

# Report from a semester at Ohio State University

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I would like to begin this report by expressing my sincerest gratitude to the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT) for awarding me one of the 2012 Excellence in Teaching fellowships. The semester spent at Ohio State University has provided me with valuable experiences that will greatly further my own career and development as a teacher and researcher, and has positioned me to share these experiences to the significant benefit of my department and institution. All past and future recipients of the STINT Excellence in Teaching award can be grateful for the honor bestowed upon them to represent Sweden abroad and to promote a dynamic and rigorous national higher educational system at home.

## Preparation and planning

STINT's announcement of the Excellence in Teaching fellowship included information about my Ohio State University (OSU) host department (English Department) and key contact people to assist me in general questions concerning OSU's role in the program (Joanna Kukielka-Blaser and Ester Gottlieb, at Office of International Affairs, are particularly well-connected and informed and can provide excellent assistance), human resources and fiscal procedures (Nichole Cochran) and academic matters (Galey Modan). I immediately contacted each of these people by email, so as to consult with them before scheduling my week-long planning trip convenient to their schedules and the academic calendar. I also indicated in this email that I would appreciate help finding suitable housing and learning about local schools. For any STINT-scholar who will be accompanied by family including school-aged children, it is critical to resolve all housing (and thereby school) issues sooner rather than later. There is no choice of school to speak of, but rather enrolment is based on residency; one must be able to provide an address before making any enrolment inquiries to elementary, middle or high schools. While the designated contact people at OSU may not be able directly to assist STINT-scholars in these matters, it is a good idea to request their help and, by extension, the help of their colleagues. It is my experience that the actual tasks and responsibilities associated specifically with the fellowship are more easily coordinated at a later stage, but that a prompt resolution of housing and school issues is critical.

- **Housing**

STINT fellows are advised to pursue (for example, via inquiries posted on department listservs) rentals by faculty on sabbatical, which is by far the ideal housing solution. In my case, there was no possibility to rent a sabbatical house, and it was also the case that none of the academic or administrative staff of the English Department were able to help identify suitable housing either. Furthermore, and significant to future STINT-scholars, the suggested housing solutions provided by the Office of International Affairs are quite unthinkable, as they include questionable boarding houses, inconveniently located apartments, or prohibitively expensive rentals. The curious housing suggestions may, however, be due to the fact that the housing market in Columbus is extremely active and dynamic, and thus it is difficult to provide information on reliable, short-term housing. Both apartments and houses tend to be rented on a yearly basis only, and they are generally unfurnished. It is entirely possible to find accommodation as late as August, but one would run the risk of accepting a year-long lease and/or the responsibility for furnishing the residence.

All three 2012 STINT fellows at Ohio State University found suitable housing through Ms. Linda Fowler of Villa Ruth Housing. Ms. Fowler rents a number of furnished houses and apartments throughout the Victorian Village and Short North neighborhoods, each approximately one mile south of the university campus. Ms. Fowler rents exclusively to short-term tenants, the majority of whom come to Columbus as visiting scholars: [linda@qsds.com](mailto:linda@qsds.com)

- **Public elementary, middle and high schools**

STINT fellows accompanied by school-aged children will be zoned for a public school according to their temporary residency. The Columbus City School System is diverse, and schools are regularly evaluated and ranked. Invariably, the schools of the Upper Arlington, Worthington, Hilliard, Grandview Heights and Bexley suburbs outperform the Columbus City schools. For this reason, OSU faculty and administrators will unanimously recommend that visiting fellows with families live in one of the suburbs, so as to ensure that their children may attend an associated school. Not surprisingly, there are a great number of social advantages to living in the wealthier districts; however, not only are many of the suburbs inconvenient to the campus and to the merchant and downtown districts, they also tend to be culturally and politically one-dimensional. Columbus city schools are often more culturally diverse, and they tend to offer competent ESL (English as a Second Language) instruction and support. Considering the brevity of the STINT fellowship, I personally recommend prioritizing convenient, comfortable housing and embracing the school for which it is zoned. Four months is too little time to experience any kind of significant academic advantage or disadvantage from any school, be it stellar or sub-standard.

- **Planning trip**

The STINT fellowship announcements were made on 14 February 2012, and soon thereafter I embarked on my planning trip to Columbus, from 12-19 March 2012. In general, it can be recommended that fellows schedule their planning trips as early as possible, as academic scheduling is decided often at least one term in advance, and spring terms often end in April or May. The timing of my planning trip was decided in conjunction with the Chair of the English Department and my faculty consultant. In retrospect, I realize that the English Department was poorly informed about the STINT program, and thus under-prepared for my visit. The department Chair had little to no interest or input in my actual department activities, and there was also no proper announcement of my pending presence. On the other hand, the Chair did assist me by putting me in touch with people who were better positioned to help me in different practical and administrative matters. The faculty consultant was similarly uninformed about the STINT program and required a measure of prompting to provide me with a reasonable plan for the scholarship period. It was decided that I would be wholly responsible for one course, *Introduction to the Study of Language*. Sketching out a syllabus for the course, including adjusting the content for the transition from a quarter to a semester schedule and negotiating a textbook were undertaken during my planning trip.

During the planning trip, it is vital to establish exactly the degree of autonomy one has as a visiting fellow. Co-teaching one course is ideal, but often a department will consider the STINT fellow "free labor" and give him or her full responsibility for a single course. Nevertheless, the fellow may not be entirely autonomous. In my case, I was assigned full responsibility for one of two sections of a course, but I was still strongly encouraged to use a particular textbook (which I was reluctant to do, but my suggestion of the use of another text was met with skepticism) and to include an external project in the course requirements (this I did gladly). On the other hand, during the semester I often consulted with my faculty partner to get approval for ideas or content and/or schedule adjustments, and was consistently reassured that I was at liberty to do as I pleased. In the end, I found it frustrating to be somewhat restrained and controlled in the planning stage, only to be met with what seemed like a lack of interest during the actual execution of the course. Therefore, with regards to the faculty consultant, the time during the planning trip is therefore best spent determining the degree of autonomy of the STINT fellow and negotiating a plan that will result in a meaningful exchange of pedagogical practices, ideas and philosophies so as to promote the mutual development of excellence in teaching. It is an unfortunate missed opportunity if the faculty consultant and

the STINT fellow work only in parallel (as in my case) and do not have the chance to partake of and discuss each other's teaching skills.

Ohio State University's English Department has a dominant literary profile, and as such, linguistics is marginalized. My research interests and teaching experience overlapped with those of academic staff in a number of other departments, including Linguistics, Romance Languages, Germanic and Slavic Languages and the College of Education and Human Ecology. During my planning trip I was able to meet face-to-face with other linguists from these departments and make plans to meet again during the STINT fellowship.

**Tip!**

It is highly recommended that STINT-scholars request that the head of their host department announce the pending arrival. Prepare a brief presentation of yourself including your research interests and teaching experience, and ask that this presentation be emailed to the faculty of your host department and other departments of interest. The advance scheduling of research seminars, guest lectures, symposia, etc. entails difficulty being acknowledged, involved and included if your presence is announced only after your arrival.

- **Tasks and responsibilities**

My primary tasks and responsibilities involved the course assigned to me to teach, *Introduction to the Study of Language*, EN2771. This course was offered in two sections, of which I was wholly responsible for one, and Dr. Modan for the other. Initially, I was to offer the only section, but due to high student enrolment, an additional section was provided by Dr. Modan. This means that, originally, I was assuming responsibility for a class that Dr. Modan was to offer. It wasn't until late spring that the decision was made to limit the number of students for one section, and to add another. Alternatively, it may have been possible to raise the enrolment cap, which could have allowed Dr. Modan and me to co-teach the class. This would have been a much more fruitful solution in terms of the Excellence in Teaching program. Faculty consultants to STINT fellows should therefore be more strongly encouraged to consider team-teaching solutions. In the end, I was assigned to teach a course which I have taught numerous times, both in Sweden and Germany, and which thus would have been a suitable course for me to exchange experiences, methods and philosophies with another teacher. Instead, two sections of the course were taught in parallel, with no integrated cooperation.

My specific course tasks included holding class Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9.35-10.55, 24 August to 4 December. Dr. Modan taught the first class of the course (24 August), so as to introduce a required external project. I taught the remaining classes, with no class missed or cancelled. Each class consisted of a PowerPoint presentation, a linguistic analysis activity and a discussion of a particular linguistic topic. A total of 11 linguistics topics (corresponding to chapters in the course textbook) were covered. All materials were provided to the students via the Carmen course web page. Student performance was evaluated according to participation (including attendance), two quizzes, one midterm exam, one final exam and one essay. The final grades were calculated and presented to the students before final grade registration: 8 As, 10 Bs, 3 Cs. No students failed the course, nor did any students take issue with or protest their grades. On a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high), my student evaluations of instruction ranged from 4.8 to 5.0. My instructor mean on overall rating was a 4.9, compared to a university-wide mean on overall rating of 4.2. Student comments on the digital and discursive evaluations included:

- "A wonderful professor; I wish we had more like her."

- “She clearly enjoys what she teaches and is very enthusiastic. The tests are difficult, but she prepares you extremely well.”
- “One of the best teachers I’ve had in a while.”
- “Dr. F tries harder than 99.9% of any teacher I’ve had at OSU to reach out to her students & help them learn. She is personable, intelligent, helpful, and available to help. Thanks!”
- “The teacher’s efforts were excellent!!! She made it through all needed course material, had tests and quizzes graded quickly, and posted on Carmen a lot to help remind us of what needed to be done. She was very interested in the content covered in the course which made the class interesting and fun to go to. She is probably one of the best professors I have ever had!”

It is clear from these comments that the students respond well to and appreciate a teacher’s aspirations to good pedagogy and commitment to excellence in teaching.

**Tip!**

Request an orientation session, ideally during the planning trip, to use the Carmen course web interface. This online course management tool is extremely dynamic and can be used to communicate with students, as a bulletin board, discussion forum, dropbox for downloads or uploads, grade manager, and more!

### **Activities during the semester**

Lesson planning, teaching and course management were my primary activities during the semester. The amount of time needed for each should *in no case* be underestimated! Despite the fact that I was to teach a course I had taught many times before at numerous institutions, I still needed to adjust my materials to a new and different textbook, semester schedule, time period, and student group. Furthermore, when a teacher has only one class to prepare for, much more time tends to be devoted to that one class. In my particular case, a good deal of time was spent on meeting students before and after class, and holding office hours, 2 hours per week. While only a few students visited me during office hours, many more communicated through emails, to which I needed to reply. Additionally, one student was performing poorly in class, and required some individual consultation, although this student eventually dropped out of the course. Another student quite early on in the semester accumulated more absences than the allowed amount, she fell asleep in class, and failed the first quiz. I confronted the student about her performance, and alerted her to the fact that I would be reviewing her case with the English Department’s Academic Program Manager of Undergraduate Studies, Ruth Friedman. The student, a first year English major, panicked about being identified to Ms. Friedman, and I had to explain that when a student runs the risk of failing the course, the Academic Program Manager must be notified. I scheduled a meeting with Ms. Friedman, who then contacted the student. I then scheduled a meeting with the student, and we negotiated a plan of action. Throughout the semester, I kept Ms. Friedman informed of the student’s progress. In the end, the student finished the course with a very respectable grade of B.

Despite the time needed to accomplish primary responsibilities and secondary tasks, there is without a doubt plenty of time available to participate in other activities than the management of one’s own course. I can only encourage STINT fellows to take part in the cornucopia of offerings available to all faculty!

- **University Center for the Advancement of Teaching university pedagogy courses**

The most significant additional activities during my semester at Ohio State University include taking several series of courses in university pedagogy, offered by the University Center for the Advancement of Teaching (UCAT). This center continuously develops and renews their university pedagogy courses, they host Course Design Institutes, and they provide additional services such as the Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) as well as objective evaluations of requested observations of teaching practices.

Each UCAT course is 90 minutes long, and the majority of them are included in thematic series. All but two of the university pedagogy courses that I took during the semester were included in thematic series, the Classroom Teaching Series and the Teaching Writing Series, including the following courses:

Classroom Teaching Series

Planning a Class Session (9.10.12)  
Techniques for Motivating Students (15.10.12)  
Student Learning 101 (16.10.12)  
Facilitating Classroom Discussion (23.10.12)

Teaching Writing Series

Responding to Student Writing (2.11.12)  
Writing and Critical Thinking (6.11.12)  
How to Help Your International Students with Writing (15.11.12)

The two non-series courses were Designing Effective Educational Environments (29.10.12) and Designing Service-Learning into Your Course (28.11.12). A verification of attendance along with a description of each of these courses is included as an appendix to this report.

- **Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID)**

I also took advantage of UCAT's Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) service, which is explained below in an extract from the UCAT web page:

A SGID is a way to gather rich, contextualized information about your course and your teaching through an in-class focus group interview, facilitated by a UCAT instructional consultant. After having an initial consultation with the facilitator to learn what you would like to discover through the SGID experience, you will schedule 20 minutes on a usual class day to step out of the room and allow the facilitator to become a "research tool" for you. The facilitator will ask your students to have small group discussions about three questions related to their learning in your course. Then, the facilitator will pull the smaller groups back into a full class discussion to summarize and clarify their feedback.

After the SGID, you will meet with your facilitator again to receive and review the data he or she collected for you – written feedback from the students' small group discussions, and the facilitator's impartial summary of the large group discussion. Together, you will work to interpret the comments to help you decide how you would like to address the student feedback with your class. SGIDs are normally conducted mid-term so that you have the opportunity to react to the information you've gathered and apply it to the remainder of the quarter, in whatever ways you see fit.

I met with Alan Kalish, Director of the University Center for the Advancement of Teaching for one hour on 5.11.12, to discuss the focus of the group interview, as outlined in the text above. It was decided that the SGID would take place the following day, Tuesday 6.11.12, and finally on Wednesday, 7.11.12, I met with Dr. Kalish and his graduate assistant for another hour to discuss the SGID results. The students were unanimously positive in their evaluation of my materials and methods, praising my organization, materials and presentation style, but were disappointed with the course textbook and encumbered by the external project, the slang journal. Both of these latter aspects of the course were imposed upon me, and in the case of the textbook, I could not adequately defend the decision to use it. However, I did forward the

complaints to my faculty consultant and course partner, and it is my hope that the use of a different textbook will be considered. I explicitly addressed the students' complaints about the slang journals, and time was devoted in that very lesson to clearing up their questions about slang and brainstorming data collection techniques. Additionally, the students complained of the amount of material included in the course, and suggested more performance evaluations (such as quizzes) covering less material. This is a good suggestion that I acknowledged but was unable to rectify during the semester. However, I intend to adjust my future evaluation schedule when I resume teaching this course at Södertörns högskola.

The SGID report is extremely helpful in determining what is working or not working in a course, as students are more responsive when *talking* about a teacher's methods and materials than when *writing* about them in course evaluations. Requesting the SGID service also promotes trust between the students and the teacher, as on the one hand, the teacher indicates s/he cares about the welfare and progress of the students and, on the other hand, the students can have their viewpoints heard and specifically addressed while remaining anonymous. My EN2271 SGID report is included in an appendix to this report.

- **Presentation for the Student Folklore Association and the Center for Folklore Studies**

As mentioned above, the external project required of students of EN2271 was the creation and maintenance of a slang journal, in which students were to document their ethnographic observations of slang usage in Ohio. The Slang Journal Project has been a part of EN2271 for several years now, and it was a fascinating and inspirational project to be initiated into as part of my teaching. Each student's completed slang journal is preserved in the University Center for Folklore Studies (CFS) Archives and made available to student scholars or other researchers or interested parties at the Ohio State University. During a meeting with the Director of the Center for Folklore Studies Archives, Cassie Patterson, to discuss the archives and to arrange a time for her to visit my class and explain the archival process to my students, I briefly presented the related, sociolinguistic research methods I used for my doctoral dissertation on swearing. This was particularly interesting to Ms. Patterson, and she and her colleague, Puja Batra-Wells, graduate archivist at the CFS Archives, organized a panel discussion focused on sociolinguistic methodology. Drs. Galey Modan and Lauren Squires and I were invited panel members at, "Talking Smack, Talking Sweet. Sociolinguistics and the Study of Everyday Language" (7.11.12), co-hosted by the OSU Folklore Student Association and the Center for Folklore Studies. The event was introduced by Professor Amy Shuman, and closing comments were made by the Director of the Center for Folklore Studies, Professor Dorothy Noyes.

- **Minor in Professional Writing**

I was contacted on 28.8.12 by Alex Fabrizio, Graduate Assistant at the Center for the Study and Teaching of Writing (CSTW). Ms. Fabrizio inquired about the possibility to visit my EN2271 class to present the Minor in Professional Writing to my students, as EN2271 is one of the eligible elective courses for the minor. I welcomed Ms. Fabrizio to my class on 6.9.12, and was captivated by the information she presented. The Minor in Professional Writing is a 15 semester-hour program, which includes coursework and an internship at one of the partner businesses or organizations. My interest in learning more about this minor led me first to Chris Manion, the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Team Coordinator. I met with Dr. Manion on 11.9.12 to discuss the different organizations, centers and programs included at the CSTW, and in particular the efforts of the WAC team. Dr. Manion then put me into contact with Trish Houston, coordinator of the Minor in Professional Writing. I met with Ms. Houston for one hour on 12.10.12 to discuss the minor and learn more about how it was established, how it is maintained, and student interest and performance. The minor provides an excellent supplementary skill set to students of any major, and through the internship offers them meaningful work experience before graduation. Writing is a critical skill and in the context of students studying English in Sweden, writing in English can represent an additional challenge. It was my intention to learn about the Minor in Professional Writing as a possible model for a smaller-scale program at Södertörn, whereby the English and Swedish departments may be able to place student interns at

partnering organizations to get some experience writing to supplement a C-essay, or, even possibly, as an alternative to writing a C-essay. I shall return to Södertörns högskola with documentation and program information that will be allow us to evaluate the potential and plausibility of initiating a similar program.

- **Substitute teaching**

It was my pleasure to substitute teach on three different occasions. Once, for my faculty consultant, Dr. Modan, which allowed me the opportunity to meet her student group and get an indication of how they were progressing in comparison to my group. On two occasions I substitute taught for Dr. Spencer Robinson in his Swedish 1103 course. Interested in learning about how Swedish is taught as a foreign language in the United States so as to compare with the instruction of English as a foreign language in Sweden, I contacted Dr. Spencer to inquire about possibilities of observing his class. Due to conference travel, Dr. Robinson had planned on cancelling two lessons, and he proposed that instead of observing classes, I could substitute during the two lessons he would otherwise have to cancel. This was another missed opportunity to observe a colleague and exchange ideas on pedagogy, but the chance to substitute teach at least allowed me to meet and engage with the students of Swedish, and to present Sweden, Stockholm, Södertörns högskola, and my research on Swedish comic strips. Additionally, I believe it was a memorable experience for the students, who during one lesson were able to meet and converse with me, my Swedish husband and our three Swedish-American children. Each of us had prepared questions and discussion topics in advance, which made for a lively lesson!

**Tip!**

Schedule classroom observations with willing faculty. If some teachers are reluctant to be observed, invite them to your classroom first. Alternatively, sit in on a course of interest, taking note of both content and pedagogy.

Arrange early in the term to be observed by the staff at UCAT, and/or attend one of their Course Design Institutes.

## **Important lessons**

In this section, I should like to address what knowledge of importance for my role as a teacher and researcher I have gained during my time as a STINT fellow. To me, the most important knowledge is that for teachers to provide a good education to their students, they need to be supported in their development as teachers **and** researchers. The Ohio State University provides outstanding support to their faculty, including light course loads of 2-3 courses per semester, reduced course loads during the first two years of employment, generous allotments of time for research such as sabbatical leaves, career guidance for promotion to Associate and Full Professor, and offices and services such as the University Center for the Advancement of Teaching, which offers university pedagogy courses and Course Design Institutes. The OSU faculty members are additionally supported by administrative staff, who are responsible for non-research or non-teaching matters, allowing the faculty to focus on their primary academic tasks. There is also excellent technological support present at the University, provided by the Office of Instructional Technology, to assist faculty in making their teaching more modern, effective and adaptable to the digital era, or in adapting their teaching materials and techniques for distance education.

Equally meaningful is the support that the more than 50,000 students receive from numerous resources for academic, financial, physical, mental, existential or interpersonal issues. There are centers, offices, organizations, programs, clubs and various contact people who are readily available to ensure students are seen, heard, acknowledged, recognized, helped, supported, managed, promoted, engaged, involved, aware, informed, entertained, stimulated, challenged, relaxed, consoled, warned, corrected, instructed and

educated. The great amount of interaction and support available to students minimizes the responsibility of the faculty for student welfare, and allows them to focus on their courses, their teaching, and their students' progress and performance.

In general, I have observed that the Ohio State University manages to offer a first-rate education and an unparalleled university experience to tens of thousands of students by way of providing a stimulating and rewarding work environment to their faculty and administrative staff. No one seems to be innocently or accidentally overwhelmed with responsibility: there is a clear minimum of required effort, and there is great opportunity for those possessing even modest ambition, and who wish to exceed the minimum requirements. The knowledge of importance for my role as a teacher and researcher that I have acquired during this semester can be characterized quite simply as: *excellence thrives in excellent conditions*. The Swedish system of doing more with less is unsustainable, and will ultimately lead to dissatisfied, unhappy or apathetic faculty and administrative staff as well as to future generations of poorly educated students and to an inferior and globally irrelevant national education system.

## **Comparison between the foreign and the home institutions (in Sweden)**

- **Student population**

With regards to the student population at the Ohio State University, no educational institution in Sweden can compare. At over 50,000 students on the main Columbus campus, the Ohio State University dwarfs even other American university student populations, being one of USA's three largest universities. Additionally, the student population is racially and culturally homogenous, with 72% White students, and 75% residents of Ohio. In comparison with Södertörns högskola, OSU is both larger and more culturally homogenous. During my semester at OSU, I experienced the homogeneity to be a distinct disadvantage to my teaching of the study of the English language. The students had little to no experience with linguistic diversity, as many were monolingual or even monodialectal and predominantly from an educated, middle-class background. The students themselves acknowledged a lack of exposure to speakers of other languages or dialects, or speakers with different socioeconomic or geographic backgrounds. I would suspect that homogenous student groups could be similarly disadvantageous to the teaching of other subjects; on the other hand, the relative equality and the generally shared educational and cultural backgrounds may also serve to facilitate instruction, classroom interaction and group management.

- **Relation between research and education**

Students are regularly exposed to seminal and current research in their course materials, often published by their own professors, and students are actively encouraged to participate in course or department research projects (such as the Slang Journal Project in EN2271). Furthermore, students are also explicitly welcome to attend faculty research seminars, and faculty are generally available to student groups who would like to extend an invitation to faculty members to present their research. Significantly, OSU provides many, many opportunities for faculty to engage in, conduct and present research. Faculty are particularly welcome to design specific courses based on their research. The strong relationship between research and education at OSU is obvious in other ways, as well: faculty are rewarded with a reduced teaching load for their research efforts in terms of publishing or securing external funding, and associate or full professors are eligible for sabbatical leaves.

At Södertörns högskola, neither adjunct nor permanent faculty members are awarded any time or work-load reduction for research. Södertörns högskola is therefore scandalously unique in denying their faculty research time: all other Swedish universities allow 20%-30% research time for both adjunct and permanent faculty members. In comparison to most American universities such as OSU, however, even this amount is



low. The result of Sweden's blatant disregard for the significance of research allowance to promoting faculty excellence is a disproportionate amount of adjunct and permanent faculty members of Swedish institutions working on and submitting applications for external funding. This continuous, tedious and intellectually gruelling process becomes a preoccupation among Swedish university faculty members, resulting in a significant amount of time diverted from teaching, administration or, tragically, personal lives. The quest for research funding also overwhelms the receiving foundations, which fund a smaller and smaller per cent of all research application, creating an atmosphere of bitter competition instead of collegial cooperation. Research and education indeed go hand in hand, and the active promotion of research at OSU has clearly resulted in excellence. It is a disgrace that Sweden does not recognize the importance of research in the higher educational system, and it is unacceptable that Södertörns högskola in particular does not invest in their faculty and their own future in this most obvious, logical and proven way.

- **Relation between teacher and student**

As mentioned above (Important lessons), the many supporting organs for the OSU student body means that the relationship between teacher and student is restricted to course and classroom. The EN2271 students were very friendly and jovial in the classroom, but only a few of them made an effort to contact or meet with me face to face outside of class time, and much like the many more who communicated with me via email, their interactions focused on the course. I did not experience that the students are indifferent to their teachers, but they do not depend on their teachers to hold their hands or guide them. It is surprising to me that the students (and/or their parents) pay a good deal of money or incur a good deal of debt to attend OSU, and yet they do not demand more of their teachers. Their independence is certainly to be respected, but at the same time, they should be encouraged to require more work and attention from their teachers than they apparently do. The faculty at OSU have enviably light course loads and very little administration for their courses. Each faculty member could (and probably should) devote more time to his/her students and/or courses, and it is bordering on scandalous the degree to which faculty neglect their students and their courses so as to prioritize their research or personal interests. Considering the high cost of a university education, students at OSU, and perhaps American students in general, should in no uncertain terms demand better service and more attention from their teachers, particularly permanent faculty members.

Students at Södertörns högskola, on the other hand, pay little to no fees or tuition, and they are all the more demanding! Invariably, the students enrolled in my courses at Södertörn have often sought contact with me outside of class, in personal visits, phone calls and in particular via email. This behavior and the general expectation that teachers always be accessible are not specific to students of the English Department, but it would seem throughout all of Södertörns högskola, and perhaps throughout Sweden. The result is a quite personal relationship between teacher and student, which in the best case can take on aspects of mentorship or, in the worst case, can be a problematic imposition on the teacher's personal time and space. It is a paradox that those who pay high tuition fees seem to demand nothing from their service provider, while those who pay little to nothing impose unreasonable demands on their teachers, who generally carry a course load 3-6 times that of American faculty and who are awarded little to no time for research.

- **Institution's view of breadth vs. specialization in education**

All majors at the Ohio State University consist of both required and elective courses at the undergraduate level, with a Bachelor's degree corresponding to approximately 120 semester hours (8 semesters of 5, 3-credit-hour courses), 40 of which are comprised of required courses for the major or for the degree, 20 of which are electives directly related to the major, and 60 of which are General Education courses. In some cases, the elective and general education credit hours can be applied towards a minor, which can be completed in 15 semester hours. Generally, the elective courses guarantee that students have some

autonomy over their education and degree design, while the general education courses assure that the students are exposed to other subject matter than their own majors. However, nearly all majors are represented in the general education courses, such that, for example, an English major can fulfill a general education requirement with an English course that is also required for his/her major. General education courses are limited and distributed over a large number of subject areas, rendering it impossible to fulfill the 60-hour requirement with courses from one's own major.

The traditional four-year degree program allows students to acquire a specialization in their major corresponding to half of their semester hours (60), exposure to other subject matter that also corresponds to half of their semester hours (60), but also one or more additional, though not as deep, specializations in the form of a minor, corresponding to 15 semester hours, that may represent courses taken for the major or general education requirement. Clearly, both breadth and specialization are valued and prioritized in this system.

The Swedish equivalent of a Bachelor's degree, the *filosofie kandidat*, consists of 180 credit hours, or *högskolepoäng*. Of these credit hours, 90 should correspond to courses within the major, with 30 credit hours at each of the three levels, A, B, and C. The other 90 credit hours can consist of electives of the student's choice, or, if the student is following a specific program, these remaining 90 hours are pre-determined. This means that a student can be conferred a degree with 90 hours of elective courses of his or her choice, which may reflect breadth or specialization. It is thus not a requirement that a Swedish university education reflect both.

At Södertörns högskola, an undergraduate degree in English corresponds to significantly fewer courses over a shorter period of time and with significantly less specialization than a degree at OSU. It is my personal experience that this comparison holds true in Germany, as well. Three years of 30 credit hours (or, the so-called *högskolepoäng*) correspond to 13-15 courses, compared to the minimum of 20 required major courses taken by students of English at OSU. Additionally, courses at Södertörn run according to a schedule of 4 blocks of five weeks, meaning that some courses last 5 weeks and meet anywhere between 4-8 times. Södertörn's corresponding course to OSU's EN2271 meets 7 times over 8 weeks, compared to 30 times over 15 weeks. The Swedish system of fewer courses and fewer contact hours combined with an increasing number of students admitted for study denies all students an education and degree that are comparable to those acquired by students in other countries.

- **Competence development for teachers**

Competence development for teachers is taken very seriously at OSU, and a great amount of resources are available to everyone from junior faculty members who wish to be initiated into the fundamentals of pedagogy to senior faculty members who wish to update their course materials or teaching practices. The University Center for the Advancement of Teaching (UCAT) primarily provides support for course design, classroom management, best practices, methods and materials. UCAT continuously develops and renews their university pedagogy courses, hosts Course Design Institutes, and provides additional services such as Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) as well as objective evaluations of requested observations of teaching practices. During my 15-week semester at OSU, I attended 9 UCAT courses and completed one SGID.

Additionally, the Office of the Chief Information Officer provides Instructional Technology Services and the Digital Union both provide excellent support for and instruction on using technology in the classroom. These organizations are detailed below under Use of technology.

Södertörns högskola also offers courses in university pedagogy, but on a smaller scale and of a vastly different nature. There are normally 3-5 courses offered per semester, each of which runs 2-3 hours, 1-2 times per month, the length of the semester. This makes attending all of the meetings difficult for full-time teachers. Since 2010 I have managed to complete only 4 university pedagogy courses at Södertörn, and in

fact low enrolment and low completion rates are not uncommon. Furthermore, the courses tend to be abstract or philosophical in nature, focusing on the seminal literature of educators or educational philosophers such as Vygotsky, Nussbaum, Bruner, or Dewey. While at least a passing familiarity with such scholars is indeed essential to the employees of Södertörns högskola due to its Liberal Arts profile, the subject matter is difficult to apply concretely to achieve actual teaching efficacy. Internationally, all scholars applying for jobs or existing faculty members applying for promotion to Associate (*Docent*) or Full Professor are required to submit a Teaching Portfolio. Ideally, the portfolio will contain explicit examples of classroom materials and methods as well as evidence of teaching efficacy. OSU's UCAT courses are specifically designed to assist faculty members with every aspect of teaching that is included in the portfolio, including observations and evaluations. Without such support, guidance, and input, the creation and maintenance of a navigable and representative teaching portfolio is very difficult and time-consuming, and could negatively impact one's career opportunities.

- **Teacher recruitment**

I had the opportunity to meet a new hire at the English Department at OSU, who told me about the application, interview and hiring process for academic positions. Positions (most commonly at the Assistant Professor level) are advertised internally and externally, the application period is normally three to five weeks from the announcement date, the application packet consists of a CV, two to four sample publications and letters of recommendation or contact information for three references. Short-listed candidates are invited to campus to lecture for students and faculty of the Department. Shortly thereafter, a decision is made among the search committee, consisting of department or interdepartmental faculty members, and an offer is extended. The process lasts approximately 3-4 months.

Recruitment in Sweden is excruciatingly slow, averaging 10-18 months. Applicants are required to submit an extraordinary amount of materials, documenting teaching, scholarly and administrative merits. My job and promotion applications from the past two years have averaged 35 pages, and have been supplemented by hundreds of pages of my published articles, book chapters and manuscripts. All applicants' materials are submitted to paid external reviewers, who write reports summarizing the applications and ranking the applicants. Normally, the top two to four applicants are invited to give a lecture, and the search committee, often consisting of non-departmental faculty members or other institution employees who will not be working directly with the new hire, make the final decision. This decision is documented and motivated in writing, and applicants have the opportunity to lodge a formal complaint. While the system is admirable for the transparency of the process, it is all too time-consuming, too vulnerable to conflicts of interest and too taxing on the applicants.

- **Pedagogy and its importance**

It is ironic that the course load for faculty members at OSU is so low, the support for pedagogical efforts so rich, and yet, according to my observations, faculty members seem neither to value teaching nor prioritize their students. Most shocking to me is the extent to which classes can be cancelled with no prior notice, and cancelled classes are generally neither re-scheduled nor otherwise reclaimed. Colleagues furthermore stated that their research agendas are prioritized over their teaching assignments, and evaluations are only important during the initial stage of employment, as an Assistant Professor works towards getting tenure and promotion to associate professorship. It is perhaps for this reason that support and incentives (see below) promoting a focus on pedagogy abound at OSU.

At Södertörns högskola, full-time lecturers and professors generally have no research time allotted them, unless they have secured external funding. This means that they carry teaching loads of 4-8 courses per term, and are possibly responsible for thesis supervision, course coordination, or other administrative duties. Teaching is thus the most significant aspect of one's position as a university lecturer or professor,

making the importance of pedagogy inarguable. Södertörns högskola does not adequately recognize this, however, as the actual teaching one does is in no way attended to, acknowledged, recognized or even observed or evaluated by one's peers, supervisors or leaders. Courses in university pedagogy are offered, but their immediate relevance and application are questionable. Furthermore, the teaching staff at Södertörns högskola are continuously asked to do more teaching with fewer material and immaterial resources and, with regards to inflation and cost of living expenses, for less and less pay. How important is pedagogy when teachers are asked to take on more and more classes but maintain content at a constant while having fewer and fewer contact hours with more and more students? Pedagogy is clearly not important in the Swedish higher educational system, an atrocious situation that, in the long run, will significantly damage Sweden's competitiveness in education and industry.

- **Status of pedagogical merits compared to research merits**

At both institutions, research weighs more heavily than pedagogical merits. OSU, however, is a research university, whose profile, vision, mission and agenda all focus on recruiting the best researchers, supporting excellent research and integrating cutting-edge research into the curriculum. Pedagogical merits are not nearly as important as research merits from the perspective of scholarly judgments or ranking, but it is nevertheless vital to one's career development to show an ability to teach advanced-level undergraduate courses and naturally master's and doctoral courses in which research surveys and methodologies are integrated, and to design courses based on one's own research.

Södertörns högskola is a teaching institution, where research is generally not part of one's terms of employment. Nevertheless, research is expected from academics, and promotions to Docent or Professor are based on one's scholarly, not pedagogical, achievements.

- **Curriculum and courses offered**

At Ohio State University, the English Department maintains an undergraduate student body of approximately 3,000 English majors. The 65-75 full-time faculty members represent a wide variety of specializations and interests in English literature and language. The size of the department and of the subject allows for a dynamic degree program, and the curriculum includes a wide array of courses, approximately 250 in total.

Södertörns högskola's English department consists of 6 full-time faculty, with approximately 100 students per term, and an average of 6 graduating English majors per term. The curriculum consists of approximately 15 courses, focusing on writing, applied linguistics (corpus linguistics, discourse and conversation analysis, sociolinguistics), global English and post-colonial literature. The department is small and the subject is limited but in 2012, Södertörns English Program was one of only three English programs in Sweden to receive the highest evaluation marks from the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education.

- **Forms of examination**

The practice of examination and the examination schedule are quite different at the two schools. At OSU, courses run two to three times per week over 15-16 weeks. This long period of study allows for, and even demands, intermittent examination. Many courses have several or even weekly quizzes, and nearly all have a mid-term and a final exam.

At Södertörns högskola, many courses are run over just five weeks, with two to three meetings per week. This frenetic schedule does not allow for frequent examination, and most courses end with a final, comprehensive exam and/or a written essay or oral presentation.

- **The conforming of educational programs to labor market needs**

The most convincing evidence of dedication to preparing students for the labor market is OSU's Minor in Professional Writing, which arranges for students to take part in at least one internship where their writing skills can be applied and honed. The Minor is very practical in this way, and an excellent complement to a degree in English, which might not be immediately amenable to one particular job or career outside of academia. The internship gives the students work experience, lets them build a career network, and exposes them to a new work environment. Furthermore, the English Department hosts Career Days, when faculty members and alumni discuss career opportunities for English majors.

The English Department at Södertörns högskola also makes an effort to acknowledge market needs in its English program by incorporating a focus on writing and analytical skills. At each level (A, B & C), writing skills are developed and practiced by way of essay or thesis writing, with assignments reflecting different genres of writing and analysis methodologies. Students studying English at Södertörn, however, rarely have English as their only major, but combine it with other subjects to achieve a more marketable degree or, in the case of teacher candidates, to design a combination of subjects attractive to the labor market in the field of education.

- **Use of technology**

Use of technology is encouraged and greatly supported at OSU. The Office of the Chief Information Officer provides instructional technology services, which include support for, information about or instruction in the use of Carmen, classroom technology, clickers (audience response tools), equipment loan, learning technology grants, and student computing centers. The Digital Union provides support for teaching and learning with technology, individual support, eLearning workshops and grants. The Digital Union laboratory features multimedia workstations, a recording studio, an experimental classroom, and video conferencing. Many OSU classrooms are equipped with a workstation featuring desktop computers with Internet access and video (DVD, BluRay and VHS) and audio data projection.

At Södertörns högskola, dynamic classroom technology is not ubiquitous. While all classrooms are equipped with an overhead projector, there are very few classrooms that have video and audio data projection. While I entered my classroom at OSU with only a memory stick, at Södertörn I carry a laptop, projector, speakers and extension cords to each of my seminars. The time required for and the tedium of setting up and connecting technology discourage its use, and many teachers at Södertörn have not adopted technology into their teaching for this very reason. Support for using technology in the classroom is, however, gaining in importance, and Södertörns högskola has even recently offered a university pedagogy course on using ICT in the classroom.

- **Distance education**

I have no experience with distance education at OSU or Södertörns högskola and therefore cannot comment with any authority.

- **Relation between the institution and its environment**

During my semester at OSU, I avidly read the daily *OSU Today* email sent out to all employees, which told of the many and various OSU-sponsored events on campus and throughout Columbus. The university can be said to sustain the city of Columbus, and the relationship between the two is one of mutual appreciation.

The university has engineered a rebirth of Columbus and continues to promote its welfare. It is my impression that the university provides many opportunities for faculty, staff and students alike to be involved directly with the activities, organizations and people of the surrounding campus environment and the greater Columbus area.

Located just south of Stockholm, Södertörns högskola inhabits an area that is cut off from its environment and only accessible by the public via car or public transportation. The Södertörn campus can be considered an island that has no direct communication with Stockholm. This situation complicates the establishment of any kind of meaningful relation between Södertörn and its environment. One advantage to Södertörn's isolation, however, is that it promotes a focus on education and campus-based interaction. While students at OSU are dispersed over a wide area of many campus and non-campus locations, and businesses and merchants vie for their attention and patronage, students at Södertörn share a concentrated area and experience an immediate exposure to relationship with their campus, their classmates and their teachers and administrators.

### **Action plan - topics to address and if possible introduce in Sweden**

During my semester at OSU, I have learned the importance of self-promotion in academia. Therefore, upon my return to Sweden, it is my personal goal to make a concerted effort to attend to and promote my own brand as well as increase my web presence. Traditionally, academia has been characterized as a business of "publish or perish". Now, while it is still essential for scholars of ambition to publish quality work, it is my impression that we must also distinguish ourselves in more dynamic ways to ensure our own competitive value. Scholars today should promote their own brand, for example, by establishing a strong web presence with a blog or webpage, by interacting with or serving as a resource to the media, by organizing or establishing a center, initiative, association or network based on their own research interests, or by spearheading collaborative projects. According to my observations of OSU faculty, such self-promotion is not entirely due to vanity, but rather to a spirit of individualism in the largely conforming context of academia. Many scholars have a desire to claim a territory or stake out a place for themselves within their discipline, which, due to the growing numbers of competent scholars, is necessary in order to avoid obscurity. Had I not proactively advertised myself, asserted my scholarly accomplishments and or announced my professional goals to various OSU faculty members, my presence would have gone unnoticed and unattended. Similarly, I intend to increase my professional presence and visibility in Sweden and internationally in answer to the changing conditions for success in academia.

With regards to my current research on Swedish comic strips, it was incredibly fortuitous to be sent to Ohio State University, with a strong tradition in comics studies, and where the Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum is located. I had the opportunity to discuss my research with Jared Gardner, Professor of English, Director of Popular Culture Studies, and author of *Projections: Comics and the History of 21st-century Storytelling* (Stanford UP, 2011). Dr. Gardner has suggested that I publish my research as a book in the series he co-edits, OSU's Studies in Comics and Cartoons, and I will be inviting him to collaborate on a research project to be proposed to *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond* and *Vetenskapsrådet*.

- **Department-wide**

*Introduction to the Study of the English Language* (EN2271) corresponds to *Introduction to English Linguistics*, a course I taught for two years at Saarland University (Germany, 2004-2006) and which I observed being taught at Tübingen University (Germany, 2011) and to *Survey of English Linguistics*, which I have taught at Södertörn since 2010. Each of these courses can compare in credit hour value and description. In other words, they should each entail the same or similar amounts of contact hours, and they should cover the same or similar material. However, the OSU, Saarland University and Tübingen University courses entail nearly twice as many contact hours, and one-third more content than the course offered at

Södertörns högskola. This is a significant discrepancy between required courses of an educational program and degree that should for all intents and purposes be equal. Furthermore, if this is the case for one course, it may be true of many other courses. It is the trend in Sweden to admit more students to academic programs, but allot them fewer contact hours with teachers, the result being reduced content and an inferior education. I have reported these differences previously to my department, and upon my return, I intend to reiterate them. It is the department's responsibility to assure that our students receive an education that is at least comparable to but ideally competitive with or superior to similar educational programs throughout the world.

- **Institution-wide**

Despite the fact that a faculty member's primary task is to educate, teaching does not generally seem to be prioritized in academia. The Ohio State University is making deliberate efforts to acknowledge the importance and value of good teaching and pedagogy by providing excellent resources for support, guidance, development, observation, analysis, evaluation and constructive feedback. The consequences of these efforts are certain to include more confident and competent faculty members, more pedagogically sound teaching and more recognition for teaching accomplishments. Similar efforts should be introduced at Södertörns högskola, but even smaller steps on the road to recognizing and promoting competent teaching can be taken. At OSU, for example, there are two programs of note for recognizing teachers: "Take a teacher to lunch" and "Thank-a-prof". In the College of Arts and Sciences, individual students or small student groups are welcome to invite a teacher to lunch at one of the eligible campus eateries, the cost of which is covered by the College. The Thank-a-prof service is offered by the University Center for the Advancement of Teaching and allows students to thank a teacher personally or anonymously by filling out an online form. Either or both of these initiatives would be appreciated incentives to introduce to the institution.

- **In the Swedish research and education system**

Clearly the most important practices of the American university system to appropriate in Sweden are the proper support of research for university and university college faculty and the introduction of tuition fees. Swedish adjunct and permanent faculty members are overwhelmed with ever-increasing course loads and student admissions, and they are increasingly required to do more with fewer resources. Research time has been systematically and unceremoniously sacrificed so as to force faculty to teach more courses to more and more students, all the while enduring fewer contact hours with individual students and delivering an inferior education. Proper support and time for research are a luxury that few Swedish scholars enjoy, and all too often it is due to external funding rather than any one institution's recognition of the importance of research. Because very little or no research time is allotted Swedish faculty, a great effort is put into applying for external funding, representing time that could be spent conducting actual research or developing pedagogical competence. Furthermore, the procurement of external funding often results in faculty absences for an average of 3 years, putting a strain on the remaining faculty and administrators, who are forced to cope with the temporary absence. Again, time that could be better spent on research or teaching is devoted instead to administration. The Swedish research and education system is terribly imbalanced, and if research supporting foundations do not start awarding funding of lesser amounts to more scholars, or if universities and university colleges cannot afford to support their faculties' research, then it is time to introduce tuition fees. Even minor fees will provide the economic resources necessary to allow the hiring of more adjunct and permanent faculty members, which in turn will allow for lower course loads, increased contact hours, and increase research time. The introduction of minor fees need not compromise the principle of the right to an education, but they may very well allow for the Swedish education system to become more internationally relevant and competitive by procuring excellent conditions so as to promote excellence in research and teaching.

## Appendix A



University Center for the Advancement of Teaching

260 Younkin Success Center  
1640 Neil Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43201-2333

Phone (614) 292-3644  
Fax (614) 688-5496  
<http://ucat.osu.edu>

November 30, 2012

Kristy Beers Fagersten  
English  
421 Denney Hall  
164 West 17th Avenue  
Campus

Dear Kristy,

I am writing to document your participation in the UCAT events listed below. When available, I have included the promotional description used for the event.

October 09, 2012

### **Planning a Class Session**

Learn how to structure the classroom interaction that you have with your students in order to meet your learning objectives. Whether you are a novice teaching for the first time or an experienced teacher looking for ways to enliven or change up your class meetings, this workshop is for you. We will discuss how to identify appropriate delivery methods and choose from a wide repertoire of teaching and learning strategies for both small and large classes. Participants will leave with a plan for a single class session and the tools for planning others.

October 15, 2012

### **Techniques for Motivating Students**

Are you frustrated that students do not seem to care enough about what you are teaching? Are you tired of students skipping class or doing only the absolute minimum required to get by? Has the semester schedule made it more difficult for you to maintain student interest throughout the term? In this session, open to faculty, instructors, and TAs, we will discover research-based ways to encourage and maintain student motivation, from the syllabus to the final exam.

October 16, 2012

### **Student Learning 101**

Are you ever at a loss to help your students learn? Do they seem focused on trivial information rather than the "big picture" of the lesson? Do they struggle to recall information learned from one day to the next? In this session, participants will gain an understanding of the general principles of learning and how they relate to student behavior in the classroom. We will explore the differences between the learning strategies of students and teachers and discuss how to better help students become independently engaged in their own learning.



October 23, 2012

**Facilitating Classroom Discussion**

Class discussion can be an effective method for getting students involved in most types of classes. In this workshop, we will discuss how to encourage and maintain student involvement, respond to individual contributions, and employ questioning strategies.

October 29, 2012

**Designing Effective Educational Environments**

Dr. Carney Strange, Professor of Higher Education and Student Affairs at Bowling Green State University and author of *Educating by Design: Creating Campus Learning Environments that Work*, will use examples from his own teaching methods to discuss his comprehensive paradigm of environmental design, including the physical, social, organizational, and cultural components of building a community of learning in your classroom.

November 02, 2012

**Responding to Student Writing**

Most course instructors will be asked to respond to and evaluate various forms of student writing, which may include lab reports, translations, essay exams, memos, online discussion board postings, and position papers. In this session, facilitated by CSTW staff, you will learn how responding effectively to assignments will ease your subsequent workload for assigning grades, and how it will help students improve their writing.

November 06, 2012

**Writing and Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is an important skill for student in any classroom. In this workshop, Writing Across the Curriculum consultants will help GTAs define what critical thinking means in their discipline. Participants will then develop effective and efficient writing activities that help students work on critical thinking skills while also helping instructors assess student learning.

November 15, 2012

**How to Help Your International Students with Writing**

Writing Across the Curriculum will be airing a documentary entitled "Writing Across Borders," a project funded by Oregon State University (<http://cwl.oregonstate.edu/wab/>). The documentary and ensuing discussion will help faculty, writing assistants, and other professionals work more effectively with international students in U.S. classrooms by addressing some of the most significant challenges international students face when writing for American colleges and universities.

November 28, 2012

**Designing Service-Learning into Your Course**

Are you interested in making service a part of your course, but you aren't sure where to begin? The Service-Learning Initiative and UCAT invite you to join us for a session on the basics of service-learning discuss what service-learning is, how it works, and the nuts and bolts of a service-learning course. We'll also discuss examples of current courses at Ohio State, and tell you how the Service-Learning Initiative can support your efforts.

I hope your interaction with UCAT has been of assistance to you in becoming a reflective and scholarly teacher. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance as you continue to improve your teaching practice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Kalish', written over a horizontal line.

Alan Kalish, Director

# Appendix B



**Kristy A. Fagersten**

Course: ENGLISH 2271  
Campus: COL College: ASC

## Student Evaluation of Instruction Report

Autumn 2012  
Class Number: 23262

Response rate: 36.4 % of 22 enrolled      Were student ratings for this report collected on the web? Yes      Date of Report: 12/18/2012

Response scale is Likert-type with "5" being high and "1" being low

	<u>N</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>N/A</u>
1. Well organized	8	0 %	0 %	0 %	13 %	88 %	0 %
2. Intellectually stimulating	8	0	0	0	25	75	0
3. Instructor interested in teaching	8	0	0	0	0	100	0
4. Encouraged independent thinking	8	0	0	0	25	75	0
5. Instructor well prepared	8	0	0	0	13	88	0
6. Instructor interested in helping students	8	0	0	0	0	100	0
7. Learned greatly from instructor	8	0	0	0	25	75	0
8. Created learning atmosphere	8	0	0	0	13	88	0
9. Communicated subject matter clearly	8	0	0	0	13	88	0
10. Overall rating	8	0	0	0	13	88	0

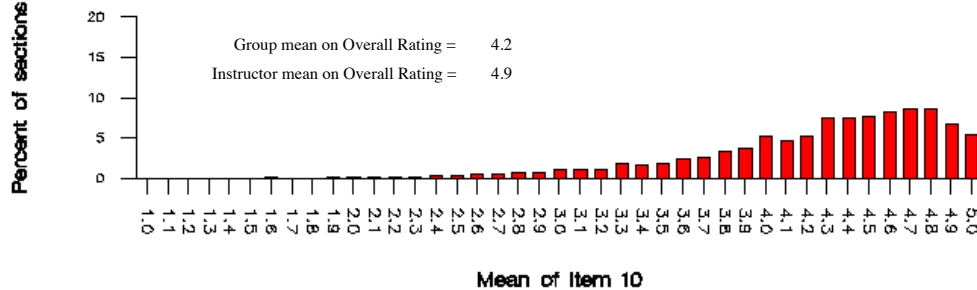
Your ratings are summarized below. When sufficient data exist, summaries are also provided for up to three reference groups. Your "comparison group" is based on the size of your class and the predominant reason students indicate they enrolled. Comparison group data are reported at both the college and university levels. Over the prior 12 months, 212 instructors and 262 course sections were in your Comparison Group by College, and 3683 instructors and 9669 course sections were in your Comparison Group by University. Across all the courses using the SEI instrument since 1994, 42.73% of them share the characteristics listed below. The Course-Offering Unit listing is not based on size or electivity; it is a summary of the SEI data across the prior 12 months in your department or school.

**Your comparison groups have the following qualities:**

Class size: 20 to 60  
Predominant reason given for enrolling in this course was that it was required in the student's major/minor or that it fulfills a Gen Ed requirement.

	<u>This Instructor</u>		<u>Comparison Group by College</u>		<u>Comparison Group by University</u>		<u>Course-Offering Unit</u>	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std.Dev</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std.Dev</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std.Dev</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std.Dev</u>
1. Instructor well organized	4.9	0.4	4.2	0.5	4.3	0.5	4.4	0.5
2. Intellectually stimulating	4.8	0.5	4.0	0.6	4.1	0.5	4.3	0.5
3. Instructor interested in teaching	5.0	0.0	4.3	0.5	4.4	0.5	4.6	0.4
4. Encouraged independent thinking	4.8	0.5	4.3	0.5	4.3	0.5	4.6	0.4
5. Instructor well prepared	4.9	0.4	4.3	0.5	4.3	0.6	4.5	0.5
6. Instructor interested in helping students	5.0	0.0	4.4	0.5	4.4	0.5	4.6	0.5
7. Learned greatly from instructor	4.8	0.5	4.0	0.6	4.1	0.6	4.2	0.6
8. Created learning atmosphere	4.9	0.4	4.1	0.6	4.2	0.6	4.4	0.5
9. Communicated subject matter clearly	4.9	0.4	4.1	0.6	4.1	0.7	4.3	0.6
10. Overall rating	4.9	0.4	4.2	0.6	4.2	0.6	4.5	0.6

**Comparison Group by University Distribution of Mean Scores on Overall Rating (Item 10)**





**Kristy A. Fagersten**  
**Course: ENGLISH 2271**  
**Campus: COL College: ASC**

**Autumn 2012**  
**Class Number: 23262**

**SEI Comment Report**

---

A wonderful professor; I wish we had more like her.

---

The instructor was more prepared and helpful than our textbook. Not only was the book not as useful for studying and understanding the class prior to discussion of chapters, but it was also ridiculously expensive, even for used books. I would recommend focus pages from the book to be scanned and posted to Carmen for this course in the future.

---

Dr. Fagersten (PLEASE ADD AN UMLAUT OVER THE "A" IN HER NAME) was superior!! She knew her subject material better than any Linguistic or foreign language book I ever studied. The book was an excellent source of information, but it did not describe the "why," like Dr. Fagersten did. Linguistics is very important for so many fields of study. Whenever a student had questions that pertained to their field, Dr. Fagersten was pivotal in pointing out the reason "why" linguistics and its study would help them. She offered more logical explanations and gave more practical examples of linguistics in everyday life than the textbook. She was always punctual and ever so friendly. She never missed a day of class, when, especially in this course, could have been disastrous for undergraduate students, as the material was crammed so tightly in the textbook. Dr. Fagersten was and will continue to be beyond excellent when it comes to teaching Linguistics. Dr. Fagersten never hesitated to help me--a 100% disabled, veteran--and motivated me to be very patient; especially, when my P.T.S.D. and traumatic brain injury (TBI) overwhelmed me so much, that it prevented me from attending some of my classes. She always kept me up to date, during her office hours, and was very motivational for me. I appreciate Dr. Fagersten. She is the epitome of what a superior professor should be at the Ohio State University. Thank you.

---

Dr. Fagersten is an excellent teacher. She makes the content easy and interesting by providing video and real life examples. She clearly enjoys what she teaches and is very enthusiastic. The tests are difficult, but she prepares you extremely well.

---

Great professor!

---

One of the best teachers I've had in a while.

---