

The Joy Shechtman Mankoff
Center for Teaching & Learning presents ...

Talking Teaching

Fall 2024



PLEASE SAVE THE DATES & JOIN US FOR GREAT CONVERSATIONS!

Talking Teaching is a series of informal discussions of teaching-related topics—typically suggested by our colleagues. Talking Teaching provides an opportunity to build community and to stop & reflect on our teaching and on our students' learning experiences. Topics are listed below, with dates & times and preliminary descriptions.

For each conversation, eight to ten discussants will bring their thoughts or questions to spark the collective exchange of ideas. ***We are still seeking additional discussants for these events.*** Interest in the topic, not extended preparation, is the only requirement to be a discussant.

Please contact Maria Rosa, Carla Parker-Athill or Cheryl Banker if you are interested in attending or serving as a discussant.

We hope to see you at these events!

Welcome Back & Community Building

A Talking Teaching Community Building Event*

Thursday 5 September 2024, 8:30 AM to 10:15 AM, in Hood.

Breakfast at 8:15 AM

Building from last year's popular semester-starting events, please join faculty and staff colleagues from across campus for breakfast and a facilitated, community building event. See staff and faculty colleagues that you have not seen since May, and meet new colleagues, all in a fun, low-stakes manner.

Teaching Different Types of Classes: Sustainably, Equitably & Effectively

A Talking Teaching Workshop*

Monday 16 September 2024, Noon to 2:30 PM, in Hood.

Lunch at 11:50 AM

Throughout our careers, most of us will teach different types of courses at Connecticut College. The approach and techniques used in a seminar course that meets weekly, for example, can be very different from a laboratory or studio course. For this workshop, we will discuss the challenges and advantages of teaching different types of specific courses, including:

- Introductory Courses & Surveys
- “Mid-Level, Mid-Content, Mid-Enrollment” Courses
- Lab, Field Work, Language, Studio, & Performance Courses
- Seminars: First Year & Advanced
- Teaching “One-on-One”: Independent Studies, Senior Integrative Projects, Honors Theses, & Capstone Projects

Focusing on critically reflective practice and evidence informed teaching, we will consider how to teach these different types of courses equitably, effectively, and sustainably.

When Politics Come into the Classroom: Mindfulness-based Approaches for Navigating Difficult Conversations

A Talking Teaching Too*

Thursday 26 September 2024, Noon to 2 PM, in Ernst. Lunch at 11:50 AM.

Global and national politics can show up in expected and surprising ways during teaching and mentoring of students. What are the tools that can enable us to support engagement without getting bogged down in distracting or unhelpful conflicts? This workshop introduces strategies for engaging with relevant topics as well as resetting conversations when subjects are raised that are not within the bounds of the current discussion. We will also identify and consider ways to navigate current hot button issues as we move through the 2024 US election cycle.

Discussants include Mara Suttman-Lea, Rebecca McCue, Ariella Rotramel, Megan Griffin, and students, including Eliza Macaluso '27, Tate Buchwald '27, Adithya Saranathan '26, and Flannery Miller '27.

Bias-Aware Peer Observations Workshop

A Talking Teaching Workshop*

Monday 14 October 2024, Noon to 2 PM, in Ernst. Lunch at 11:50 AM.

As faculty, we need to think about our own peer observations and how we can minimize bias, especially in the context of our ongoing and ever-evolving work of dismantling racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, and other axes of discrimination and inequity on our campus. How can we mitigate unconscious bias in peer evaluations? Evidence highlighting the persistent presence and impact of unconscious or implicit bias in a variety of work settings is well documented (for a recent meta review of the literature please see Forscher, et. al., 2019). Although ubiquitous, implicit bias can be addressed and changed. Quite simply, “implicit bias changes only when contexts change” (Payne and Hannay, 2021). In a recent article, Edward Pitman (2021) argues that having a structural lens, engaging an intersectional scope, creating a context for repeated cultural engagements, and engaging with an educational model—versus one-off trainings—are pivotal for changing implicit bias in higher education. In the literature on higher education, implicit bias is primarily discussed in terms of hiring practices, teaching evaluations, and classroom dynamics. How can we apply these ideas to our own observations of our colleague’s teaching?

Facilitated by Danielle Egan, Dean of the Faculty, with Erika Smith, Interim Dean of Equity and Inclusion.

Creating a Realistic & Forward-Looking AI Policy to Support Effective Student Learning

A Talking Teaching Discussion*

8:30 AM to 10:15 AM Thursday 31 October 2024, in Hood.

Breakfast at 8:15 AM

Artificial intelligence (AI) is not only here to stay, it will also likely revolutionize the ways in which we all write, research, study, learn, and, yes, teach. While Library & Information Technology have several resources*, at the moment, Connecticut College has no explicit policy about the student use of AI—beyond how AI has been interpreted to apply in the plagiarism rules in the Student Handbook. Should we have a more explicit AI policy related to students? And, if so, what should that policy be? At the moment, faculty members typically conceive of and share their own policies—some forbid the use of AI totally, while others require its use in order to complete assignments. Beyond a policy, lies the questions: What do our students need to know about AI—and how to use it—in order to be prepared for the future? And, what do we need to know about AI in order to teach them effectively?

This Talking Teaching will bring together a variety of stakeholders from the faculty, staff, and administration to discuss this important topic and, hopefully, begin to chart a course forward for the use of AI as we facilitate student learning.

*Resources include: "[AI Literacy in the Age of ChatGPT: A Guide for Instructors](#)" and "[AI Literacy for Students](#)."

Co-sponsored by the Office of the Dean of the Faculty, Office of the Dean of the College, Office of the Dean of Students, Library & Information Technology, Office of Academic Support, and AAPC.

Discussants include: Tim Becker, Chris Colbath, Sarah Cardwell, Matt Gardzina, Semra Kiliç-Bahi, Lori Looney, Jessica McCullough, Erika Smith, Summar West, & Marc Zimmer.

Understanding How the Office of Academic Support (Academic Resource Center, Roth Writing Center, Quantitative Skills Center) Can Support Effective Teaching & Learning

A Talking Teaching Discussion*

Monday 18 November 2024, Noon to 2 PM in Ernst. Lunch at 11:50 AM.

Could your students benefit from better time management, writing and communication skills, and quantitative reasoning? Could you benefit from more collaboration and feedback around planning your assignments and assessments of students? The staff from the Academic Resource Center, the Quantitative Skills Center, and the Roth Writing Center--all part of the Office of Academic Support (formerly called the ARC)--are here to support you. In this session, members of the Office of Academic Support will provide an overview of the resources their centers offer, and attendees are invited to explore ways to collaborate with the centers to address diverse student needs. This collaborative approach aims to empower educators to maximize student potential, improve learning outcomes across disciplines, and create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Co-sponsored by the Office of Academic Support.

Discussants include Noel Garrett, Christopher Colbath, Semra Kiliç-Bahi, & Summar West.

Grading Bonanza

A Talking Teaching Community Building Event*

Thursday 12 December 2024, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM (beverages and light lunch provided) in 1941 Room, Cro

It's that time of the year! Research has shown that working in a group setting can increase productivity (By how much? We don't know; we only read the title because we were busy grading!). Come join us in this community event, bring your materials to grade, and spend some focused time working while enjoying sandwiches, coffee & tea! Commiserate over whose idea it was to assign this much work. Feel free to drop by for all or part of this event.

Hot Chocolate Social

A Talking Teaching Community Building Event*

Thursday 12 December 2024, 3:30 to 5:30 PM in 1941 Room Cro

Hot! Hot! Hot! Join the Center for Teaching & Learning and the Talking Teaching co-coordinators as they host a HOT CHOCOLATE BAR and HOT CIDER to warm-up prior to the end of the semester crush. Snacks, casual fun, and conversation, including fun questions! A variety of fixings and stir-ins for your hot chocolate and hot cider will be provided!!

****A note about Talking Teaching:***

In order to better define what participants should expect during our different Talking Teaching events, we designate each even according to its focus:

Workshop: These sessions draw upon colleagues' expertise and seek to engage participants in learning more about a topic in a more structured environment than typical Talking Teachings.

Discussion: These sessions invite participants to come together with a set of discussants who have a particular interest in a topic.

Community Building: These sessions focus on supporting our engagement with each other around a topic.

Curricular Development: These sessions focus on an aspect of our curriculum and bring together different voices to both share their experiences and thoughts and learn from each other.

Talking Teaching Too: These sessions include students and emphasize the exchange of ideas about teaching & learning between and among students and faculty & staff members.