

**Date:** May 7, 2004  
**For use:** Immediately

**Contact:** Bob Otterson  
**Phone:** (701) 671-2483  
**E-mail:** bob.otterson@ndscs.nodak.edu

### **TWO NDSCS FACULTY MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN CRITICAL THINKING SEMINAR AT VASSAR**

WAHPETON — North Dakota State College of Science faculty members Don Kruckenberg and Ivan Maas will participate this summer in the Ford Foundation Summer Seminar for Community College Faculty.

The critical-thinking seminar involves only six two-faculty teams selected from community colleges nationwide. This year's participants come from five different states. Maas and Kruckenberg are the only faculty from traditional career and technical education fields. The seminar will be held June 11-25 at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

Kruckenberg is an Electrical Technology professor and longtime department chairman who has taught at NDSCS since 1975. Maas has taught at NDSCS since 1985 in Electrical Technology and Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Technology. He is an associate professor who also serves as department chairman for Mechanical Systems Technology and Electrical Technology. Both are NDSCS alumni.

Seminar participants work with colleagues to create new courses or curriculum for their own colleges. By working with faculty from other colleges, participants model their best practices for others.

Kruckenberg and Maas said they will look at NDSCS's Electrical Technology curriculum for ways to incorporate new delivery methods and instructional technology into its courses.

"As you get more comfortable with teaching, you have a greater concern for student learning," Kruckenberg said. "Students learn the subject matter for their tests, and I hope we can incorporate some instructional methods that help them retain that knowledge from one semester to the next."

Kruckenbergsaid faculty can teach the same content taking a different approach. As an example, he said he would like to incorporate collaborative learning environments, a method where students reinforce what they've learned by working with each other.

Maas said he hopes to share the seminar content and processes with their colleagues in a large academic department.

“We can describe this as curriculum mapping, outlining the flow of knowledge and tracking what we are teaching in related courses,” he said. “Don may be using a teaching method in one class that would reinforce similar subject matter in my class. ... All our teaching tools — books, worksheets, lab practices — should contribute to the learning process and improve retention of knowledge.”

Maas and Kruckenbergsaid used first-year Electrical Fundamentals as an example of one class in which they may incorporate new teaching methods, emphasizing learning and retention as an outcome.

“The first semester of theory is very mathematical and very conceptual,” Maas said. “Maybe we need to look at ways to add in a lab component so students can see the theory at work; they can see the light bulb turn on.”

The Ford Foundation provides a \$1,500 stipend for participants and provides their housing and meals. The seminar draws upon 20 years of faculty experience with Vassar's award-winning Exploring transfer program, an interdisciplinary academic immersion aimed at working-class and minority community college students, which is taught by faculty teams from Vassar and community colleges. Last year's pilot group included faculty from community colleges in the New York area.

NDSCS is a two-year, comprehensive, residential college in Wahpeton. The State College of Science offers degrees, certificates and diplomas in over 80 academic options in traditional career and technical studies and in the liberal arts. Approximately 97 percent of graduates from its technical programs find jobs in their chosen fields.

Unlike most two-year colleges, NDSCS offers a university atmosphere for its students, complete with residence halls, 35 affiliated clubs and organizations, music groups, theater productions, intercollegiate athletics, intramural athletics and numerous social activities.

NDSCS celebrated its centennial last year. The college opened in 1903 as the North Dakota Academy of Science.