I would like to say thank you to staff development personnel for your continued efforts and commitment to improving student learning through staff development. This past year has been one of change and growth for our Office of Professional Development in Education (OPDE). While tuition costs are continuing to increase, we have been able to maintain course fees at $60 = 3 hours, $45 = 2 hours, and $30 = 1 hour courses. Professional development that is content-focused leads to improved instruction. The OPDE works with and assists staff development leaders in presenting the knowledge, skills, and best practices needed for teachers in the 21st Century. The OPDE will again present four regional workshops around the state during the 2006-2007 school year. We look forward to your joining us at one of these informative sessions. We also look forward to working with each of you. Therefore, as you begin planning for the coming year, I ask that you think of ways in which our office may assist you in reaching your goals. For more information, I invite you to visit our website at http://www.cofc.edu/~pdie.

The Journal of the National Staff Development Council
Article Review

Teacher collaboration is a powerful form of professional learning. One focus for collaboration efforts is designing assessments. When teachers design assessments, give each other feedback through peer reviews, evaluate student work, and plan together for improvement, they are engaged in highly effective professional development. Once teachers have recognized the value of performance assessments, they face the challenge of finding or creating tasks and scoring rubrics.

Teaching strategies to collaborate to develop performance tasks and assessments:

1. Collaboratively design tasks and assessments based on desired learning results.
2. Have peer review tasks and assessments for feedback on designs, and

3. Conduct a group evaluation of student work elicited by tasks.

Strategy one: Collaborative Design
Step 1: Form the group.
Step 2: Meet as a team.
Step 3: Decide which standards to measure.
Step 4: Create a task.
Step 5: Develop evaluative criteria.

Strategy 2: A peer review process
Peer Review is more successful when:
Step 1: Feedback is specific, descriptive, and guided by the criteria in design standards.
Step 2: Feedback is not personalized
Step 3: The Designer listens to the feedback and asks clarifying questions.
Step 4: Meetings stay on schedule.

Strategy 3: Anchor Evaluation in student work
Step 1: Reconvene Teams
Step 2: Describe the student work on the performance task.
Step 3: Anchor the work

Collaborative designs and peer reviews honor and enhance teachers’ professionalism, expertise, and collegial learning. Working in teams to evaluate student work against established criteria, identify models of excellence, and plan needed improvements promotes a results-oriented culture of quality.

By designing performance assessments, educators enhance their understanding of content standards and of the evidence needed to show that students really understand the important ideas and processes contained in those standards. Teachers discover that the connection between curriculum and assessment becomes clearer, teaching is more sharply focused, and evaluation is more consistent.

Ultimately, students benefit by having defined learning goals, opportunities to demonstrate their understanding in more authentic ways, and advance knowledge of the evaluation criteria so they have greater purpose in their learning.

The School of Education at the College of Charleston offers nationally accredited teacher and athletic training education programs. Our teacher education programs are accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, and our athletic training program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs. Initial teacher certification programs and specialized concentrations in the physical education and health arena are available at the undergraduate level. Additionally, we offer several graduate initial teacher education programs (M. A. T.) as well as advanced (M. Ed.) programs.

School of Education Conceptual Framework: The mission of the School of Education at the College of Charleston is the development of educators and health professionals to lead a diverse community of learners toward an understanding of and active participation in a highly complex world. Our vision is to be a community of diverse teacher leaders who ensure exemplary learning and wellness opportunities for all individuals. These opportunities are created by professionals who can MAKE THE TEACHING - LEARNING CONNECTION through:

- Understanding and valuing the learner;
- Knowing what and how to teach and assess and how to create an environment in which learning occurs; and
- Understanding ourselves as professionals.
STAFF DEVELOPMENT INITIATOR HIGHLIGHT:

Karen Perrotta is the Coordinator for Professional Development and Early Childhood Education in Sumter School District 17. She has 28 years experience in education, with 18 years serving as a classroom teacher. She absolutely loves teaching, and one of her priorities is to bring about quality professional development opportunities for Sumter School District 17 teachers, administrators, and support staff.

She is an active member of Delta Kappa Gamma, Sumter Area Reading Council, International Reading Association, Phi Delta Kappa International, and National Association for the Education of Young Children. Karen is also a National Board Certified Teacher, a task she chose as an effort to better support teachers going through the process. She found it very difficult to support National Board Candidates when she really didn't know what they were experiencing. She can honestly say that it is a very intensive process and one that has forever changed me as an educator.

Karen and her husband, Joe have three daughters and recently expanded their family to include a son-in-law! Brene and Rob were married in April and now live in Lugoff. Abby and Brittany are both missionaries with Campus Crusade for Christ. In her spare time, Karen enjoys reading, shopping for antiques, and spending time with her family on Lake Wateree.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. In what term is the official grade posted if enrolled in a course that goes beyond one term and the grade of IP is awarded?

The official grade will be posted for the term in which the course was initiated. A grade of In Progress (IP) is awarded any time a course extends beyond the term of its initiation dates during an official grading period of the college.

2. If I took a course with a Pass/Fail grading system, can the P/F grade be converted into a letter (A-F) grade?

As per the academic policies of the College of Charleston Catalogue a pass/fail course grade carries Zero (0) grade points and thus cannot be converted to a letter grade.
PAST AND CURRENT EVENTS

The South Carolina Association of Teacher Educators (SCATE) and the South Carolina Association of Colleges of Teacher Educators (SCACTE) Fall 2006 Annual Conference will be held October 29-31st at Sea Mist Resort, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Dr. Maria Goodlow-Johnson, Superintendent of Charleston County Schools, was recently elected to serve on the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) Board of Trustees for a three-year term.

The Center for Partnerships to Improve Education is on the road to success. The Center is based in the College of Charleston’s School of Education, and is a recently established non-profit organization charged with addressing and resolving the obstacles that confront selected underachieving schools.

The N.E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center at the College of Charleston has received national accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the nation’s leading organization of early childhood professionals.

NATIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

“All teachers in all schools will experience high-quality professional learning as part of their daily work by 2007.”

NSDC- Strategic Plan for 2002-2007

The NSDC’s strategic plan emphasizes the importance of Professional Development, which improves the performance of all educators and the learning of all students. The following strategies and priorities chart the Council’s course in improving the quality of professional learning for all teachers and administrators.

- **Strategic Priority 1-Leadership**: School and district leaders create systems of professional learning that ensure continuous improvement of leadership, teaching, and student achievement. **Goal**: To affect leadership for the purpose of having quality professional learning in all schools.

- **Strategic Priority 2- High Performance Cultures**: School and district cultures support sustained collaboration and professional learning. **Goal**: To have all educators work in schools whose cultures focus on high levels of learning for all students, rigorous professional learning, and continuous improvement.

- **Strategic Priority 3-High Poverty Schools**: All schools with high concentrations of low income and minority students ensure quality professional learning for all educators. **Goal**: To dramatically improve the quality of professional learning in high-poverty schools.

- **Strategic Priority 4-Advocacy**: Local and state policies promote quality professional learning for all educators. **Goal**: To have local, state, provincial, and federal policies that promote quality professional learning.

For more information concerning the Office of Professional Development visit our website: [http://www.cofc.edu/edpie](http://www.cofc.edu/edpie)