and I had never taught a class on it, even as an undergraduate. I had a degree in English Literature; I knew about William Shakespeare and Emily Dickinson and Toni Morrison, not Homer and whoever else might fall under this murky realm of mythology.

My next move involved ordering Mythology for Dummies on Amazon. I needed to catch up as soon as possible, and my husband mentioned that he took World Mythology at a nearby community college that was actually the textbook for his course. But I already felt like a fake. What kind of college community college that was actually the textbook for his course? Yet, I should pause to emphasize that I did not lack support. Veteran Aims teacher Rebecca Sailor graciously shared her materials with me, and my chair Tony Park assured me of his confidence in my abilities. Also, my husband—more excited relative calm in January, it may not come as a surprise to hear that my first semester of World Mythology went well, without any embarrassing situations in which students exposed my lack of expertise, or in which my class descended into chaos. The cherry on the top? Two comments on my course evaluations under the category of what students “liked best”: “she was knowledgeable and enjoyed talking about the subject” and “her knowledge of the course.”

But the greater lesson here is not one about letting go of worry or bolstering self-confidence in the face of new teaching challenges. Rather, this experience reminded me of something I already knew, but do not always internalize: teaching is not about, or at least not all about, content and subject matter knowledge. Good teaching involves modeling for students how to be learners and critical thinkers, how to approach texts, pose questions, make claims, and evaluate ideas. None of these skills required me to have advanced knowledge of the Hindu pantheon or Mayan cosmology. Such knowledge might advance my teaching and remains something to strive for; but ultimately, my role is to guide students through the academic process of encountering these ideas and texts. For this, I can draw on my prior experiences teaching literature and writing, but also in the fact that my reading, writing, and analytical abilities surpass that of most students, and, as I discovered this fall, I also possess a greater sense of historical and cultural literacy than them as well. In being educated myself, I rediscovered that I am equipped to educate.

Thus, I spent the summer in a state of mythology-induced anxiety, trying to fill the seemingly endless gaps in my knowledge of this subject, which while related to literature, was simply not the same, nor approached academically in the same manner. So, I studied, read, planned, and waited to be revealed as a possible fraud come the end of August.

Yet, I should pause to emphasize that I did not lack support. Veteran Aims teacher Rebecca Sailor graciously shared her materials with me, and my chair Tony Park assured me of his confidence in my abilities. Also, my husband—more excited than I was about the prospect of this class—showered me with ideas and suggestions. Still, I was nagged by my own self-doubt, a feeling often experienced by new teachers, and I had not been a “new” teacher in several years.

Once the semester began, I took the one-day-at-a-time approach and committed to staying a textbook chapter ahead of my students. And since I am writing this essay with relative calm in January, it may not come as a surprise to hear that my first semester of World Mythology went well, without any embarrassing situations in which students exposed my lack of expertise, or in which my class descended into chaos. The cherry on the top? Two comments on my course evaluations under the category of what students “liked best”: “she was knowledgeable and enjoyed talking about the subject” and “her knowledge of the course.”

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Teaching Sociology, as with other disciplines, gives rise to the ability to involve experiential learning, as well. Of the participatory activities I offer in my Sociology class, two are in the manner of role-playing games. The most successful activity is when students act out economic inequality, in which groups of students take on roles such as the “government,” the “county social services,” a “family” experiencing a sudden economic downturn and one “homeless veteran.” As the students read through the scenarios and start to act out their roles, they begin to see the larger reality of what it might be like to stand in line and apply for food stamps, or to sit and listen to why someone is applying for assistance. They deal with budget cuts and reallocating funds. They learn that the government task to “end homelessness” is not an easy fix. During the debriefing after this exercise, many of the comments I hear in class are on the theme of “I didn’t realize that’s what it’s like for people” or “Wow, that was a lot harder than I expected.” Many students begin to see the impact of the rules of society on individuals, including themselves and people they may know. They’ve not only incorporated the lesson, they’ve experienced the sociological imagination.

Students begin to see a larger picture of the world in which they play a vital role. The sociological imagination asks us to look at our stories within the context of society as a way of understanding that although we are each unique, we are not alone in how our lives play out within the framework of the institutions we live in. By starting a lecture with the words “Imagine if you will” and continuing to paint a picture of what lives were like for workers in the early days of the industrial revolution or family units working together to survive by hunting and gathering, students begin to see themselves as a continuation of the history of society. When I use sociological terms to explore this story, it places the story within the context of the sociological perspective. Students begin to see a larger picture of the world in which they play a vital role. When this type of storytelling is backed up with chapter outlines, on-screen images of prominent theorists and/or events, as well as videos, students seem to process the information in a more meaningful, deeper level. The result is often higher quiz scores and more thoughtful essays.
One of the greatest benefits that online environments bring to education, much like community colleges, is being a gateway to real-world experiences for students, i.e., access to the right skills and technology can place the student from one geographic location into another within minutes. Other benefits include flexibility with busy schedules, increased affordability by allowing students to study in remote areas or from home (not having to pay for a babysitter or parking saves money), and access to digital materials is more cost effective than ever before. The right combination of digital and traditional content can amplify student learning experiences and engagement processes. Moreover, when thoughtfully applied, universally designed online content can support students of all abilities and backgrounds. In my opinion, everyone deserves a chance for a quality education. While technology is not a panacea, it is beneficial for our online campus to explore in the following areas.

1. Universal Design: Advocating for course consistency across departments and disciplines, while promoting continuity throughout the navigation and educational materials, and supporting the needs of students learning and sensory modes.

2. Use Live Classrooms: Train faculty and students to connect using our new “live” classroom opportunities. We have a new version of web-based course meeting software that is much more accessible and intuitive to use.

3. Add on-demand training: This includes an updated website to assist with needs of faculty and students with new web-based tutorials and movies, these provide direct support during busy schedules and times outside of regular work hours.

4. Quality Control Measures: Increase Best Practices in Teaching and Learning for online and hybrid courses. Adding a new certificate in Online Teaching for faculty is being discussed. The focus is on quality, not quantity, of instruction for the chosen delivery model to ensure it’s meeting the learning goals for students.

5. Implement Mobile Technology: Mobile Technology (MT) is sweeping the educational landscape. We are currently working with Academic Pathways to assist on their MT initiative in 2015.

6. Digital Literacy: Pursue and encourage in teaching digital literacy for students and faculty. It’s a must-do with all the technology we are afforded today.
last year we created a place on the Aims website where faculty can find helpful information specifically related to teaching. The Faculty Toolbox is located under the Faculty tab and contains a plethora of resources. New information is added on a regular basis to meet the ever-evolving needs of faculty, and the FTLC is happy to add any specific information that you may need to make your job a little more efficient.

How can they get access to some fantastic professional development and network with their colleagues?

The answer was simple, let’s have a big conference and let’s have it during a time when everyone can attend.

On a beautiful Saturday in September, the FTLC sponsored the first ever (to my knowledge) faculty conference. With over 80 attendees at 20 different sessions, the conference was a tremendous success!

Our second conference of the academic year, “Create, Collaborate, Evaluate” will take place on Saturday, February 21, 2015. We already have an impressive line up of speakers from our institution, as well as from institutions such as CSU Global and CU Online. There will be food, fun (a few surprises), and fabulous learning opportunities. Visit the conference website at http://www.aims.edu/internal/faculty/development/conference/spring_2015/index.php for more information.

By Patricia Rand

What is the most important thing you learned at the Assessment Academy?

My most important take away is how valuable this can be for students. Assessment is a tool that can help us show our students how and why they are learning what they are learning. It’s a way for students to understand the investment they can make in themselves for their own success and we’re there to facilitate that success.

Marge Lambeth | Sociology

What helped me the most from the Assessment Academy was the process of collaborating with my colleagues to identify the most important groups of skills for students in our Assessment Prep Program and then writing specific learning goals. We had fun sharing insights with each other while working to improve the services we offer.

Jonathan Hui | Assessment Prep

What did you like best about the Assessment Academy?

I liked the opportunity to interact with members of my department as well as other departments from around Aims. I was able to meet and work with some great people within the college and generate ideas that I believe can help my students learn.

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Peer review is a divisive and dichotomous phrase. Some students and instructors love it; others hate it. When done well, peer review can be advantageous for both the instructor and the students. For the instructor, these workshops can make grading quicker and easier; minor errors can be found and corrected before the final assignment is due, creating one less aspect to address during grading. Furthermore, peer review is one of the only practical methods for an entire class of students to receive feedback in a single class period.

Students obtain many potential benefits as well: positive feedback about what they are doing well; critical, constructive criticism about what is not working; and valid suggestions for revision. Moreover, students are forced to fine-tune revision skills. And even when a student doesn’t receive valid and constructive comments (and it is hard to believe that no useful comments are made during a peer review session), the student will benefit from seeing the models composed by classmates. In this sense, peer review becomes an effective and contextualized form of modeling, both for what works (the good) and for what doesn’t (the bad). The late Wendy Bishop, Keling W. Hunt distinguished professor of English at Florida State University, notes that the workshop atmosphere forces students to “examine the content, structure, linguistic, and cognitive choices that form the congeries of style(s), usage(s), and grammar(s)” made in writing, fostering “an examined matrix of ongoing writing activity as writers use classrooms…to read and write their own and others’ writing more fluently and accurately” (Bishop, 1995, p. 174). Sounds like an obvious win-win, right?

Not always because, unfortunately, peer review can also be ineffective. One problem is that the workshop is dependent on the quality of a student’s peers. If classmates are incapable of both understanding and articulating the necessary criteria for the assignment, they will not provide helpful feedback. And when this occurs, students often stray from the purpose, instead noting other elements of the essay such as grammar and punctuation, morphing the session into ineffective “editing” where students, who don’t understand grammar themselves, try to locate the grammatical errors they believe to be present. Another problem is created when the feedback is unfiltered by the instructor, which leads to ambiguous suggestions that are rarely useful.

Fortunately, there are ways to make peer revision workshops more effective:

**Direct the feedback:** Remind students what is most important for the particular assignment and what they, as reviewers, should focus on. Provide handouts to direct the comments instead of leaving feedback to student interpretation. Encourage students to avoid marking grammar and punctuation mistakes unless they are obvious.

**Assign a point value:** Making participation a part of the assignment grade ensures better attendance and participation. For example, the instructor can require students to bring a full draft of the assignment being assessed along with detailed and well thought out feedback from the peer review.

**Give students something tangible to take:** Instead of just requiring verbal comments or short marks on the actual paper, have students fill out an evaluation form that the writer can keep. This method allows the writer to access the feedback later when the revision is occurring.

**Keep it student-led:** Your students likely receive lots of feedback from you during the writing process. Allow the workshop to be a time where they receive feedback from other students instead of from you, only get involved when necessary.

**Round Robin:** This involves rotating essays frequently in larger groups, perhaps even with the entire class. The goal is to address one aspect of the essay quickly before passing the essay to another student and moving on to another portion of the review. For example, you can begin with a check of the format, then pass the essay and review the title and spacing, then again for the thesis, etc… One benefit of this format is that it puts more emphasis on finding and marking particular criteria instead of commenting on the quality of the criteria. Because of this, round robin works well for classes where students are beginning writers or where students have a wide range of writing abilities.

**Small Group:** This allows for more focus on specific essays and overall content. Keeping groups small allows for students to review several different essays and receive review from several people while still providing detailed feedback.

**Partner:** Putting students into groups of two allows for significant discussion and feedback. The downside, however, is that because students are only given one partner, the quality of the feedback they receive is entirely dependent on their particular partner. Therefore, the partner workshop works better for more advanced classes and assignments.

10-20 minute workshops: Instead of devoting a significant portion of a class, or even an entire class, to a peer workshop, several quick sessions can be held at the beginning or end of multiple class periods. The goal of these workshops is to focus on something quick and concrete each time (i.e. proper format, citations, thesis statements, one paragraph, etc.).

A further suggestion for review and modeling:

Many instructors model effective essays (or parts of essays – paragraphs, for example) to their students, and this modeling generally occurs early in the writing process, often when the essay is assigned and the requirements are detailed. This use of ideal modeling is particularly beneficial to newer students who have had limited exposure to a particular essay or structure. However, research suggests that it may be advantageous to provide such models during the revision stage rather than the invention stage (Bishop, 1995). The theory behind this suggestion is that it is in the revision stage where students can directly apply the analysis of such models to the writing they have created whereas in the invention stage, it is less feasible for the analysis to impact the student’s writing. Said another way, modeling during the revision stage provides greater contextualization for the student and his/her particular assignment.

**FERPA note:** Assignments become part of a student’s educational records once the instructor takes possession; therefore, instructors should not collect an assignment before peer review takes place.

**REFERENCES:**

The AQIP Career Exploration Project is at its midway point. The first phase of this initiative was implemented in Fall 2014 via AAA 090 classes. Through a partnership between the Student Success Center, Division III and First-Year Experience, a comprehensive career planning process was infused into the course curriculum to increase student career self-actualization. Pre and post-test data from the fall show promising results:

- An 18% increase in students who are able to articulate career interests,
- A 23% increase in students reporting they have researched their chosen career, and
- A 24% increase of students who understand the qualifications and experience needed in order to be competitive in their intended career.

Phase two is currently underway and includes second semester career activities for the Emerging Scholars program. Students who will develop two-year academic plans based on career exploration.

(Key Innovators: Denise Pearson, Paula Yanish, Allan Obert, Ryan Barone)

AAA/Disciplinary Infusion Project

Since its inception in Spring 2014, this academic and student affairs collaboration has demonstrated significant learning outcomes. The project contextualized AAA 090 curriculum for career and technical education programs in Allied Health, Business, and Protective Services. Course content includes discipline-specific study strategies and readings, related career focused research, guest speakers from the occupational field and other andragogical adjustments based on best practice. Students completing the infused AAA courses have an average 3.33 GPA compared to an average 2.54 GPA for students in non-infused AAA courses. Pre and post-test data demonstrate greater than 10% increases on 17 of the course learning outcomes for students in the infused classes, a sampling of which follows:

- On a pre-test, 15% of students in an infused class agreed that they set goals for performance in classes and develop steps to achieve them whereas 55% agreed to the same item on the post-test (24% higher post-test score over non-infused AAA).
- On a pre-test, 24% of students in an infused class agreed that they regularly review their notes whereas 54% agreed to the same item on the post-test (26% higher post-test score over non-infused AAA).
- On a pre-test, 40% of students in an infused class agreed that they review every test and check for errors before submitting whereas 67% agreed to the same item on the post-test (20% higher post-test score over non-infused AAA).

Instructors, who taught the contextualized AAA class, reported higher levels of student engagement, increased career self-actualization and cited the benefits of the cohort model over the non-infused AAA courses they taught.

(Key Innovators: Ryan Barone, Denise Pearson)

Starfish

The early alert program was significantly updated in Fall 2013 with the implementation of the Starfish Early Alert software. Faculty across all Aims campuses partner with the Student Success Center retention team via Starfish to report no-shows, report under-performing students and offer kudos for academic achievements. Early alert usage has increased dramatically since the implementation of Starfish with a 452% – 490% increase over fall and spring semesters respectively. Spring 2014 data indicates that 70% of students identified for early intervention were motivated to take action and improve their academic performance through the alert. Fifty percent of students felt the action they took as a result of the alert helped improve their final grade. More than 89% of students receiving kudos through Starfish were motivated to increase their effort and engagement in class. The early alert program is yet another student and academic affairs collaboration designed to increase retention, success and completion.

(Key Innovators: Michael Gulliksen, Paula Yanish, Ron Lewis, Lori Ford, and Cathy Belghay)

LEARNING COMMONS

- Science tutoring is now offered on the Fort Lupton campus and for the first time this spring, the embedded tutoring program will be available in CCR 092 and 094 at both Fort Lupton and Loveland.
- Our Supplemental Instruction in the Kiefer Library has grown. Our librarians have worked tirelessly to deliver custom-designed information literacy sessions to all AAA classes on all campuses.
- Our Library Advisory Committee has new members who will provide additional guidance and focus for future decision-making.
- The Computer Learning Lab staff has grown our partnerships with iFocus, faculty and IT by bringing innovative workshops, new software and the most up-to-date hardware into our areas.

AN INTERVIEW with DISTINGUISHED FACULTY

PHYLlis GOSCH

Q: Tell us about your background. What did you study and how did it prepare you to become a faculty member?
A: Originally, my career focus was to teach elementary children. However, I soon found that it was important to be a master teacher with a single focus so I got a degree as a reading specialist. During my many years as a middle school reading teacher, I learned how to excite reluctant students to something they weren’t particularly interested in. These were powerful learning years for me and my students. I paid my dues by teaching middle school during the day and teaching nights at various community colleges. I found my niche during those years. Ultimately, I was fulfilled with a long career at Aims.

Q: How do you have a mantra or general belief that you follow in your faculty role?
A: My general belief is that students are doing their best at any given moment. They get up in the morning thinking they will be successful. My job as a teacher is to facilitate that success and instill confidence in students that they deserve success. Along with that belief goes a substantial amount of academic and life coaching.

Q: What do you believe separates Aims Community College from other institutions?
A: Aims Community College stands head and shoulders above most other community colleges because of its ability to serve students as individuals from advising to financial aid services to faculty who work with them to help them achieve and realize their hopes and dreams. The Aims community teams together to put students first.

Q: Is there a word or a phrase that captures your andragogy? How or why?
A: My andragogy is driven by high expectations. First semester students sometimes think a college degree is beyond them, but by believing in them and leading them through many of the unknowns, they are able to persevere and expect more of themselves.

Q: What do you believe has been your most effective tool in reaching students? What is your greatest accomplishment?
A: My most effective tool in reaching students has been to intentionally engage each one of them as often as possible inside and outside of class. My goal was to have at least two personal contacts with each student each week. Within the first couple of weeks I knew each student’s name. Shy or quiet students got a bit of TLC first. From there on, all students are expected to be called on in class and to participate in activities because I’d explained the importance of active learning.

In my book, the highest honor I’ve received as a teacher is students referring their family members and friends to my classes.

Q: What, if any, advice do you give all your students and/or faculty just beginning their teaching careers?
A: I encourage new faculty to observe master faculty teaching, then discuss the lesson afterwards. The art of teaching is more readily observed than discussed.
A few years ago, when the Aims’ Writing Center was located in Horizon Hall, the back wall was lined with several old, dusty file cabinets full of writing handouts for students. These cabinets were hard to navigate, and many of the resources were so old we didn’t even know who had created them or when they were created (when was the last time carbon copy paper was used, anyway?). When a student was in need of a resource to help understand a term or concept, the tutor would scramble to find something applicable and somewhat current, something that could actually help the student. It was easier said than done.

In 2010, the Aims Writing Center moved to its current location in the Learning Commons. Space was at a premium, so bringing the file cabinets and all of the dated writing resources was impractical. Furthermore, the hours that writing tutoring were available to students in the new space changed as well. And, of course, Aims’ student population was also changing; in particular, more students were taking online classes, creating an impetus for resources that could be accessed at a distance, while other students on campus were in need of writing help outside of available tutoring hours. It soon became clear that new writing resources were needed, and they were needed in a different format. An idea emerged: create a dynamic resource for writing materials that could be accessed by anyone, at any time, and from any location. Over the following year, the Aims Online Writing Lab (or OWL, for short) was created, and in the Fall 2012 the website went live. During that first semester, the site received approximately 8,000 page views, a number that, at the time, seemed substantial. Of course, 1,000 of those page views probably came from me, the editor, frequently checking each page to make sure it was still active and that typos hadn’t been missed, but others were using the resources, too. Clearly we had created something that students, faculty, staff, and others outside of the Aims community found helpful.

But Rob Umbaugh, Mary Gabriel, and I weren’t content with the resources, too! Clearly we had created something that students, faculty, staff, and others outside of the Aims community found helpful. So videos were made; interactive grammar exercises were added; resources for instructors were created; and, more recently, materials for writing across the curriculum and for composing resumes and cover letters were added. As the OWL expanded and evolved, and as word of its existence spread, the website continued to grow in popularity, both by members of the Aims community and by others. One year after its inception, the OWL had approximately 150,000 page views, many of which were coming from outside of Aims. In fact, in Spring 2013, representatives from Colorado Christian University, who were hoping to create their own online writing lab and looking for an exemplary model to follow, found the Aims OWL. They were so impressed with its quality they contacted Aims for guidance.

This past fall, the Aims OWL received approximately 260,000 page views, a 32.4% increase in just two short years. The OWL has become so widely used that a Google search using the basic search term “online writing lab” results in the Aims OWL appearing on the first page, and many of our individual pages become the number one link when searched for. For example, a search for “how to write an evaluation essay” or “independent vs. dependent clause” (along with many other writing concepts/terms) leads directly to the Aims OWL. This means that not only is the OWL being used at a high rate, it is also being linked to by other websites, and many of these views and links are coming from people unfamiliar with Aims.

By any measure, the OWL is a comprehensive and frequently used site, one that is accessed and linked to by users all over the world. But we aren’t satisfied yet. The resource can continue to grow and get better, and it will. In the coming months, more videos, interactive exercises, information for faculty, and job/technical writing resources will be created. So continue to use the OWL frequently and help spread the word. The resources are available for anyone. In the meantime, if you have any ideas for additional resources, don’t hesitate to contact me at jared.merk@aims.edu.

I wonder what happened to those old file cabinets?!

The OWL can be found at www.aims.edu/onlinewritinglab

Creating Worklife and Wellness Programs

By Jay Hinrichs

You have probably heard about or seen the expansion and remodeling of our Physical Education building at the Greeley Campus. Work is underway and we expect to hold our grand opening in Fall 2015.

This is a tremendous opportunity for Aims’ students, faculty and staff to come together and grow the Physical Education curriculum, our campus wellness programming and offerings and enhance the campus community with this renovated and expanded Physical Education and Recreation facility in the heart of the Greeley campus. One of the strategic goals of this project is to expand our fitness, educational and wellness offerings. Our goal is for everyone on campus to feel welcome in the facility and want to participate in some program, class or intramural sport. We look forward to collaborating with everyone on campus and in the Aims community to make this a landmark facility and program.

To keep up-to-date with our construction visit: http://www.aims.edu/student/gym/
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WE know continuous improvement is necessary and possible. This is the reason we teach, because we believe that we can be more, do more and accomplish more through education and so, we seek to improve on everything we do and then teach others to improve upon what we have all learned together.

JENNA OLIVER
RIGHT NOW

is one of those moments when we are influencing the future.

STEVE JOBS

Thank you to all of our Aims faculty, staff and administrators for all you do!