

Teaching & Learning at connecticut college

The Joy Shechtman Mankoff Center for Teaching & Learning **Newsletter**

Winter 2014



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THE JOY SHECHTMAN MANKOFF CENTER FOR TEACHING & LEARNING 2013-2014

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On the cover, faculty participate in the
2013 Camp Teach & Learn conversa-
tion "Athletics & Academics."

▶ letter from the Director

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome back!

And welcome to our redesigned newsletter, with articles, columns, and features that share the experiences, insights, and wisdom of our colleagues.



The CTL is all about collaboration and community-building, sharing effective teaching practices, and fostering critically self-reflective and intentional teaching. It comes as no surprise that faculty at Connecticut College are doing exciting things in classrooms, laboratories, and studios, during office hours and advising sessions, on the athletic fields and in the community. It's a pleasure to see their insights in this newsletter!

Check out a series of new features and consider writing one for a future issue. *Creative Differences* reveals the contrasts among our syllabi on policies important to classroom teaching, so that we better appreciate the differing environments navigated by our students. Our first column focuses on electronics in the classroom. *Engaging the Data*, authored by John Nugent (director of institutional research), provides the data that tests our preconceptions. The inaugural column challenges our misconceptions about increasing double-majors. At the center of the newsletter, you will find *Sharing Wisdom About Teaching & Learning*, a collection of related pieces — interviews, resource listings, commentaries — focusing on one aspect of teaching. In this issue, Ana Campos-Holland (Sociology) and her team of student researchers discuss how they are building an effective faculty-student research partnership — and how they are avoiding some of the common pitfalls. Still other articles suggest strategies

for designing extra credit assignments, showcase the signature courses of newly arrived colleagues, and provide updates on the teaching and learning initiatives sponsored by the College's new Academic Resource Center (ARC).

For those interested in the CTL's continuing programs, the newsletter has plenty to offer. Chad Jones (Botany) profiles Talking Teaching, Dave Chavanne (Economics) reflects on the Class of '57 teaching seminar, and Stuart Vyse (Psychology) provides an update on the work of the CTL Student Research Scholars. Book reviews by Bridget Baird (Mathematics), Simon Feldman (Philosophy), Afshan Jafar (Sociology), and Larry Vogel (Philosophy) will entice you with opportunities for further reading.

As always, the CTL is indebted to a wide range of faculty colleagues for their generosity in sharing time and wisdom. In addition to all those who have written for the newsletter, or who have been interviewed, or who have responded to frantic e-mail requests for information, or who have contributed other distinctive skills, we are grateful to those who contribute to the Center through leadership on its advisory board and through its programs.

We have had several changes this year, all with smooth transitions, which says a great deal about the generosity and skill of our colleagues. Talking Teaching is now being co-coordinated by Chad Jones and Simon Feldman, and I want to thank both of them for their vibrant programming ideas. Fall discussions often focused on the definition of a Connecticut College liberal arts education and effective practices related to General Education. As Chad discusses in his article, spring conversations will continue and develop this theme — we have an exciting list of forthcoming conversations.

The CTL Newsletter is now being edited by MaryAnne Borrelli (Govern-

continued on page 16

► Research in Teaching & Learning

Focus Group Revelations

CTL Research Scholars interviewed 47 Connecticut College students in small focus groups throughout spring and fall 2012, asking about the strengths and weaknesses of the College's General Education program, and the interactions students commonly experienced with College faculty. Among the student groups targeted by Scholars Nora Loughry '13 and Jessica Schanzer '13 were international and domestic students of color, and natural science majors.

Loughry and Schanzer's most important findings were:

- *Students feel that the General Education requirements are valuable, but they say that there are too many.*
- *Students like the idea of a diversity requirement, but prefer that it overlap with the existing General Education requirements and not create an additional requirement. Many suggested*

that a community learning diversity option would be desirable.

- *Most students reported that they chose their major before coming to college or after taking a class they enjoyed.*
- *Students' response to first-year seminars was mixed. Some reported having a great or valuable experience, but many said they did not.*
- *Students described their ideal relationship with a professor as being "someone with whom I can have a more personal and comfortable relationship."*

Loughry and Schanzer, the second pair of psychology majors selected as research scholars, were supervised by CTL Director Michael Reder and me.

Two new CTL Research Scholars, Laura Garciduenas '14 and Gabriel Plummer '14, collected data throughout the fall and spring 2013 semesters.

They will report their findings early in spring 2014. In this third cycle of the project, CTL Research Scholars are asking further questions about the General Education program and about student academic experiences throughout the first year of college. —
Stuart A. Vyse, Joanne Toor Cummings '15 Professor of Psychology

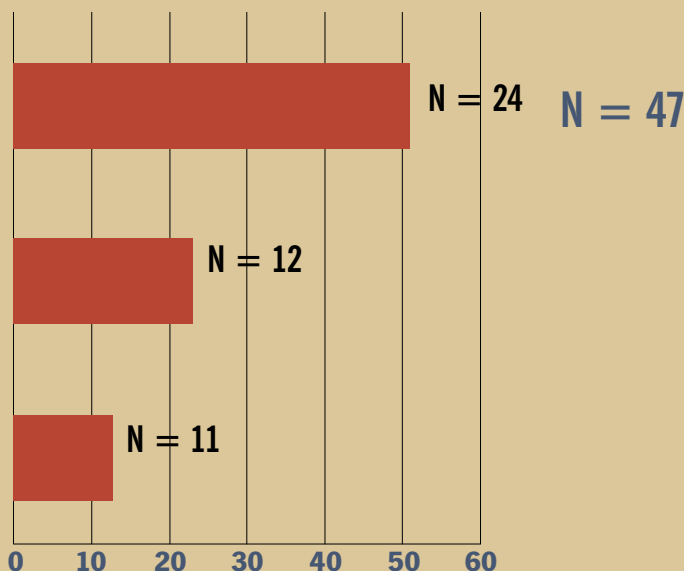
The CTL Research Scholars Program at Connecticut College began in Winter 2011, a follow-up to the Wabash study. Each year, the undergraduate Scholars have conducted confidential focus groups, transcribed and summarized their content, and then reported their findings to faculty, staff, and administrators.

What would your ideal relationship with a professor be?

Someone with whom I can have a more personal and comfortable relationship, 51%

Someone who is genuinely invested in their students, 23%

Someone who makes themselves available, 13%



Life Beyond Lectures: My Experience with the CTL

Prior to my arrival at Connecticut College, I taught only lecture-based courses. I came with two years of teaching experience, but I had never even gone lecture-free for a *single class period*. Every class, to some degree, involved a lecture component. Discussions were mixed in, but I was always at the front of the room, standing at the board, and never taking a seat amongst students. Although discussions were never as active as I wanted them to be, I was comfortable with this

professional career. Discussions were deep, vibrant and substantive. Students were always well prepared and, most importantly, all indicators pointed toward them both learning a great deal and thoroughly enjoying the course.

As I reflect on my first year at Connecticut College, I cannot help but think about how my perspective of teaching has evolved since my arrival. This evolution is entirely due to the CTL Class of '57 Seminar. The seminar has given me insight into the

novel approaches, got me thinking in contingent terms about which strategies would fit my specific classes and teaching style, and provided a forum to learn from other people's personal examples of successes and failures.

Second, in a more general sense, the seminar has infused me with a philosophical perspective that leaves me more open-minded, comfortable, and confident when it comes to my teaching. The seminar made it clear that excellent teachers, with abundant experience and respect from students, still struggle with the same challenges that confront a new professor. There aren't any "magic bullets"; there are no "best practices" that unconditionally work wonders in generating the perfect classroom environment or learning experience. Perhaps paradoxically, I found a newfound awareness of the non-existence of perfection to be extremely liberating. Rather than trying to find THE perfect idea or strategy, I could creatively try new things while hyper-vigilantly trying to understand the dynamics of specific classes and assess particular outcomes. Free from the pressure that comes with trying to be perfect, I could instead embark on a self-exploratory quest for continuous marginal improvement.

My pre-Connecticut College self was overly devoted to lecturing and risk-averse with regards to attempting, and learning from, new approaches. I would never have imagined teaching without lectures, and I would have wondered how an entire semester's worth of class time could be filled with organic, open-ended discussions. I have the CTL and the Class of '57 Seminar participants to thank for my conversion. — *Dave Chavanne, assistant professor of economics and member of the organizing committee for the Class of '57 Seminar*



Class of '57 Teaching Seminar participants Ginny Anderson (Education), Ken Prestininzi (Theater), and Mark Seto (Music).

mode of teaching and reluctant to step out and try a different approach. I figured that this method was simply the way that I was *supposed* to teach, and that I should work on improving my ability to generate and facilitate discussion within this existing paradigm.

In Spring 2013, during my second semester at Connecticut College, I taught an entire course — a seminar with seven students — without a single lecture. I never stood at the board. I never came to class with a fully specified list of what needed to be covered that day (though I did have goals, ideas and a plan). It was radically different than anything that I had ever done. And it was, by far, the most rewarding and enjoyable experience of my

minds, preferences and learning styles of Connecticut College students, while also providing suggestions and ideas to try out in the classroom. It has made me both more creative and increasingly comfortable in occasionally casting aside lecture notes and embracing the uncertainty that follows.

The seminar has helped me in two separate, but related ways. First, direct conversations — revolving around specific themes like syllabus building, shaping challenging assignments, formulating course goals and improving class discussions — have exposed me to new ideas and strategies. These one-to-one and small-group discussions with fellow participants, both experienced and inexperienced, shined a light on

Extra Credit, Extra Creative

Math extra credit assignments, related to a student's major field, frequently help undergraduates gain "mathematical/quantitative confidence."

Shorter extra credit tasks, often suggested by class discussions, will spark students' imaginations and generate conversations. Answering a question such as "What is chained CPI?" will boost a learner's participation — particularly if the extra credit assignment expands on a course topic and the student presents the information herself.

Longer extra credit assignments can become intriguing semester projects. For example, "A Jazz Composition/Performance with Fibonacci Structures," or "African Numeric Systems," are extra credit topics that have helped students recognize and then value the mathematics underlying music, social

relationships, history, and markets. As this happens, the student-scholar begins to reassess her own quantitative abilities more favorably.

Key extra credit components, which help increase self-assurance, include a meaningful topic which merges well with the course curriculum, a project model, written criteria, multiple re-

vision opportunities, and evaluation/peer assessment. Extra credit topics often emerge spontaneously, but a structured assignment will provide students with a greater opportunity to express their creative priorities, contributing to their own and their peers' learning. — *Ann Robertson, senior lecturer emeritus in mathematics*

Extra credit doesn't have to be remedial. In this op-ed, published posthumously, Ann Robertson shares her secrets for designing extra credit assignments that motivate students to study and learn, acquiring knowledge and self-confidence. In addition to her writing in mathematics, Ann published several papers and articles in the scholarship of teaching and learning. An active contributor to the CTL, she will be missed in the profession and on our campus.

► Creative Differences in Teaching & Learning

What policy is stated in your syllabus regarding electronics in the classroom?

► JOE SCHROEDER

associate professor of neuroscience

Psychology 101: Computers and access to digital information are an integral part of the lives of today's students and are an important aspect of the learning experience. Effective use of digital technology is essential for the development of active, engaged professionals in many disciplines. At the same time, the classroom is a collective learning environment that centers on respect for others and individual responsibility to contribute to a fruitful class discussion. You are encouraged to bring your computers or tablets to class to take digital notes and/or immediately access information that may enhance class discussion. However, this privilege comes with an acknowledgement that your computer should only be used as an appropriate educational tool, as well as an assurance to me and your classmates that you will not use your computer in any way that would be considered a distraction to anyone in the class. Cell phones, on the other hand, are used primarily for digital communication and are not appropriate for classroom activity. Please turn

your cell phones off during class. Using your cell phone, or inappropriate use of your computer during class will have a severe negative impact on your class participation grade.

► MARYANNE BORRELLI professor of government

Government 111: Computers can only be used in class with the permission of the professor.

Please turn off all cell phones. If you are waiting for an important call or text, please sit near the door so that you can step into the hallway when your telephone rings. In this way, you will be able to take the call without disrupting class.

Since my statement is so brief, I'm adding an explanatory note: I know that electronics can be a lifeline for students, which is why I make arrangements for critically important calls. But computers offer so many opportunities for distraction that I've decided to remove them from most of my classes. Though I acknowledge that multitasking is a skill that students need to refine, I think that my policy has led to more student engagement and more dynamic conversations.

Transitions

The 2013-2014 academic year is bringing one innovation after another to the Connecticut College community. New faculty colleagues, a new College president, and General Education reform initiatives are only a few of the more obvious changes that we are welcoming. More subtly, there are all the continuing developments that come as teaching and learning is practiced, refined, and strengthened in classrooms and offices, on playing fields and in laboratories, in studios and on stages throughout the campus and the semesters. In that spirit, we celebrate the changes in our faculty.

We have five new emeriti, colleagues whose status within our community is shifting as they enter a new stage in their careers. Paul Althouse (Music), Tom Ammirati (Physics), Bridget Baird (Mathematics and Computer Science), David Lewis (Chemistry), and Richard Moorton (Classics), cumulatively, taught for over 170 years at the College. As the listing of their departmental affiliations makes clear, their contributions extended to every division within the College — sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities. As participants in the Center for Teaching and Learning, their insights entered into even wider circulation and we hope that they will continue to do so. This newsletter includes several emeriti reflections, an opportunity for conversations to continue a little longer.

Perhaps the most moving of these is an op-ed written by a sixth emeriti, Ann Robertson. Ann authored this piece in summer 2013, while she was in the midst of treatments for endometrial cancer. A dedicated, enthusiastic, and intensely curious teacher-scholar, Ann engaged the imaginations of mathematicians and artists with her studies of the imagery, fractional dimensionality, and process of Jackson Pollock's drip period and the symmetries of the Alhambra; she opened new possibilities to undergraduate students through her signature course, Mathematics from a Cultural



NEW FACULTY MEMBERS, SEPTEMBER 2013

FRONT ROW (L TO R): Lauren Anderson, Kevin Johnson, Matt Willis, Stephen Winters-Hilt; MIDDLE ROW (L TO R): James Lee, Ken Prestininzi, Ginny Anderson, Daniela Melo; BACK ROW (L TO R): Tobias Myers, Wendy Moy, Michelle Neely, Vincent Thompson
Missing from this picture is Nina Papathanasopoulou.

Perspective. Ann passed away on November 20, 2013, but her writings keep her wisdom fresh in our memories.

Thirteen new full-time members of the faculty, both tenure-track and visitors, have joined the College. The September faculty meeting provided an opportunity for the community to hear their accomplishments, which were extraordinary. Following up on those descriptions, we invited our new colleagues to identify their signature courses. While it is never easy to single out just one course, they offered the following as highlights of their teaching at Connecticut College:

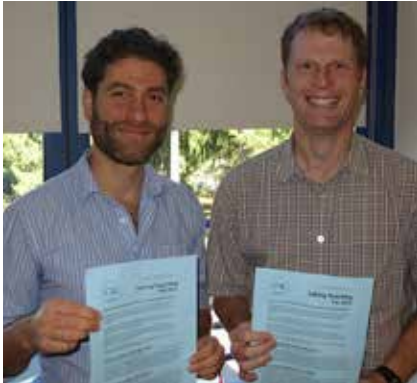
- Ginny Anderson, FYS 143K, The AIDS Epidemic in Theater and Film
- Lauren Anderson, Education 313, Children, Books, and Culture, and Education 341, Literacy Methods in the Elementary Classroom
- Kevin Johnson, Chemistry 307, Chemical Thermodynamics
- James Lee, Computer Science 209, Computer Graphics and Virtual Environments.
- Daniela Melo, Government 493W, Rebels, Rogues, and Revolutionaries: Social Movements and the Politics of Protest
- Wendy Moy, Music 308, Methods in Music Education

- Tobias Myers, Classics 101, Greece
- Michelle Neely, English 336, Humans and Other Animals in 19th-Century American Literature
- Nina Papathanasopoulou, Classics 104, Classical Mythology
- Ken Prestininzi, Theater 212, Playwriting Studio, and Theater 231, American Drama
- Vincent Thompson, Mathematics 105, Introduction to Mathematical Thought, and Mathematics 111, Precalculus with Calculus
- Matt Willis, Mathematics 210, Discrete Mathematics
- Stephen Winters-Hilt, Computer Science / Biology 203, Bioinformatics I and Computer Science 307, Machine Learning I

These course titles and numbers only begin to suggest the expertise and creative energy that our new colleagues bring to the College. Welcome!

New, old, and continuing . . . please do participate in the CTL's Talking Teaching conversations, the Open Classroom initiative, and the Camp Teach & Learn workshops. Beyond an opportunity to "meet-and-greet," the CTL hopes that these dialogues will foster a teaching and learning network that builds community through shared wisdom. Do come — and meet one another!

Talking Teaching, Building Community



Talking Teaching coordinators Simon Feldman (Philosophy) and Chad Jones (Botany).

I started helping to coordinate the Talking Teaching series last spring, which led me to think about its objectives and its impact on my career. First, Talking Teaching has helped to create a community of teachers, so that we can share ideas. This was particularly helpful in my first years at the College, but it continues to support me in my teaching. Second, Talking Teaching provides us with an opportunity to pause, assess, and plan ways that we can improve our teaching. In the busyness of our lives, it is difficult to make time for reflection. Third, Talking Teaching provides information about teaching-related resources on and off campus, strengthening our teaching and learning.

I saw all of these benefits in action throughout the conversations. During the informal mealtime conversations and the discussions, I learned from several faculty members that I had previously not known well. At one session, for example, I learned how many colleagues deal with controversial topics in the classroom — something that I do not have much experience with. In other discussions, I considered my use of teaching and learning goals, and identified ways to incorporate those goals more fully into my courses. Still other events taught me about resources provided by the Office of Student Life and Student Counseling Services to help us support students with mental health challenges, the work of the

Holleran Center in helping to develop community-based learning courses, and the new Academic Resource Center.

Simon Feldman and I are coordinating Talking Teaching discussions throughout this academic year. The six fall semester conversations spanned topics ranging from critical thinking to the honor code to designing exams, and we are designing even more diverse topics for the spring semester. Our list of possibilities include grading, creating connected courses to foster integrated education, general education models, inclusive excellence, advising to foster intentional learning, classroom teach-

ing to facilitate faculty research and creative work, and becoming a more critically reflective teacher.

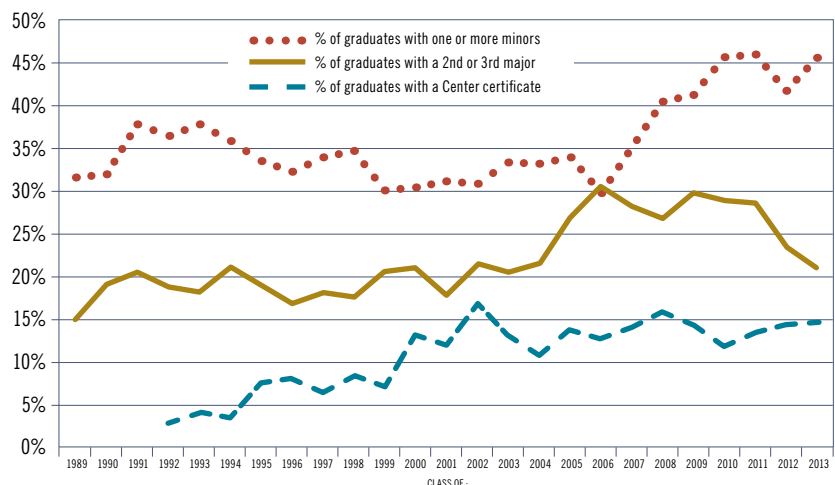
We also want to invite discussion about Talking Teaching itself. How has Talking Teaching helped you to improve your teaching? How do you think Talking Teaching could be improved? Are there topics that you would like to see addressed? Feel free to contact us with your thoughts and ideas. We hope that Talking Teaching will continue to be an important way to collaboratively improve our teaching at the College.
— Chad Jones, George and Carol Milne Associate Professor of Life Sciences

▶ Engaging the Data Multiple Majors/Minors

Many faculty have expressed concern about the number of students pursuing double and even triple majors, worrying that “credentialing” has undermined the richness and breadth of a liberal arts education. The trend data, however, indicates that a growing percentage of students is declaring multiple minors and a shrinking percentage is declaring multiple majors. Center certificates

have, though less dramatically, also increased in numbers. Why are students electing multiple minors? What are the consequences of multiple majors and minors, and of Center certificates, for their liberal arts learning experiences? Ask students, as you sign their declaration forms! — John Nugent, Ph.D., director of institutional research

25-Year History of “Credentialing”: Multiple Majors, Minors and Center Certificates



► Sharing Wisdom About Teaching & Learning

In this issue of the CTL Newsletter, *Sharing Wisdom* focuses on faculty-student research partnerships. Excerpts from a 90-minute interview with Ana Campos-Holland (Sociology) and her three student researchers reveals the energy and dedication required for — and generated by — a strong partnership. *Preliminary Findings* showcases their early analysis. Drawing on her experiences, Ana provides questions that will help faculty to build strong research teams (see page 10, *Know the Answers*), and Dave Lewis reflects on his teaching through laboratory research (see page 11). Finally, note numerous on-campus funding sources (see page 10) support faculty-student research.

► An Interview With Professor Ana Campos-Holland, Molly Bienstock '14, Brooke Dinsmore '14 and Kevin Zevallos '16

SURPRISES ...

KEVIN: The biggest surprise to me was probably seeing how valid what children have to say is, yet they are the biggest group whose voice is ignored. And children understand things, but because adults give them no attention or we presume certain things about their age — we presume that they are immature or unknowing — we don't listen to them as we should.

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DR. CAMPOS-HOLLAND: In society.

KEVIN: Yes. And I see it almost every day. When I talk to people in time out, they explain to me what really happened and why they think it is unfair. But when they try to explain that to their counselor, they get into more trouble for talking back, or not following directions, or not following authority. And it's the idea that children are not supposed to question anything, even when they think that they are right. So it's silencing their voices...

DR. CAMPOS-HOLLAND: Children are one of the most silenced populations in society.

BROOKE: So that makes this research even more important.

TRUST ...

MOLLY: There really is a huge amount of trust, among us and with the children. I always think about putting myself in the interviewee's shoes. And I think I would have been uncomfortable sometimes, interviewing in the places that we have



From left, clockwise, Brooke Dinsmore '14, Kevin Zevallos '16, Molly Bienstock '14, and Dr. Ana Campos-Holland (sociology).

been interviewing our kids. [In navigating spaces with staff at the youth centers, the interview spaces ranged from completely private rooms to sitting outside on the grass.] But they'll talk. Sometimes they won't talk; if they're not going to talk then they will say, "I'm not going to talk about that." But if they're going to talk, then they have talked — even though people [other than research team members] have come in and out of the interview spaces.

DR. CAMPOS-HOLLAND: Our goal is

always to protect the privacy and confidentiality of our participant. So when someone comes in, we pause.

MOLLY: But sometimes they don't even hesitate. And the questions that we had formed were actually pretty invasive.

DR. CAMPOS-HOLLAND: When you interview someone, you are asking them to share their lived experiences with you. I remember, we were talking about this in the car, and we were reaching saturation because we had

heard this before so many times. But I told them, “Remember what Berg said, that every time you are sitting in that room, that person is sharing their soul with you.” So you have to be there with them. You have to be there more than 100 percent there with them. Because you’re living that experience with them, you’re reliving it. So you have to be respectful, aware, and fully there.

MOLLY: You also trust someone to pass on a subject, to say, “That’s okay. We don’t have to talk about that.” Because you’re learning that sacrificing a piece of data is less important than the trust, and also your relationship with the interviewee that you have formed.

MINDS, NOT JUST HANDS ...

DR. CAMPOS-HOLLAND: We focused on this project and everybody is getting something out of it. Whether Molly decides to become a professor, a teacher, or she works with the environment and children, she has an amazing talent with children... And so even though they are at different places, they are all getting something out of this research and experience.

BROOKE: I knew that I needed research experience, and I knew that I wanted to work with a professor, and I needed this to get into graduate school. I needed research experience. This is the next step. This is what I needed. And I saw it on the experience network at CELS... But then when I first interviewed with Professor Campos-Holland, I realized that this was a project where I was going to be respected as a partner, I was going to be challenged, I was going to be given responsibilities – I was going to be a partner and not just a student. Not just an extra set of hands. My mind was going to be utilized, which was phenomenal – I was so excited about that. And then I realized that Professor Campos-Holland had this goal of all of us being able to use this going forward. So it wasn’t just a summer. It was the summer and the year afterward. And as soon as I figured that

out, I realized that I needed to take this and invest so much of myself in it. Because I know as much as I invest in it, Professor Campos-Holland is going to be investing ten times more. So that was what immediately —, what I responded to and what really made me want to do this. Professor Campos-Holland was looking for minds, not just hands.

PASSION ...

DR. CAMPOS-HOLLAND: The thing that Molly, Brooke and Kevin have in common is that they are motivated. Because every morning, I am here at 7:30 a.m., and they are either running to the car or they are there waiting. What makes them get up every morning? They are motivated and they are driven.

You can’t teach that. That is what makes them work, really, that motivation, that accountability, and that passion for what we’re doing. If they didn’t have that passion, they wouldn’t show up.

KEVIN: We just express it in very different ways and use it in our different ways.

DR. CAMPOS-HOLLAND: Absolutely. But that is the commonality. They are driven.

BROOKE: You could not have students doing this if those students did not have motivation and drive and passion. If we did not have those, we would have quit after the first week. We would have made three days, because the hours are so long and it’s so much work and we’re exhausted by the end of the week. We’re delirious

► Preliminary Findings, Summer 2013

Based on 185 interviews with 83 children and youth, each 1.5 to 2 hours in length.

What is the social process involved in youth’s use of meanness within peer culture? Meanness is rooted in children’s social organization, and childhood culture fuels its continuation and diffusion. The content of the meanness is gendered and shaped within the social context. Most importantly, mean public expressions on social media intensify this social process. (Dr. Ana Campos-Holland)

How is peer culture practiced within social media? In search of privacy, youth are leaving the adult-dominated Facebook world to openly practice self-expression within Twitter, Instagram, and Vine. Although concerned with privacy, they are in search of celebrity and entertainment, and want to create and maintain a teenage peer culture. (with Brooke Dinsmore ’14)

How do youth perceive, use and navigate their physical spaces? Youth navigate their urban environments and social realities within multiple neighborhoods. They navigate various racial dynamics, negotiate their age status with diverse adult authorities in multiple homes, and attempt to transform their environment. (with Molly Bienstock ’14)

How do youth within peer cultures practice consumerism? Youth appear to be indifferent to social media marketing, but use social media to share their peer driven consumerism and engage in status displays. (with Kevin Zevallos ’16)

because we're so tired and we have no social skills left at all, because we have used them all. So I think that would be my biggest advice to any faculty member thinking about doing research with students. If you want to know what student is actually going to be good doing research, it is the student who has motivation and passion and drive on their own. And I think that is what makes this a joy for me. I'm working with people who are incredibly passionate.

In Fall 2013, Elena Klonoski '16, Gina Pol '16, Luis Ramos '16, and Allie Rothenberg '16 joined the research team. With Dr. Campos-Holland, students are transcribing interviews, making conference and campus presentations of their findings, authoring honors theses, and drafting co-authored publications.

► Know the Answers

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If you are thinking about forging a faculty-student research partnership, here are six basic questions for you to answer first. A partnership will be successful only if it fits smoothly into your personal life and professional career, and into your students' learning and development.

1. Is the project intellectually accessible in its literature and its research methods? Will your student partners first have to complete specific courses or independent studies? Will this investment have a strong return when conducting the research?

2. Does the project inspire and guide students' intellectual curiosity? Will it help students to transition from consuming to producing knowledge? How can you use the project design to stimulate questions and critical thinking by student researchers? (See also Dave Lewis' reflections on these questions.)

3. Can students invest in the research and analysis? Can they contribute intellectually to the project? Will they be

► On-Campus Funding Sources

Not all projects, faculty, or students are eligible for all awards, grants or programs, but the possibilities are diverse. And remember: This is just a partial listing.

<p>The Arboretum The William A. Niering Student Summer Research Fund</p> <p>The Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology Collaborative Research Grants Curriculum Development Awards</p> <p>CELS Internship Programs</p> <p>Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity Funds for student and faculty study in core areas relating to race and ethnicity</p> <p>Environmental Studies Program The A. W. Mellon Environmental Research Fund</p> <p>Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy Margaret Sheridan '67 Community-Research Initiative Grant, for research and for teaching</p>	<p>International Commons International Curriculum Development Fund</p> <p>Joy Shechtman Mankoff Center for Teaching & Learning Funding for Collaborative Initiatives to Improve Teaching and Learning Across the College</p> <p>Office of the Dean of Students ConnSSHARP Funding</p> <p>Office of the Dean of the Faculty Enders Fellows Harold Juli Student-Faculty Research Award Hodgkin Fund Judith Tindal Opatrny '72 Junior Faculty Fund King, Mulvey, Rash, and Regan Faculty Awards President's Fund for Faculty-Student Engagement R. F. Johnson Funds Research Matters Awards Student Travel-to-Conference Grants</p>
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engaged and motivated, especially if the data collection process becomes draining or tedious?

4. Do the research tasks match the students' skills? Will they be able to undertake tasks that are progressively more difficult, strengthening their critical thinking skills? Will the Information Technology support staff have the resources and funds to support the

project's — and the researchers' — technological needs?

5. Is the faculty-student partnership likely to be constructive? Are there shared intellectual interests? Are personalities and research commitments similar or opposing? (See also the interview account, which makes it clear that student-faculty partners spend a lot of time together.)

6. How will the project schedule affect the researchers' families, work and course commitments, service and co-curricular responsibilities? What opportunities will there be for re-energizing, particularly late in data collection or when starting data analysis? — *Ana Campos-Holland, assistant professor of sociology*

► The Most Important Lesson

My best teaching may not have been done in a classroom. For 42 summers I invited groups of undergraduates into my laboratory to do chemistry research with me. After some introductory lectures, I let each student choose a project, and I helped each of them get started collecting data. After a few days they would bring me their first results and ask me what to do next ... and that is when the most important lesson of the summer happened. I would respond, "What is the data telling you, and what do you think you should do next? Robots need to be instructed what to do next, but research scientists, doctors and other professionals need to develop their own hypotheses, plan experiments, and try out their ideas on other experts." The smart ones got it right away and transformed themselves from being my students to being my research partners. For others, the change came more slowly and with greater difficulty, but the goal remained constant — for my students to create, not merely consume, knowledge. — *David K. Lewis, Margaret W. Kelly Professor Emeritus of Chemistry*

The Academic Resource Center



Evening at the Academic Resource Center.

The next time that you are in the Plex, wander upstairs from Harris, and check out the Academic Resource Center (ARC), now in its temporary home in Main Street West. Open six days a week, often well into the evenings, the ARC provides a diverse set of resources for all Connecticut College students. There are workshops to enhance academic skills (notetaking and active listening, project management, exam preparation), individual and small group tutoring for an array of classes, and strategy sessions to improve study habits. Whether students are transitioning to college in their first year, or developing capstone projects and honors theses in their senior year, the Academic Resource Center provides support that is coordinated with the academic deans and with faculty members. The goal is always to provide assistance, advising, counseling, referrals, and interventions that strengthen student learning.

The 2013-2014 academic year is a busy one for the ARC. In addition to its workshops, the Center has and will host fall and spring poster sessions. In the fall semester, a September poster session focused on faculty-student research partnerships in behavioral neuroscience, biological sciences, botany, chemistry, and computer science. Then, in November, the "Political Transformations in the Middle East" conference showcased research by students in Professor Caroleen Sayej's Middle East Politics and Iraq War

courses. Looking back on all the preparations for the event — research design, data gathering, analysis, writing, graphic display, visual design — Professor Sayej concluded, "The conference and poster session experience revolutionized the way I think about teaching. This semester, students learned a variety of skills they would not have otherwise learned without the practical aspect of the course. Consequently, they took full ownership of their work and displayed great responsibility and pride in their final products. Students were empowered. Moreover, this practical, skills-based approach to teaching allowed students to think about political science as tangible, not just theories and secondary materials written by others. They were doing political science." Two more poster sessions — conferences are being planned for the spring 2014 semester. The ARC will also be playing a large role in the Academic Fair next April, which will feature honors and independent studies across all majors.

So ... swing by Main Street West. Introduce yourself to the ARC director, Noel Garrett; to the assistant director, Dana Roth; the program coordinator, Ali Rossi; the graduate intern, Peter Castagna, and the office manager, Patricia Dallas. Meet the student receptionists, tutors, and presenters. Pick up the brochures and encourage your students to take advantage of ARC opportunities. It's a powerful new resource for our College community.

Heard Around the Campfire ...

Samplings of Feedback from the 2013 Camp Teach & Learn Workshops

Using Your Student Evaluations to Improve Your Courses

New ideas: Keep a long-term perspective on evaluations; look for trends over time with the same course. And focus on the linkages between evaluations & best practices information.

I think that the CTL evaluations are optimal for self-assessment.

It was new to me, to view evaluations as a narrative rather than as quantitative data.

Book Discussion, Outliers

Now I'm thinking about how I can not bias my attention toward the best students – we may exacerbate small differences by giving more opportunities to students that are a little better.

The freely flowing discussion was interesting and useful! I'm thinking about how to encourage people to “make their own luck” by taking advantage of available resources.

I'm coming away with the idea of not only singling out our *best* students for extra attention; help others students learn use resources, *scaffold* assignments to help them along.

What's Happening with Blended Learning at Connecticut College

I'm thinking about incorporating some kind of blended learning into my teaching because it is important to appeal to new generations of students.

I'm going to start utilizing more tech skills in my assignments. The Quiz on Moodle would be great for my intro class. I've used the Forums before and think that the Quiz is better.

Book Discussion, Teaching With Your Mouth Shut

I enjoyed learning / discussing about different learning & teaching styles.

I think that student-centered versus faculty-driven discussion is easier to do with a smaller class size. We should follow-up after fall term to see if any of the new ideas were used.



Midge Thomas (Music) and Luis Gonzalez (Hispanic Studies) discuss the connections among teaching, learning, and chairing a department.

It was helpful to hear how everyone has the same problems with group work in class, with students not doing the readings, etc. Thank you — I feel better!

CC's New Academic Resource Center

It was helpful to learn that I could utilize group tutoring for my classes.

The most compelling suggestions were having in-class workshops & knowing I have the ability to send students to workshops at the ARC.

Effective Chairing

It was interesting to see how many people shared the sense that chairing required culture building.

One of the challenges [of chairing] is identifying the strengths of each member and figuring out how to capitalize on those strengths; recognizing that every member can make a meaningful contribution.

As a way of supporting chairs, it would be good to have more meetings like this, or even informal get-togethers, possibly even a mentoring program (i.e. a lunch budget).

Sleep Patterns

With 6.5 hours of sleep a night and a habit of late-night cramming before exams, our students reflect society's lackadaisical attitude toward the health value of sleep. And the results are seen in their low test scores. So test scores tell us about knowledge but also about study practices.

Student Research in the Digital Era

As a follow-up to this conversation, the faculty needs to discuss how to systematically teach research skills in a revised GE program. It was very interesting to hear the data on what freshmen know about research when they come in.

There is a whole new world out there. And students can't even identify the difference in citations between a book and journal.

Athletics & Academics

Working with the College's schedule is the challenge.

Is there any interest in having faculty liaisons with other campus organizations, in addition to the varsity teams? Athletics are only one piece of what engages our students.

Supporting Students of Marginalized Communities, Backgrounds, & Identities

This was a helpful push to have an authentic conversation about complex and difficult issues. It opened up issues we should be talking about more.

I'm beginning to understand how our students feel when they don't fit the typical student profile.

Most compelling new idea: To reach out to students, to be proactive.

Strategies for Teaching First-Year Students & FYS's

It was helpful to learn where 1st year students are coming from intellectually — memorize and regurgitate, get the grade — and to discuss ways to break that way of thinking with “low stakes” assignments coupled with assignments that challenge.

Compelling ideas: Encourage but don't force. Provide a way to communicate. Challenge and take risks — think outside the comfort zone. Don't assume students know things.

As a compelling idea, that maybe there aren't easy answers or specific, identifiable best practices.

► from the CTL Bookshelves

Reinventing Discovery: The New Era of Networked Science

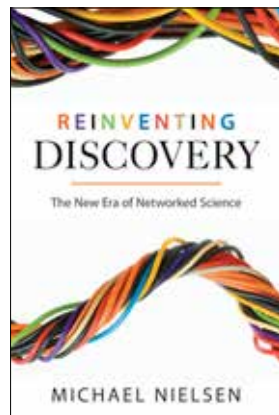
Michael Nielsen. Princeton University Press, 2012.

This is a fascinating book that addresses new ways of doing science using online data, online tools, and (possibly) large numbers of people. The book is aimed toward scientists but many of the author's observations apply to other disciplines. I would recommend it to all faculty, not just those in the sciences. In particular, the first part of the book has implications for most disciplines. While not a book specifically about pedagogy (in fact it's about research) it is one of those books that raises interesting questions for many disciplines and illuminates the digital world our students live in and will work in; thus it ultimately is relevant to how we teach.

The author has made some rather bold claims, many of which he argues quite convincingly. For example, he claims that: "The process of science- how discoveries are made- will change more in the next twenty years than it has in the past 300 years." He goes on to give many examples of projects that would not have been possible even 30 years ago: math problems where hundreds of mathematicians work collaboratively to solve a problem, chess games played collectively and convincingly by thousands of people, astronomy research assisted by thousands of amateurs ("citizen scientists" he calls them) analyzing images, thousands of biologists working towards a complete map of the human brain. The examples are fascinating.

We live in an era where the amount of knowledge, even in fairly specific fields, has become immense. We also live in an era where the generation and analysis of data can be quite separate

enterprises. Nielsen has good suggestions for the kinds of online tools that will create an "architecture of attention" where many people with microexpertise in different areas can come together. He points out the ways in which online tools should assist in the research process and also points out the disadvantages of online research. He also notes that we already have large databanks of information that can be exploited to tackle research problems in astrophysics, climate change, the oceans, understand-



ing of languages, disease, genomes, to name a few. The availability of these data has changed the nature of the questions we can ask.

In the latter part of the book the author argues for an open, networked atmosphere for doing research. This would make the act of publication in journals largely obsolete (as well as some of the evaluation methods for tenure and promotion). He argues that new knowledge and new tools for accessing and understanding that knowledge should be made immediately accessible to all; he is obviously a strong proponent of open source everything: data, research results, programs to analyze data, online tools.

This is a good read. The examples are illustrative; the questions are relevant; the suggestions are worth considering.
— *Bridget Baird, professor emeritus of mathematics and computer science*

Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities

Martha C. Nussbaum. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.

What case should we make for the humanities in these economically challenging assessment-focused, budget-cutting times? In *Not for Profit*, Martha Nussbaum argues that the humanities—and the liberal arts more generally—

are uniquely capable of producing the kinds of citizens necessary for sustaining a flourishing democracy in a globalizing world. Though Nussbaum thinks that the skills cultivated by an education in the humanities have economic value, she thinks it's a mistake to tie the case for the liberal arts to this kind of grossly instrumental economic argument. Nussbaum's book focuses, in particular on the value, to democracy, of an education in "critical thinking" and the arts.

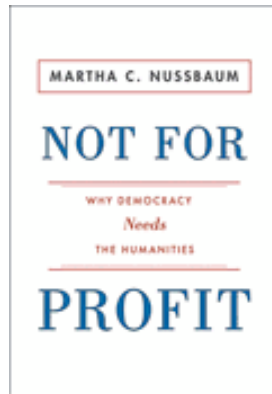
The primary value of critical thinking, Nussbaum argues, is that it is a method of analysis and inquiry that is truth-directed. The capacity to assess the logic of an argument and the evidence for a claim enables us to identify good and bad arguments and claims. These cognitive skills have a corresponding ethical value because they enable us to overcome forms of prejudice that are based on false or unsupported beliefs (say, about the moral or intellectual capacities of people different from ourselves) and to be independent-minded and wary of unchecked authority. But critical thinking, as such, is a formal activity and does not, on its own, conduce to any particular set of substantive democratic (or other) values. A person can be perfectly rational, but still have desires, preferences and affinities that most of us would consider distasteful, anti-social or even morally reprehensible. This is where the arts come in, for Nussbaum. Making, performing and consuming certain forms of art, Nussbaum argues, can stimulate moral sympathy by enabling us to imaginatively occupy the perspectives and experiences of other people. An education that both immerses students in forms of art that produce moral sympathy and develops students' critical thinking skills is the kind of education capable of producing citizens oriented toward the good, and competent to assess competing political ideas and social policies.

Nussbaum's compelling case for

the humanities faces at least two difficult challenges. In her afterword, Nussbaum observes that many think of those who champion the liberal arts as cultural elitists with social and political values that do not necessarily mirror those of the American population at large. Moreover, the idea that everyone ought to have the kind of humanistic education Nussbaum is proposing (and Nussbaum does hope for this) can seem patronizing and paternalistic. Nussbaum, of course, wants to resist this charge. Though she is a classicist, she is clear that the kind of education she is advocating need not be “great books”-style and certainly need be radically inclusive of historically marginalized voices. But, in fact, her view is that one can only live a fully dignified human life if one’s mind has been shaped in a very particular kind of way by exposure to very specific forms of thought and to forms of art carefully selected to produce moral dispositions of a decidedly liberal bent. This is *some* kind of elitism (perhaps even one worth defending). If we are to make a version of Nussbaum’s case for the humanities (and I’m thinking here about the kinds of first principles that might undergird our general education reform) we will have to consider whether we can agree which *kinds* of thinking our students must all learn to engage and *what* they should be compelled to apply that thinking to. These will be no easy tasks, but they are one’s that Nussbaum convinces me are worth pursuing.

A second challenge for Nussbaum’s argument is both philosophical and pedagogical. Nussbaum’s dual emphasis on critical thinking and the arts raises the question of the relation *between* the critical components of a liberal arts education and the morally educative ones. On the one hand, Nussbaum praises critical thinking of a Socratic kind that resists authority and that produces a skeptical disposition; on

the other hand, she is also clear that cultivating “good” moral and political values (namely inclusive, sympathetic and progressive ones) is a matter of educating the emotions by exposure to carefully selected art and literature. So, while we are teaching our students to think critically and independently, we are simultaneously engaged in a concerted project of moral education through immersive value-forming artistic experience. But what happens when students apply their critical reasoning skills to the content of their artistic experiences, as Nussbaum must surely intend? One possibility (presumably the ideal one) is that students develop an even richer set of sympathetic moral understandings; another possibility is that subjecting aesthetic experience to



sustained critical thought drains it of any determinate “democracy-promoting” moral content; and a third, perhaps scarier possibility is that, becoming ever more capable of seeing things from other people’s perspectives, and critically investigating their relative merits, students succumb to a moral relativism bordering on moral nihilism. Nussbaum

seems confident that “the right kind” of humanities education can instill students with “good democratic values.” But trying to figure out what these values are, and even whether democracy is the best form of government, are projects that might be at odds with the arguments in Nussbaum’s book. My guess is that we can all agree that we should be trying to produce students who are critically minded and morally sympathetic. I think nurturing these capacities is probably an end in itself. But I’m much less confident than Nussbaum about what kind of citizens students so nurtured will turn out to be. And, in the end, I am skeptical of Nussbaum’s central contention that the best (strategic or principled) way to establish the value of an education that promotes critical thinking and moral imagination is to focus on their instru-

mental contribution to a very particular vision of participatory democracy. — *Simon Feldman, associate professor of philosophy*

Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia.

Edited by Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs, Yolanda Flores Niemann, Carmen G. González, and Angela P. Harris. Utah State University Press, 2012.

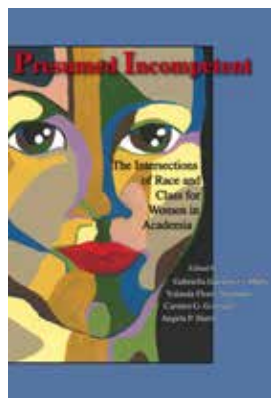
The 30 essays in *Presumed Incompetent* expose a nasty truth about Academia: it is not above the realities of everyday American life. It, in fact, reproduces and reinforces society’s inequalities, stereotypes, and hierarchies within its own walls.

That academic women, especially academic women of color, are often presumed incompetent, is probably not surprising to most. The virtue of this book is that it enables the reader to see that these experiences are not individual experiences nor are they the result of individual flaws. Keeping this insight in mind, these essays become more than just “stories” or anecdotes. They point to the larger structural and cultural forces within Academia that make the experience of being presumed incompetent for women of color far too common.

The book is a collection of various types of essays: scholarly literature reviews of the experiences of women of color, personal narratives, and interviews. The content is divided into five parts: “General Campus Climate”, “Faculty/Student Relationships”, “Networks of Allies”, “Social Class in Academia” and “Tenure and Promotion.” As one can tell readily from the themes, the book isn’t directed at students, nor is it meant primarily for use in a classroom (although there are several chapters that would be a good fit in courses that cover race, class, gender and sexuality issues). The book’s primary audience is faculty and administrators. It not only highlights the cultural and structural obstacles facing women of color in Academia, but proposes strategies and recommendations aimed at faculty and administrators. Several essays do this effectively, but

Niemann's concluding essay provides a particularly valuable summary of strategies and advice.

Several themes cut across the five sections of the book. One is the discussion of stereotypes and identity work. For instance, African American women may be seen as “mammies” and expected to be nurturing and caring and when they are not, they face anger and disappointment from students and colleagues (see Douglas' and Wilson's essays). Another example is Lugo-Lugo's chapter, which discusses the stereotypes of the “hot Latina” and how they play out for her in the classroom where she must negotiate her identity as a Latina and a professor.



Lugo-Lugo also touches upon a second, though sometimes less explicit,

theme of this book: the corporatization of higher education. There are several layers to this phenomenon that affect women of color disproportionately. For one, contingent labor now makes up the vast majority of faculty positions in this country. White women and women of color are disproportionately represented in these contingent ranks. Women of color only make up 7.5% of all full-time faculty positions in Academia (pg. 449). Given this reality, the presumption of incompetence gets reinforced and magnified for women of color. But there is another aspect of corporatization that is considered in the essays in this book. These are the essays that discuss student evaluations of teaching. Because students increasingly come to the classroom with a consumerist mentality, they feel entitled to a certain experience, a certain grade, a certain “kind” of teacher. Lazos' chapter, in particular, is a must-read for anybody who wishes to understand the factors that impact students' evaluations of their professors. Department chairs and members of committees on tenure

and promotion will also find this chapter useful since they are responsible for evaluating a faculty member's teaching effectiveness and student evaluations are a primary source of that information.

The importance of mentoring is also underscored in many of the essays in this volume as they highlight the need for good mentorship not just in graduate school but throughout the various stages of an academic career. The essay “Lessons From a Portrait: Keep Calm and Carry On,” by Adrien Wing, discusses the need to have a variety of mentors across racial, gender and institutional lines. Wing reminds the reader not to rely on a single mentor. “I never put all my eggs in one basket. If one mentor did not work out, that was fine because there were others” (p. 366).

There is one recurring piece of advice in this collection that worries me: many authors exhort women of color to simply do better and do more than what is expected of them. This includes doing “more than the minimum”, teaching “on a grand scale” (p. 362, 363). This lesson, which may seem productive from an individual's perspective, does nothing to address the deeper problem of why women of color feel the need to do this in the first place. It poses a very personal solution to a problem that the editors and authors themselves have identified as a structural issue.

That critique aside, *Presumed Incompetent* offers valuable lessons and advice for just about everyone in Academia, from contingent faculty, post-docs, and tenured and tenure-track faculty, to administrators and search committees. It is up to us to heed that advice if we hope to erase the dangerous and erroneous belief in academic women's incompetence. — *Afshan Jafar, assistant professor of sociology*

The Art of Procrastination: A Guide to Effective Dawdling, Lollygagging and Postponing.

John Perry. Workman Publishing Company.

My own behavior today supports the main point of John Perry's little book on procrastination. I had been putting

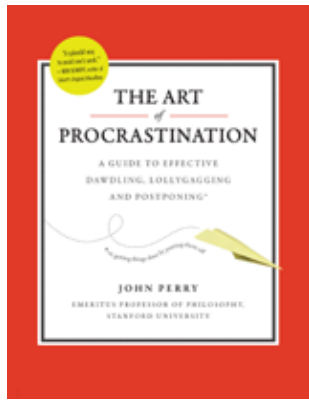
off actually getting down to the business of writing this review — brief as it is — but I hadn't been wasting my time, for tomorrow I'll be teaching Aristotle in my summer course at Yale, and I spent today reading yet another book on this great ancient philosopher. Although I wasn't zeroing in on what I was “supposed to be doing” — meeting my deadline — I could nonetheless rationalize to myself that I wasn't just frittering away my time. In fact, the intensity of my involvement with David Roochnik's diversionary book, *Retrieving Aristotle in an Age of Crisis*, seemed to increase as it chewed up more and more time I was expecting — though not really — to devote to this review.

Perry labels this “structured procrastination”: getting a lot done by not doing other things one “should” be doing. He encourages structured procrastinators not to put themselves down. Self-flagellation means being imprisoned by the perfectionist ideal of a rational agent who always pursues her most important goals. If we give up this ideal and notice how much we accomplish while avoiding the things that are first on our to-do lists, then we won't suffer “needless unhappiness.” His hope is not to magically transform procrastinators into non-procrastinators, but to help his particular species — structured procrastinators — “to feel better about [themselves] and to realize that [they're] managing to be productive in spite of procrastinating.”

I do belong to this species. I've never been as productive outlining papers and lectures I've promised to give in the future than when I have paper-grading to do in the present. The stack of essays (or, in contemporary terms, the electronically submitted “pile” of files) that promise mostly unreadable prose and undeveloped ideas hammered out in the eleventh hour emits a reverse magnetism that pulls me towards my own projects that I've put on the back-burner during the semester. But then when vacation arrives and I have the free time to actually write, putting my notes into prose, I feel not quite ready and retreat into productive, but not yet directed lines of more research and note-taking. Still, I

feel guilty not finishing what I'm supposed to, and it usually isn't until a deadline lays down its requirement that I finally "get the job done." But it isn't fun. I often get sick along the way and make my family miserable to boot. WHY?

This is the question that Perry never answers to my satisfaction. He even confesses to brushing it aside. He's more interested in helping structured procrastinators feel better about ourselves for all we manage to accomplish than to interrogate why we avoid things like writing and grading papers – or bringing back overdue library books or paying bills. I know I'd be much better off if I didn't agonize for so long and wait until the last minute to get down to the actual writing or grading process. Say I have 40 papers to grade and a week to do it. The rational way is to divide the pile up by seven and grade six a day,



leaving plenty of time for the rest of life. But no. Seven days become four in which I have to grade 10 per day. Once two more days slip by, it's 20 per day. Then things get deeply depressing. The task doesn't seem possible, and one has to entertain the humiliating possibility of begging students for "an extension." Isn't something

like this precisely what led many of them to turn in rushed work? We're all in the same boat.

I wish I could write the way "real writers" do. Get up in the morning, face the page (or screen), and scribble away: knowing that I can always go back and revise. But it's tough to confront the stupidity of one's ideas, and easier to step back and plan for a more thoughtful assault. So time drifts by. Perry doesn't help me with writer's block, for he says: "Think of all the other things you got done when you

were blocked." But I want to know how to put things out there sooner, so I'm not stuck in my own head and notebooks for so long.

And there's another trap that Perry doesn't explore. Once you're aware of being a structured procrastinator, it may feel like what were once healthy diversions are now things you're "supposed" to be doing in order to justify procrastination. But then it's tempting to procrastinate over them, too. Being too self-conscious about structured procrastination takes away the guilty pleasure of doing the second or third best thing. Then, the only way to get away from "shoulds" is to really waste one's time.

Well, the NBA finals begin tonight, while I'll be teaching Aristotle tomorrow (with students' posts arriving via email at 10 p.m.) and have committed myself to present three papers in the next four months. The question is: can San Antonio manage to win the opening game and put the Heat's back against the wall? So much for rational agency. — *Larry Vogel, professor of philosophy*

letter from the Director

continued from page 2

ment and International Relations), who has greatly benefited from Sufia Uddin's (Religious Studies) mentoring in this role. As a Faculty Fellow, Sufia was highly regarded for her skilled appeals and thoughtful editing, which resulted in outstanding book reviews and articles. MaryAnne looks forward to continuing and building upon her example, drawing forward ideas that have been discussed in our most engaging CTL conversations and workshops. Many thanks to MaryAnne, whose innovative approach to this newsletter has led to the exciting new format before you now.

In May, Joyce McDaniel, the CTL administrative assistant, retired after three decades of service to the College. We all miss Joyce and the depth of knowledge she brought to the Center. We have been lucky to find a wonderful



Ann Schenk, CTL administrative assistant, and Joyce McDaniel, CTL administrative assistant emeritus.

new assistant, Ann Schenk, who moved into the position with both energy and grace. Welcome, Ann.

Anne Bernhard (Biology) continues to serve as Faculty Fellow and co-leader of the CTL; she also serves as the tenured faculty mentor for the Class of '57 Teaching Seminar for Incoming Faculty. Anne's tireless efforts on behalf of the CTL, and teaching & learning as a whole, contribute to ensuring that our programming remains

both responsive and dynamic.

The CTL would not be successful without the work of these leaders and the support of our colleagues across the College. Personally, attending CTL events inspires me to improve my own teaching. These conversations, dialogues, and debates about education also increase my enthusiasm about the College, the campus, and our community. I am privileged to be part of such an enterprise and to work with so many creative and dedicated teacher-scholars.

Best wishes for a happy and productive semester.

Sincerely,
Michael

Contact Michael Reder, director of the Joy Shechtman Mankoff Center for Teaching and Learning, at rederm@conncoll.edu.