



Using Evidence about Student Learning with Faculty

Selected Connecticut College Events

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For more information about our programming, visit <http://ctl.conncoll.edu/>

Examples from Summer Workshops, 2008-2012

Camp Teach & Learn



Special Workshop on First-Year Seminars: Learning from Experience

Friday, May 23rd, 2008 : : 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

Breakfast served at 8:30 AM; Lunch served from Noon to 1 PM.

Faculty have numerous stated and implied goals for their First-Year Seminars (FYSs): reading carefully & critically; synthesizing information & developing arguments; improving writing; engaging in classroom discussions; using library resources; honing oral presentation skills; addressing issues related to pluralism & diversity; and helping students successfully transition to their academic lives here at the college. Some faculty advise their seminars; others teach their courses in the residence halls; while others incorporate the use of more advanced students to help their first-year students learn.

This annual workshop brings together both experienced and new FYS faculty and will address a variety of topics, including: what makes these courses distinctive, the three years of feedback and data gathered from previous FYSs, and the effective design of seminars and assignments. Faculty will share ideas regarding the teaching of their FYSs, using writing and discussion, and helping students develop essential critical thinking skills. We will also discuss what it is like to teach in the residence halls and advise your FYS.

Discussants include Theresa Ammirati, Melissa Behney, Gene Gallagher, Ashley Hanson, Larry LaPointe, Kathy McKeon, John Nugent, Michael Reder, Maureen Ronau, Andrea Rossi-Reder, Steve Shoemaker, Stuart Vyse, Marc Zimmer and other FYS faculty.

Intellectual Climate & Challenge: What the Wabash Study Tells Us about Teaching & Learning at Connecticut College

Thursday, June 5th, 2008 : : 9:00 AM to Noon. Lunch served at Noon.

What does the first year of Connecticut College's data from the Wabash National Study (WNS) tell us about how we teach and what our students learn? What insights can be gained by closely examining the evidence regarding student learning, and how do we, as a faculty, want to respond to this information? What have our students said in focus groups about their classroom experiences and about what keeps them engaged in their learning?

Facilitators include WNS Director Charles Blauch, Associate Director Kathy Wise, Roger Brooks, John Nugent, Michael Reder, and Julie Rivkin.

Raising the Bar: Asking More of Our Students

Thursday, June 5th, 2008. Lunch served at Noon. Workshop from 1 PM to 3 PM.

What does the Wabash National Study and the student interviews tell us about designing our courses so that our students will be more engaged in their learning? How can we design intellectual experiences that challenge our students? What are some of the common features of “successful” courses? What is the relationship between these issues in individual introductory courses and the other courses in the major? In this workshop we will share ideas and approaches to designing successful introductory courses intended to intellectually challenge our students. Faculty will bring a syllabus to consider.

Facilitators include Gene Gallagher, Michael Reder, Julie Rivkin, WNS Director Charles Blaich, Associate Director Kathy Wise, and will feature a variety of additional faculty.

Connecticut College Students’ Attitudes about Discussion: Implications for Critical Thinking and Diversity with Carol Trosset

Tuesday, 25 May, 2010: 9:00 AM to Noon; lunch to follow.

Based on a new CTL survey of over 90% of Connecticut College’s first-year students during Fall 2009, this workshop draws upon Carol Trosset’s ground-breaking research on student attitudes about discussion that she conducted at Grinnell College. In that study, Trosset explores the student view of discussion as advocacy, their notion that the purpose of discussion is to reach a consensus, and the implications of these beliefs as possible roadblocks to productive classroom discussions, particularly those focused on diversity or controversial subjects. During the workshop Trosset will present the results of the survey of our students and we will discuss the implications and strategies for running productive classroom discussions. *Guest facilitated by Carol Trosset, Institutional Researcher at Hampshire College. Trosset is the former Institutional Researcher at Grinnell College, where she taught Anthropology. Discussants include Anne Bernhard, Sunil Bhatia, Simon Feldman, Cherise Harris, Leah Lowe, John Nugent, Michael Reder, Andrea Rossi-Reder, and Abby Van Slyck.*

Writing and Academic Challenge: Integrating Writing and Subject Matter

Wednesday, 26 May, 2010: 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM; lunch served at noon.

There is a general consensus that serious attention to the teaching of writing must be a crucial element of any rigorous academic program. But that still leaves the thorny question of how exactly one is supposed to balance the teaching of writing and the teaching of other subject matter in the classroom when one’s time is, after all, limited. In this workshop, we’ll consider various time-efficient strategies for stimulating our students to become both critical thinkers and accomplished writers. *Co-sponsored by The Writing Center.*

What Do We Know about Student Learning at Connecticut College? What Would You Like to Know?

Wednesday, 26 May, 2010: 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM, including drinks and hors d’oeuvres.

Connecticut College is the lead institution of a Teagle Foundation-sponsored grant, “Data into Action,” that is focused on making the myriad data colleges have about student learning useful for faculty. During this meeting, faculty will get a brief overview of the information we have about faculty teaching and student learning at Connecticut College. We will discuss what information would be most interesting and helpful for faculty to make improvements in their teaching and courses. *Discussants include Deborah Eastman, Marc Forster, Leah Lowe, John Nugent, Michael Reder, and Julie Rivkin.*

Using Evidence: Changing Your Course to Improve Student Learning

During this interactive workshop, participants will consider data about student learning (both at the College in general and information related to their courses specifically) and revise a course with the aim of improving student learning, academic challenge, and student engagement. Participants will consider the data, explore ways to incorporate evidence-based teaching and learning practices into their course, and then re-design a course. Follow-up workshops will be offered later in the summer and during the fall semester.

Workshop leaders include: Bridget Baird, Anne Bernhard, Leah Lowe, John Nugent, Michael Reder, Sufia Uddin, & Abby Van Slyck.

Part 1: Tuesday, 24 May: 9:00 AM to Noon; lunch served at noon &
Part 2: Thursday, 26 May: 1:00 PM to 3 PM; lunch served at noon.

Sleep Patterns and the Factors Affecting Them in Connecticut College Students: What Impact Does Sleep Quality Have On Academic Performance?

Tuesday 22nd May 2012: 10:30 AM to Noon, lunch served at Noon

Students enrolled in Psychology of Sleep (PSY204, Spring 2012) kept a sleep journal and used personal electroencephalographic monitors to collect sleep stages data over the course of the semester. How does the amount of light, deep and dream-state sleep correlate with reported stress levels, alertness, exercise, caffeine and alcohol intake, etc? How does the sleep of Conn students compare to students on other campuses? More importantly, how does sleep quality affect academic performance and measures of learning and memory in Conn students? Did students apply what they learned in the course to improve their personal sleep patterns? A report on these and other interesting findings from the first Psychology of Sleep course will be reported and discussed. *Discussion led by Joe Schroeder.*

Learning from the Wabash National Study: A Conversation with the WNS Working Group

Tuesday 22nd May 2012: 1 PM to 3 PM, lunch served at Noon

The final report of the WNS Working Group represents a tremendous amount of effort and thought by our colleagues analyzing a substantial amount of evidence—both quantitative and qualitative—about student learning and experiences here at Connecticut College. Their analysis offers insight into the education we offer—both what works and for whom, and what we can do better. It also contains specific recommendations related to policy and programs, additional areas of research, advising, and faculty involvement with admissions. Please come and discuss the report's implications for introductory classes, First-Year Seminars, advising, the structure of General Education, and admissions, as well the authors' own thoughts on the implications on their findings for teaching and learning at Connecticut College.

Discussion led by Dean of the Faculty Roger Brooks, and featuring members of the WNS Working Group, including Maria Cruz-Saco, Ron Flores, Heidi Henderson, Carrie Kent, Julie Rivkin, Bill Rose, and Stuart Vyse.

The Myths & Realities of Multitasking and How It Affects Student Performance

Thursday 24th May 2012: 11 AM to 12:30 PM, lunch served at 12:30 PM

Can some people really function efficiently while attempting to consume more than one item or stream of media content at a time? Do multitaskers process information differently than non-multitaskers? Is there a limit to the number of simultaneous streams of media information an individual can process? These questions are especially relevant when considering the education of digital natives of the I-generation. This and other research will serve as an introduction for a discussion of how to deal with today's multitasking student in the classroom and how to prepare them for a rapidly changing, digital work environment.

Discussion led by Joe Schroeder.

Selected CTL Reading & Discussion Groups (from 2011):

Key Issues in Liberal Education

We will discuss a selection of readings on pressing issues in liberal arts education and learning, including Richard Arum, Josipa Roska, & Esther Cho's position paper "Improving Undergraduate Learning" (SSRC, 2011; Arum & Roska are the authors of *Academically Adrift*); chapters from Martha Nussbaum's *Not For Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* (Princeton, 2010); a controversial *New York Times* editorial "End the University as We Know It" by Mark C. Taylor (and some of the over 400 responses it garnered); a recent speech given by Bennington College President Elizabeth Coleman; a *New York Times* review essay by Peter Brooks; and a selection of evidence about student learning here at Connecticut College.

Discussion led by Roger Brooks, Julie Rivkin, & Abby Van Slyck.

Wednesday, 25 May 2011: 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM; lunch served at 12:30 PM.

How Learning Works:

7 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching (2010)

by Susan Ambrose, Michael W. Bridges, Marsha C. Lovett, Michele DiPietro, & Marie K. Norman.

This lively, critically-acclaimed book offers straightforward, practical strategies for course design and teaching based on research about learning taken from diverse disciplines and perspectives. For more information about the book, visit [Amazon](#).

Discussion led by Anne Bernhard & Sufia Uddin.

Thursday, 26 May 2011: 10:00 AM to Noon; lunch served at noon.

If you are interested in participating in one or more of these reading & discussion groups, please email Michael Reder at rededer@conncoll.edu to request your copy of these books or readings.

Selected Events from Our Faculty Discussion Series



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

Talking Teaching

Athletics and Academics

Tuesday, 28th March 2006

Noon—Faculty Lounge, Blaustein

What is the place of intercollegiate athletics in a liberal arts setting? How does playing organized Division III sports both enhance and challenge students' learning experiences? An open discussion with faculty, students, and members of the Department of Physical Education & Athletics about the challenges faced by student-athletes committed to a full co-curricular life. Come join Jenny Fredricks, Sunil Bhatia, Fran Shields, Eva Kovach, members of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, John Nugent, and a selection of coaches for lunch and discussion.

Helping Students Overcome Barriers to Learning

Friday, March 2nd, 2007

10:00 am – 11:20 am

Hood Dining Room

Our students face a number of challenges that can prevent them from performing well academically, including learning disabilities, substance abuse problems, and personal crisis. How do students' problems or challenges outside of class affect their experiences inside the classroom? What can we do to educate ourselves about the challenges facing students today? Come meet with faculty and staff from Student Health Services, Disabilities Services, and Counseling Services to learn more about the issues facing our students, and to participate in an important dialogue between faculty and representatives from Student Health Services. *Featured discussants:* MaryAnne Borrelli, Blanche Boyd, Sue Duques, Ruth Grahn, Cate Moffett, and Janet Spoltore.

Grades, Grade Inflation, and Beyond

Wednesday, February 18, 2009 : : 8:30 am to 10 am

Hood Dining Room

Grades, grade inflation, and grade-related policies give rise to questions that have significance for individual faculty and for our institution as a whole. These include: What is the relationship between grading and "academic challenge"? Do grades influence student evaluations? Do grading practices impact enrollment patterns in departments and majors? Grades obviously matter; they can determine whether a student remains at the College, goes on to grad school, or receives a prestigious academic award. Yet, what does an "A" (or a "B" or a "C" or "D") "mean"? Have grades been rendered, through inflation and the vagaries of evaluative criteria, largely meaningless?

FEATURED DISCUSSANTS: Anne Bernhard, Roger Brooks, Marc Forster, Janet Gezari, Eileen Kane, Mike Monce, John Nugent, Rosemarie Roberts, and Lisa Wilson.

CC: Challenge and Curiosity in Teaching

Wednesday, 4 November 2009, from 11:50 AM to 2 PM Alice Johnson Room

How can we stimulate students' intellectual curiosity and challenge all students in our classes, especially when students have different levels of preparation and different interests? Come share your views on how to achieve this goal, while discussing the report and recommendations of the Faculty Working Group on Academic Challenge. How does faculty engagement with students outside the classroom, the intellectual climate in the residence halls, and the broader presentation of the College impact this issue of academic challenge? Recent data from the Wabash National Study indicate that students' perceptions of intellectual challenge and academic rigor are surprisingly low at Connecticut College. What are your experiences as you assess teaching-and-learning in your classrooms, office hours, and more informal conversations? How have you responded to student evaluations of their workload and your grading? What is a rigorous course? How might the faculty and the College strengthen its commitment to intellectual growth and development among our students? Co-sponsored by the Faculty Working Group on Academic Challenge.

FEATURED DISCUSSANTS: Roger Brooks, Stan Ching, Marc Forster, Martha Grossel, Christopher Hammond, Andrea Lanoux, Leah Lowe, Denise Pelletier, Jefferson Singer, and Stuart Vyse.

“I WORK HARDEST WHEN I HAVE A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PROFESSOR”

MOTIVATING STUDENTS, ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS & SETTING BOUNDARIES

Friday, 24 February 2012: 11:50 AM to 2:00 PM

Hood Dining Room

What do students mean by having a “personal relationship” with faculty? What does it involve for faculty members?

Research suggests that Connecticut College students work harder and learn more when they know that a professor cares about them as individuals. More generally, evidence suggests that the student-faculty relationship provides a foundation for effective teaching and learning. What are the best ways to establish and maintain this important pedagogical relationship? Carefully chosen readings, thoughtfully prepared lectures, and extensive feedback on student work all depend, to a significant extent, upon the qualities of this relationship. But what are the boundaries for this association? This conversation will draw on evidence from several surveys conducted at the College and will feature the insights of faculty colleagues who have taken a relational approach to teaching, even in larger courses.

ASSESSING THE ALL-CAMPUS EVALUATION

Wednesday, 14 November 2012: 8:30 AM to 10:15 AM

Hood

What are your experiences with the All-Campus Evaluation (ACE)?

The ACE was intended to provide on-going feedback that would support improvement in teaching, while also providing standardized measures needed for tenure and promotion reviews. Documenting and controlling for systematic patterns of bias – on the basis of age, gender, sexual identity, race, and ethnicity, among other aspects of identity – was also a high priority. What are our experiences with the ACE? Does the ACE provide both formative and evaluative information? How does it compare with other evaluations, including earlier departmental evaluations and the current First-Year Seminar evaluations? How should ACE data be interpreted by the teacher and presented to evaluators? Faculty members who work with the ACE and other teaching evaluations will share their insights about these resources.