THE DIRECTOR’S PODIUM

By Kim Cuny

Last semester we presented original pedagogical innovations at national and regional conferences and we authored a chapter on Multiliteracy Learning Spaces in “Cases in Higher Education Spaces”. This semester, there are many things that are new and some that remain the same.

NEW

*We are celebrating 10 years!!

*Where consultations go, we completed 36% more reaching 1% more speakers this year compared to last. We reached 4% more speakers with our course workshop efforts. Our orientations also increased by reaching 4% more speakers. We grew our workshop series by 25% in the number offered and 60% in the amount of speaking, group, and interpersonal communication consultations.

*The number of speakers seeking support via the resources on our Web page continues to grow.

*We provide a safe place for non-native speakers of English to practice conversation with native speakers.

*We offer extended support via online chat! Send us your quick questions during our regular hours of operation.

GoogleTalk/AIM: UNCGSpeaking

Visit our Web page.

*Speakers who need to be recorded when they come to practice, can be recorded to their own electronic device or we can use our iPad or laptop. If we record to one of our devices we’ll share by way of your Google Drive before the consultation ends.

*Due to the spoken nature of our work we still require appointments. It is never too early to call for an appointment. It can, however, be too late. Appointments need to take place two or more days before the final presentation date.

*We are taking requests for our interactive oral communication workshops. We can facilitate these workshops in your space or the Speaking Center Training Facility in McIver.

*During a consultation, speakers work one-on-one with a communication consultant trained to offer guidance & feedback. Each individual session lasts 30 minutes while a group session lasts 60. We can assist you at any stage of your presentation, from discovery to organization to delivery.

*Our services are open and available to the entire campus community, and through our community outreach, not-for-profit off-campus communities as well.

THE DIRECTOR’S PODIUM

BY ERIN ELLIS

Technology: How I love thee

I quickly revert back to my high school days of puppy love when I am around you. Technology, I am enamored with you. It is amazing to find new ways to connect with people through text, video, pictures, and apps. Of particular interest to me is working with Google+ and all its features to discover ways we can work with speakers. My most beloved feature is the ‘hangouts’. In a hangout you are able to connect with a speaker, or as many as 9 other people, in a synchronous video call. This feature allows people to talk with one another, share and edit documents, and watch videos together. We have successfully worked with 7 speakers using this feature in a CST course. In addition to being able to take online group appointments, I am personally exploring how to develop and offer mini virtual workshops. Stay tuned as this venture continues to grow and develop.
The 12th Annual Excellence at the Center Mini-Conference held at UNCG was an eye-opening experience for me. As a student at UNCG and a junior consultant at the University Speaking Center, I thought all Speaking Centers were the same. However, having attended the session “Speaking Center as Experimental Learning Site”, my impression that all Centers are the same was proven wrong. In this session, students from different speaking centers had the opportunity to share their experiences on becoming independently functioning employees at their center or lab. Listening to commentary from numerous students, I noticed how each person’s experience allowed them to develop in different ways. What really caught my interest was listening to my peer with whom I took the Speaking Center Theory and Practice class speak on the literature we discussed and how the readings helped to guide her in consultations. I was astonished at her perspective and how she exposed me to a different way of thinking even though we had the same assignments. As an individual who was somewhat of an outsider to the “communication realm” not long ago, gaining different point-of-views motivated me to look deeper into the experiences and knowledge of others so I may grow in ways not foreseen.

A SHORT HISTORY OF A GROWING CENTER

BY SUSAN WEBSTER

The 2012/2013 academic year has been busy, eventful, and fulfilling for the University Speaking Center. In addition to hosting The 12th Annual Excellence at the Center Mini-conference and serving a record 7,373 speakers, we are celebrating our 10 year anniversary. Evan Zakia, who served as I work with Kim Cuny, the director, and the other consultants. Everyone understands how terrifying the process of learning how to be a good public speaker can be, so the environment where UNCG students practice these skills is comfortable, supportive, and safe. As students, we easily empathize with the speakers who come to the center. After all, we, too, give presentations, worry about grades, and try to squeeze too much into our days. We are fortunate to have the opportunity to share with other students the knowledge we acquire through our communication classes and Speaking Center training. It reinforces our own knowledge and helps us to keep improving our own speaking skills.

We consultants at the University Speaking Center are looking forward to beginning a new decade of supporting UNCG and the surrounding community. See you at the center!