1. Let's celebrate LDOC on Wednesday! We thought about slip and slide, or bouncy houses... but we settled on happy hour from 5:00-7PM at Tru. Please join The Office of Instructional Innovation and friends at Tru to celebrate last day of class. It’s not a formal event, just stop by, grab a drink or food, and meet other faculty and staff. 
http://trudeli.com/

2. Did you hear about the Testing Center this final exam season? We are piloting a new Undergraduate Testing Center on reading days (April 28th and May 4th). Students and instructors may use this option only if the following arrangements are made in advance:
   a. The instructor writes an email to the Testing Center administrators (Testing_Center@unc.edu), with a copy to the student using UNC email addresses. Information in the email should include:
      i. Subject line: “Testing Center Spring 2016”
      ii. instructor and student name
      iii. course number, section, title
      iv. one of six exam dates and times
         • Thursday April 28, Reading Day: 8am, noon, or 4pm
         • Wednesday May 4, Reading Day: 8am, noon, or 4pm
      Choose the time of day that matches the scheduled exam.
      v. required testing conditions (e.g., no materials allowed, closed book, etc.)
      vi. confirmation that the instructor will have the secure exam ready by noon on the last day of class (Wednesday, April 27).
      vii. instructor and student phone numbers
   b. Andy Lang (OASIS, Director) will send a separate email to the instructor to confirm the instructions related to a secure exam upload and post-exam secure delivery back.

3. What are they up to in their teaching?

Eric Youngstrom, Psychology and Neuroscience says this about teaching content vs. skills, “the facts will be dated, and the needle of helpful information will be hidden in an ever doubling haystack. The most important thing for the student to take away is effective strategies for asking a good question, searching quickly and well, and critically evaluating the results to decide – is this a good enough answer... for my client? For me? ...for my child?”

How does he teach these skills? In his Developmental Psychopathology course he uses cases (based on real people). The student’s understanding of “best” evolves rapidly, from “what the book says” to “what a high quality systematic review says,” and then to focuses on the balance of risks and benefits, and whether a family could even find access to the service or afford it.

Margaret O'Shaughnessey, English and Comparative Literature, teaches an APPLES service-learning course, Into the Woods: Literature and Nature. One group
of students catalogued and measured all the trees in the Old Chapel Hill cemetery on campus. They wrote up a report on the history of this cemetery, the tree species they found and their estimated ages, a brief history of cemetery design in the US and the changing trends in burials in the US. The paper has links to the interactive map the students created where you can isolate trees by species and age. The map won a prize in a competition on mapmaking. They sent the paper and the map to the town of Chapel Hill as well as to the Botanical Gardens, their partner for the course.

**Bob Goldstein, Biology** has each of the students in his Honors Cell and Development class build digital microscopes with their smart phones. And here are the results: [https://www.flickr.com/photos/205h2016/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/205h2016/)

Bob remarked, "the class ended at 12:15 today, but they keep posting more photos, which gives me a big smile."

**Cheryl Moy, Chemistry**, found her groove with active learning by teaching Organic Chemistry in the newly renovated Greenlaw 101 classroom. She and Bob Henshaw from the Center for Faculty Excellence told others about how the space was developed and used at the Educause Learning Initiative National Meeting in San Antonio. This is one of the most highly desired teaching spaces on campus with well-designed furniture and technology (definitely peek inside if you haven’t seen it yet!)

What are you or your colleagues up to in their teaching that might inspire others? Please send along to Kelly_Hogan@unc.edu

**4. What are departments up to?**

Many departments are trying to create more uniform experiences in their introductory courses that have many sections taught by various instructors. This means aligning the course objectives, pedagogy, assessments, and expectations.

Other departments are making sure their syllabi are clearly posted on their departmental webpages and that they are current. Students tell us they want a place to see syllabi to make course and instructor decisions—which provide much more information than RateMyProfessor.

All departments offer fascinating and engaging first year seminars. If you’ve never seen the list of first year courses we offer, see a sampling by looking at the spring course list: [http://fys.unc.edu/courses/spring-2016/](http://fys.unc.edu/courses/spring-2016/) You’ll want to head back to college...

**5. ‘Tis the Season for Course Evaluations.**

Remember that course evaluations are just one tool for examining teaching. Rubrics for peer observation are another great tool. Here is one example: [http://cfe.unc.edu/files/2014/09/Methods-Based-Peer-Visit-Form.pdf](http://cfe.unc.edu/files/2014/09/Methods-Based-Peer-Visit-Form.pdf)
6. **Think Backwards.** Many faculty use the summer to design or redesign aspects of a course. When surveyed, many faculty say they plan a course by first choosing a topic and readings. However, educational specialists will tell you—plan *backwards*. Backwards planning means asking, “What do I want my students to learn and how will I know if they learned it?” Thus, start with the assessment and then plan the learning activity and readings that give students the practice they need to master the concept or skill.

**Plan to use the summer to develop a course or learn a new teaching/technology skill?**
Check in with the Center for Faculty Excellence for tips and advice!
[http://cfe.unc.edu/](http://cfe.unc.edu/)

7. **Thank you...** for the work you put into continually improving your teaching, incorporating constructive feedback from students and peers, redesigning curriculum, picking up new teaching methods, attending workshops, collaborating with colleagues to align sections, and caring for students.

Have wonderful graduation celebrations with your students!

Signing off and heading to Costa Rica to teach Genetics and Molecular Biology...

Cheers,

Kelly Hogan
Director of the Office of Instructional Innovation
Senior STEM Lecturer