

Dr. Linda B. Nilson

Dr. Linda B. Nilson is founding director of Clemson University's Office of Teaching Effectiveness and Innovation. In addition to managing OTEI and its staff, she holds individual consultations with faculty, works with faculty on grants, consults on instructional and assessment issues to committees and departments, and designs and conducts faculty development workshops at Clemson and other universities across the U.S. and Canada. Her workshop repertoire includes comprehensive course design, time and task management for faculty, interactive and experiential teaching, holistic grading, teaching with laptops, designing tests and assignments to assess higher-order thinking, reducing classroom incivilities, interpreting student ratings, and using graphic tools in teaching (e.g., a graphic syllabus, concept maps, thinking maps). She also teaches a graduate course called College Teaching.

One of Dr. Nilson's books, *Teaching at Its Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors*, is now in its second edition (Anker Publishing, 2003) and has received excellent reviews. It is currently the most up-to-date and comprehensive teaching methods book on the market. Her most recent book, *Enhancing Learning with Laptops in the Classroom*, edited with Barbara E. Weaver, is part of the New Directions for Teaching and Learning series (No. 101, Spring 2005, Jossey-Bass). In addition, she has published extensively in scholarly journals and has presented conference sessions nationally and internationally.

Diverse Experience

Several years ago Dr. Nilson completed a three-year term as chair of the Southern Regional Faculty and Instructional Development Consortium. She is also active on a national level in the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education and the Society for Teaching and learning in Higher Education (based in Canada), as well as on the international level as a member of the International Consortium for Educational Development.

Before coming to Clemson in 1998, she directed the Center for Teaching at Vanderbilt University for five and a half years. Prior to that, she directed the Teaching Assistant Development Program at the University of California, Riverside, and designed and taught a very popular graduate seminar on college teaching. In addition, she developed the "disciplinary cluster" approach to training TAs, a cost-effective way for a centralized unit to provide disciplinary-relevant instructional training. This approach received coverage in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. She similarly structured TA training at Vanderbilt.

Dr. Nilson entered the area of instructional and faculty development in the late 1970s while she was on the sociology faculty at UCLA. After distinguishing herself as an excellent instructor, her department selected her to establish its Teaching Assistant Training Program. She supervised it for four years. As a sociologist, she published research in the areas of occupations and work, social stratification, political sociology, and disaster behavior.

Dr. Nilson was a National Science Foundation Fellow at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where she received her Ph.D. and M.S. degrees in sociology. She completed her undergraduate work in three years at the University of California, Berkeley, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.