

# **This *Semester* in the Teaching Center**

**Spring 2012**

**Including offerings for the  
Faculty Learning Certificate Program**

- ◆ **Getting to Know Your Students: Race and Class in the Classroom**
- ◆ **Introduction to Teaching Online**
- ◆ **Practitioners' Roundtables: Interdisciplinary Conversations about Teaching**
- ◆ **Authentic Diversification: Re-Conceptualizing Our Approach to Adding Diverse Content to Courses**
- ◆ **"But I Write Like I Speak": How Understanding Language Diversity Can Help Students become Better Interdisciplinary Writers**
- ◆ **"Just" Pedagogy: Race, Class and Language in the Classroom**
- ◆ **Dewey "How We Think" reading group**
- ◆ **Faculty Learning Community on the Brain and Learning**
- ◆ **Faculty Learning Community on High Impact Practices**

**Community  
College  
*of* Philadelphia**

Happy New Year!

2012 looks like it might hold some challenges for us at CCP – and at community colleges across the country -- as we weather the current economic realities and their impact on us and our students. Still, we'll be going strong in The Teaching Center and we hope you'll be joining us for dynamic conversations about teaching and learning. Particularly in these times of change and turmoil, it is critical to connect to the importance of what we do for our students and our city, and to connect with each other. The Teaching Center remains a place where that can happen.

Our Teacher-in-Residence series continue. **Getting to Know Your Students: Race and Class in the Classroom** is a series led by Amy Lewis that provides a welcome emphasis on inclusion and diversity. Fran Lukacik and Melissa St. Pierre return to offer a hybrid series called **Introduction to Online Teaching**, a wonderful option for exploring the possibilities of online learning. Both series have been very well received by our colleagues, who found them to be informative and helpful for thinking about and making changes in both virtual and face-to-face classrooms. (More information can be found on p. 3 and 7, respectively.)

Reading groups and Faculty Learning Communities are proving to be a super way for our colleagues to connect, learn and continue to refine their teaching practices. This semester two interdisciplinary Faculty Learning Communities will continue in The Teaching Center, one on high impact practices and another on learning and the brain. Last semester, The Teaching Center sponsored two interdisciplinary reading groups. One group read Maryellen Weimer's *Learner Centered Teaching* (and will be presenting on Thursday of Professional Development Week). Another group of colleagues, largely from the Center for Science and Engineering Education, have been reading James Zull's *From Brain to Mind*. This semester, we launch two new reading groups: one will focus on John Dewey's *How We Think* and another, called "'Just' Pedagogy: Race, Class and Language in the Classroom" will be reading books dealing with the each subject in the group's name. (If you are interested in joining in with either of these last two groups, or starting your own, contact me at [teachingcenter@ccp.edu](mailto:teachingcenter@ccp.edu).)

All are welcome as we foster even more interdisciplinary exchange in the **Practitioners' Roundtables: Interdisciplinary Conversations about Teaching** (see p. 14). For more on how to think about doing diversity effectively in your classes, come to the workshops on **Authentic Diversification** (p. 13). Or, if you're interested in student writing, join us for "**But I Write Like I Speak**" (p. 15) or other workshops in the works for non-English faculty interested in writing/teaching writing intensive classes. There's also a **Lunching with the Lindbacks** session in March with Marcia Epstein and more. Keep up with additions to our programming in our weekly "This Week in The Teaching Center" emails.

If interdisciplinary isn't enough and you want global, too, join us as we host the Faculty Travel and Research series of the Center for International Understanding which has some wonderful programming on India lined up this semester (p. 12).

There's a lot, but there's room for more. If you have a teaching or learning related group or workshop you would like to see, or you have a teaching circle that would like to meet in The Teaching Center, let me know.

On behalf of The Teaching Center Advisory Board and Staff, welcome to Spring 2012. We look forward to seeing you in The Teaching Center!

*Lisa Handler*

Facilitator, Teaching Center

# Getting to Know Your Students: Race and Class in the Classroom

AMY LEWIS, TEACHER-IN-RESIDENCE

CCP students. For many of us, they are the reason we decided to work here in the first place. They inspire us with their bravery and uniqueness. They challenge us with their academic and/or personal needs and ask us to rethink our teaching on a regular basis. They make us laugh with their humor and creative ways of looking at the world.

But it's not always about sunshine and happiness at CCP, for these same students, who inspire, challenge, and entertain us, can also frustrate, worry, and upset us. Sometimes, there seems to be a communication barrier between teacher and student that feels insurmountable. Other times, the penny just doesn't seem to drop; we explain what we want a million and one times, and yet somehow they don't get it. And then there are those most heartbreaking of times – the times it feels like a student simply couldn't care less.

It's an emotional rollercoaster that makes us jump out of bed some mornings and want to hide under the covers others. We want so badly to see our students excel, to see them move onto the next course, a four-year institution, or the professional world successfully, but in our darkest moments, we might doubt this can happen for a number of them.

So how do we overcome these issues? How do we make more jumping-out-of-bed mornings and develop greater confidence in our students' futures? One way is to learn more about them.

For many two-year college students – particularly those in urban settings - a number of environmental, social, and pre-collegiate educational factors can have an enormous impact on the way they interact with their professors, handle their workloads, and even understand the material we are teaching them. For some students, these obstacles will simply be too overwhelming and will, sadly, end some of their college careers woefully early, depriving the world of some brilliant young minds.

As teachers, it behooves us to understand our students as best as we possibly can, and this semester in The Teaching Center, Amy Lewis will be running a series of workshops entitled, "Getting to Know Your Students," which will go some way toward shedding light on the issues affecting many of our students. Amy has a great deal of interest in this subject area because of her own experiences as a working-class student thrust into the world of academia. Like many of our students, she struggled to make sense of why she felt so at odds throughout her time in higher education until years later, when she began to read the works of several authors included in this series. What began as some assigned reading during her MA turned into her thesis and pedagogical passion as she endeavors to make others aware of just how greatly class and race issues can affect a student's classroom experience and beyond.

Amongst the many authors Amy will draw upon, some of the highlights are as follows:

- Patrick Finn's fascinating book *Literacy With an Attitude: Educating Working-Class Children in Their Own Self-Interest*, an eye-opening look at the educational journeys of minority and working-class students
- bell hooks' *Where We Stand* and its poignant observations of the alienation felt by students afraid of being "outed" as "the other"
- Pat Belanoff's scholarly essays about the importance of critical thinking for working-class and minority students
- Eli Goldblatt's *'Round My Way*, which deals explicitly with the challenges Philadelphia's working-class and minority students experience in college and beyond. (continued...)

## Getting to Know Your Students

This series hopes to give attendees from all areas of the college some food for thought and useful strategies to consider in working with our wonderful, diverse, and often complex student body. Those who receive a Faculty Learning Certificate for this workshop will walk away with new perspectives on behavioral issues that may occur, problems with getting critical thought from their students, and ideas for how to empower their students whilst lightening their own workload. After all, we are promising a “Path to Possibilities,” so let’s make sure there are no roadblocks along the way!

### Session One: What They Don’t Know

Often, it can seem like students don’t care about college or aren’t taking it seriously, but for a first-generation college student, understanding what it means to be in college can be difficult. College is a place filled with new lingo, rules, and expectations and can overwhelm someone who has never been there before and has no college-educated family or friends to explain such terminology. Does this mean we absolve our students of all responsibility? Of course not. Does it mean we need to make sure concepts and expectations are explicitly explained? Absolutely. This session will explore ideas and standards faculty assume their students know and examine ways to clarify these in order to start students off on the right foot and empower them.

**Tuesday:** 1/31 at 12:30-1:20

**Wednesday:** 2/1 at 11:15-12:10

### Session Two: What THEY Don’t Know WE Don’t Know

For many students raised in working-class and closely-knit ethnic backgrounds, college can present enormous communication problems. It seems no matter how much they try to explain their ideas, their professors don’t seem to understand them or want “more detail.” What both student and teacher often fail to recognize is that this may very well be the first time this student has been asked to communicate with someone outside of his/her community. As a result, the student often uses implicit language that would make perfect sense to someone at home but is lost on the outside world. Getting students past this hurdle can be the difference between their ideas being heard by a larger audience or forever trapped within their immediate social circle, and getting students past this hurdle will be the focus of session two.

**Tuesday:** 2/7 at 12:30-1:20

**Wednesday:** 2/8 at 11:15-12:10

### Session Three: What You Know Is Just as Important as HOW You Know It

Getting working-class students to think critically can be difficult for a number of reasons, and yet college success is impossible without it. We ask students to formulate new ideas and draw connections based upon research and support, but what we often get in return is a series of disconnected facts, irrelevant babbling, or sometimes even plagiarism. This session will examine why critical thought can be so challenging for our students and examine ways to foster it within our classrooms.

**Tuesday:** 2/14 at 12:30-1:20

**Wednesday:** 2/15 at 11:15-12:10

## Getting to Know Your Students

### Session Four: Why Some Students Don't Seem to Want to Know

College is difficult for many students, but for working-class and minority students, it can be particularly difficult. Academia operates within white, middle-class values and language, and for those who don't fit this mold, it can feel as though the message is the ways their communities speak, act, and think are "wrong" or "ignorant." This can be a difficult challenge as an educator because we don't want to devalue our students' home communities, and yet we know the academic and professional worlds will demand certain ways of expressing and conducting oneself that are necessary to succeed. This session will discuss and explore ways to find a balance between celebrating our students' personal backgrounds whilst preparing them for the world that lies ahead of them.

**Tuesday:** 2/21 at 12:30-1:20

**Wednesday:** 2/22 at 11:15-12:10

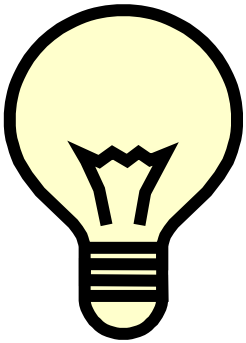
### Session Five: Getting to Know When to Back Off

Throughout this series, we have explored what concepts within college might be hazy, confusing, or challenging for our students, and we've also examined the idea of critical thought. We've talked about the teacher's role in clarifying concepts and explaining expectations clearly. This is all important, but at the end of the day, we are trying to prepare our students for the even larger challenges further education and the professional world will hold for them. We can't hold their hands for too long. This last session will look at ways to empower our students and make them take a greater responsibility for their own education. The result? Students who enjoy their classes far more and feel a greater sense of pride in their work and teachers who actually do LESS work but see greater progress. It's a win-win!

**Tuesday:** 2/28 at 12:30-1:20

**Wednesday:** 2/29 at 11:15-12:10

#### ***Teacher(s)-in-Residence and Teaching Center Facilitator 2012-2013 positions available***



Have an idea for programming you'd like to explore and bring to your colleagues in The Teaching Center? Apply to be a ***Teacher-in-Residence***.

Have a vision? A desire to learn more about teaching and learning or faculty development? Apply to be The Teaching Center's ***Facilitator***.

In April, The Teaching Center Advisory Board will be accepting applications for 2012-2013 for these positions. Be on the lookout for announcements this Spring and apply!

#### **UPCOMING TEACHING CENTER EVENTS :**

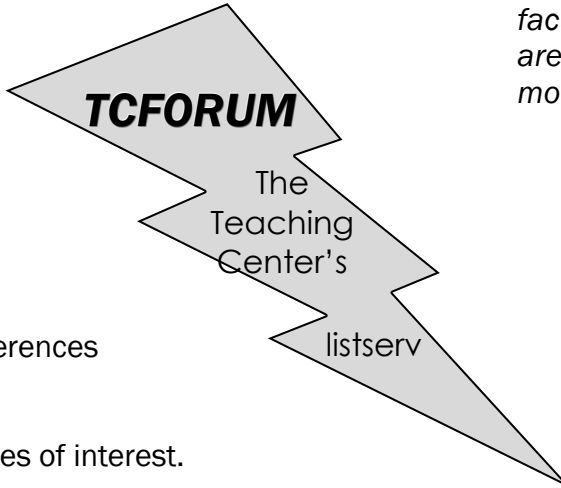
- ◆ **LUNCHING WITH LINDBACKS WITH MARCIA EPSTEIN** in March
- ◆ **MICROAGRESSIONS IN THE CLASSROOM** in April

Get teaching tips.

Get answers from colleagues about teaching questions or feedback on classroom dilemmas.

Get announcements about upcoming teaching and learning conferences or related events.

Get specially selected articles of interest.



*Who can sign on?* All full and part time faculty. All disciplines and programs are welcome. The more joiners, the more useful for all of us.

*Why join?* To have useful, targeted conversations with colleagues from across the college that help you problem solve, share your experience, continue to develop as a teacher, reflect on your teaching and your students' learning, while building a collegial community of faculty from across the College.

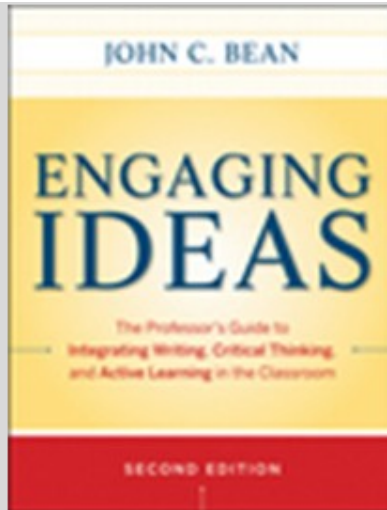
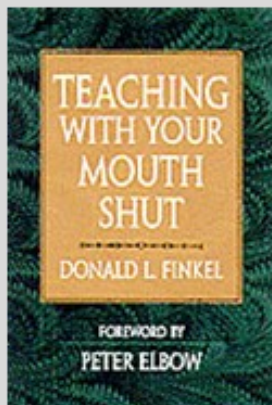
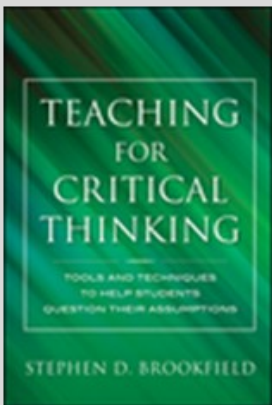
**How to join?** Send an email to [Listserv@listserv.ccp.edu](mailto:Listserv@listserv.ccp.edu)  
In the subject line, put: Subscribe  
In the body of the email put: subscribe TCFforum firstname lastname

When you get confirmation with an embedded link, click to confirm or reply with "OK" in the first line of the reply.

**The Faculty and Staff Prose Writers Group**  
will meet on the following  
Tuesdays from 3:30-5:00 pm in The Teaching Center

1/24, 2/21, 3/20, 4/17

Interested in learning more?  
Contact: Simone Zelitch at [szelitch@ccp.edu](mailto:szelitch@ccp.edu)



**More recent additions to the Teaching Center's Resource Library !**

# Introduction to Teaching Online

FRAN LUKACIK AND MELISSA ST. PIERRE, *Teachers-in-Residence*

It's a new year, a new semester, and for some, perhaps a new promise to once and for all, start building that online course you've been thinking about for some time. We know. The thought of planning an entire 15-week semester, while teaching your regular course load, can seem daunting but it doesn't have to be and we think our series, *Introduction to Teaching Online*, can help you keep that resolution.

Over the last two years that we have led this series, five times total, we have continually tweaked and adjusted the sessions, so we bring to you what we think to be the best workshop to date. This six-week hybrid (where you complete some work online and some face-to-face) is designed to give you a buffet of options, so that you have a toolkit of ideas from which to choose when designing your course.

We begin the series with a conversation about the overall strengths and challenges in distance education before moving into topics, such as course design, learning activities and assessment measures. Often faculty express concern about feelings of isolation, for both faculty and students; thus, the series will present ways to build an interactive classroom community with students who are separated by space and time. We will also share with you *Quality Matters*, a peer-reviewed rubric used to ensure that distance education courses meet pedagogical standards. We'll discuss changes you'll need to make to your syllabus, along with copyright and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) laws. And all the while you will be enrolled as a student in *WebStudy*, the College's course management system, showing you the nature and capabilities of this software as you submit homework assignments, participate in discussion forums, work in small groups, and take tests and quizzes.

This series is perfect for the instructor who still isn't sure if distance education is a good fit. It also benefits those more committed to converting their courses and looking to learn and share ideas about online education in a structured, interdisciplinary

setting. To date, we've had almost 40 faculty take a similar version of this series, from a wide variety of disciplines, including English, culinary arts, psychology, counseling, biology, sociology, philosophy, diagnostic medical imaging, and dental hygiene. We hope that you will join us and add your name to this growing list.

## Quotes from evaluations of previous sections:

"The instructors were excellent – enthusiastic, highly knowledgeable, and well-prepared. They provided a terrific array of materials that will be very helpful as we move forward with course development."

"There were several things that were helpful — the instructors, their knowledge and their willingness to share experiences, and materials with us that they currently use. The resources that the instructors provided were very informative and helpful."

"Everything was helpful. It is good to have the print and online reference materials. I think the timing, number of participants, and mix of online and in-person sessions was just right."

[The most helpful aspect of the series was the "instructors (!) and the variety of exercises and modes we employed. It was very helpful to experience things as a student would, rather than simply talking or reading about them."

"I am happy to have this kick start. Fran and Melissa have demonstrated excellent modeling for how to make this work as instructors."

## Introduction to Teaching Online

### Series Overview

As a hybrid course, we will meet face-to-face three times during the semester, with the remaining three sessions happening entirely online. The weeks we meet face-to-face (in The Teaching Center) there will be two “sections”: one on Mondays and one on Tuesdays, both from 11:15 am to 12:10 pm. Students from both sections will participate in the same online course on *WebStudy*. Participants should attend and participate in all six sessions to get the most from the series, since later sessions are built upon earlier ones. Because of space limitations, seating is limited to 12 per section so RSVP early to save your seat. Topics by date are as follows:

#### Week 1: What’s it like to teach online?

**Face to Face Meeting:** Monday 2/6 or Tuesday 2/7

In this session, we will introduce you to distance education, including common misconceptions and concerns held by both faculty and students as well as the strengths and potential challenges. After the session, you will log on to *WebStudy* to start your experience as a student in an online course.

#### Week 2: How do I create an online classroom community?

**Online via *WebStudy***

In our first fully online session, we will provide ideas on how to promote interaction and build community between students who are separated by space and time. Topics will include the importance of introductory and first week activities, netiquette guidelines, and modes of communication.

#### Week 3: How does teaching and learning happen online?

**Online via *WebStudy***

This session will introduce you to ways to create fun, engaging learning activities that are conducive to the online environment, such as group work, guest speakers, discussion forums, and student presentations. Other topics will include ways to communicate a faculty presence, classroom management techniques, and how to handle miscommunications due to the lack of non-verbal cues or inappropriate interactions in an online environment.

#### Week 4: How do I assess student learning online?

**Face-to-Face Meeting:** Monday 2/27 or Tuesday 2/28

In this session, you will be introduced to various assessment measures available in *WebStudy* in addition to strategies that discourage cheating.

#### Week 5: What factors are present in a quality online course?

**Online via *WebStudy***

We all know quality matters but what is *Quality Matters*? This faculty-centered, peer reviewed process is intended to confirm the quality of an online course and facilitate student learning. We will review some of Quality Matters’ course guidelines as well as address other areas including creating courses that are ADA compliant and that honor copyright laws.

\* Hybrids combine face-to-face and online interactions.

## Introduction to Teaching Online

### Week 6: What have I learned and what else do I need to know?

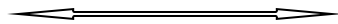
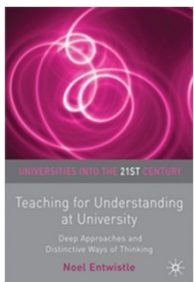
Face-to-Face: Monday 3/19 or Tuesday 3/20

In our closing session, we will show you our courses and give you some advice from lessons we've learned. Our director of distance education, Peter Margolis, will introduce you to the "next steps" for launching a course.

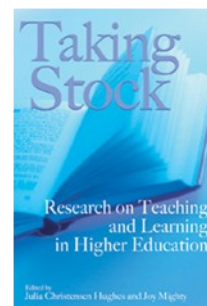
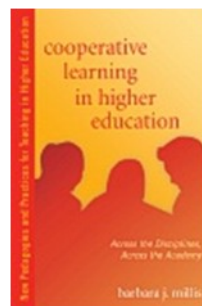
### Fun Facts in Distance Education

([http://sloanconsortium.org/publications/survey/going\\_distance\\_2011](http://sloanconsortium.org/publications/survey/going_distance_2011))

- ◆ Over 6.1 million students were taking at least one online course during the fall 2010 term, an increase of 560,000 students over the previous year.
- ◆ The 10% growth rate for online enrollments far exceeds the 2% growth in the overall higher education student population.
- ◆ Thirty-one percent of higher education students now take at least one course online.
- ◆ Reported year-to-year enrollment changes for fully online programs by discipline show most are growing.
- ◆ 65% of higher education institutions now say that online learning is a critical part of their long-term strategy.



*More  
resources available in  
the Teaching Center  
Resource Library*

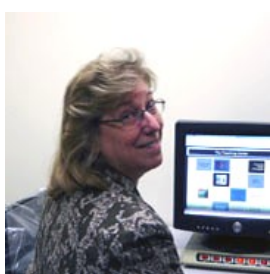


Hey! Who are you nominating for the ALANA COLLOS TEACHING AWARD this year?

I'm still deciding. So many worthy colleagues! But I'll submit a nomination for sure!

Deadline: April, 2nd

## TEACHERS-IN-RESIDENCE 2011-2012



**Fran Lukacik** joined CCP as a full time faculty member in 2007; she is an Assistant Professor in Allied Health. Fran has her Master's in Applied Technology with an emphasis in distance education and has been teaching online since 2004. She has taken classes online and completed continuing education training via online. She has attended Quality Matters training sessions and is a Certified Quality Matters Peer Reviewer. She has also spoken at many conferences regarding online learning and technology. Fran has been involved with The Teaching Center since Fall 2007. She held the staff position as the Web Master / Technology from Fall 2007 until Spring 2010 and is now in her second year as a Teacher-in-Residence.

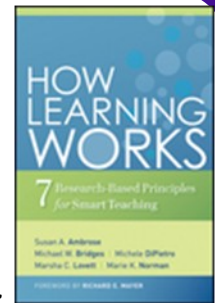
After years of teaching a variety of age groups on two different continents, **Amy Lewis** discovered her passion lies in teaching Developmental Writing. For this reason, she is delighted she can finally dedicate herself to doing this full-time at CCP, her favorite college with her favorite students. Amy joined the English Department as an adjunct four years ago and has been working with The Teaching Center since 2010, first as a volunteer and now as a T-i-R. Through conferences, Professional Development seminars, and some future publications, Amy hopes to facilitate discussion about the issues and challenges facing developmental students and those who teach them. She has a BFA in Drama from NYU, a PGCE in English from Cambridge University, and an MA in Writing Studies from St. Joseph's University.



Melissa St. Pierre has been with the College since 2006, starting as a counselor in the former Act Now program. She is beginning her fourth year of teaching as an assistant professor of psychology. To date, she has converted 3 courses for online delivery, including CCP's Counseling 101 course, a 3-credit college success course for a community college in Missouri, and most recently, PSYC 101. Melissa has taken college credited coursework in designing courses for online delivery and has attended several professional development sessions surrounding online learning. She has been involved in The Teaching Center almost since her start at the College, beginning as a volunteer before obtaining paid positions. This is her second year as a Teacher-in-Residence for the Center. Melissa holds an M.S. in Clinical/Counseling Psychology and a B.S. in Rehabilitation Psychology, both from the University of Central Missouri.

UPDATE FROM  
THE  
FACULTY  
LEARNING  
COMMUNITY  
ON LEARNING AND THE  
BRAIN  
FACILITATORS:  
FRANCIE WOODFORD  
AND TOM OTT

Teaching and learning have long been guided by many things — intuition, common sense, folklore, experience, fads and more — but only recently have they begun to be guided by brain research. As technologies advance, so does research on the brain, allowing us to better understand the learning process empirically.



This interdisciplinary Faculty Learning Community has finished reading *How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching* and is now moving on to applying their learning to their classrooms.

Each member of the FLC is making a plan, as prescribed by the book for both students and faculty. Plans, classroom observations and other ideas from the book will all enhance both the learning and teaching of those involved.

If you're interested in reading *How Learning Works* on your own it's available in The Teaching Center's Resource Library.

Last semester, we heard from various master faculty and administrators about the opportunities for, as well as the pluses and minuses of, service learning, undergraduate research, and other related forms of experiential learning under the umbrella of High Impact Practices. We also read and discussed John Dewey's *Experience and Education*. This semester we will continue to investigate ways we can help our students get the most out of their experiences (in and out of the classroom), increasing the likelihood that all of them will have high impact learning experiences. Most-likely we will continue meeting periodically on Wednesdays from 3:00-4:30 pm.

For more information contact Maddy Rolston at [mmarcotte@ccp.edu](mailto:mmarcotte@ccp.edu).

UPDATE FROM  
THE  
HIGH IMPACT  
PRACTICES  
FACULTY  
LEARNING  
COMMUNITY

FACILITATORS: MADDY  
ROLSTON AND SANDY  
HARRILL

DEWEY "HOW  
WE THINK"  
READING  
GROUP

FACILITATOR: CINDY  
GIDDLE

Interested in reading this classic with an interdisciplinary group of faculty? Sign on! Four meetings. Lively and insightful discussions. All to enrich your teaching and learning.

Tuesday, January 10th  
Wednesday, January 25th  
Wednesday, February 8  
Wednesday, February 22

3:30-4:30 pm in The Teaching Center

Contact Lisa Handler at [teachingcenter@ccp.edu](mailto:teachingcenter@ccp.edu) for more information.



**“JUST”  
PEDAGOGY:  
RACE, CLASS  
AND  
LANGUAGE IN  
THE  
CLASSROOM**

FACILITATOR: ALEXINE  
FLECK

Interested in reading books like Gilyard’s *Voices of the Self: A Study of Language Competence?* Finn’s *Literacy with an Attitude: Educating Working-Class Children in their Own Self-Interest?* Or Delpit’s *Other People’s Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom?*

We are. And we’d like to do it together. Come join us to explore these issues, the impact they have on our classrooms and to develop strategies for working effectively with them. Dates: 2/16, 3/15, 4/5 at 1-1:50 pm..

Contact Alexine Fleck at [afleck@ccp.edu](mailto:afleck@ccp.edu).

## Faculty Research and Travel Series

### India, in Depth Series: Arts, Humanities, History, Literature and Language of the Indian Subcontinent

<p><i>A Personal reflection on the present day India through the lens of its architectural and cultural history — Lakshmi Gudipati</i></p> <p>I was able to recapture my academic study of India’s cultural and religious past from a fresh perspective during my travels in India over the past decade. As an expatriate Indian, passing through the country’s many temples, urban scenes and tourist centers, I couldn’t but help notice the self-conscious presentation of itself to an outsider on the one hand and the dogged ownership of that which makes it uniquely Indian on the other. My session will include my reflections I derived through the observations and conversations I had with people interspersed with a Power Point presentation of several iconic images.</p>	<p>Wednesday 2/15 2:00—3:30</p>
<p><i>The Language Situation in India — Suzanne Kalbach and Paul Bolleddu</i></p> <p>India has 16 major languages, and many sublanguages and related dialects. This situation leads to linguistic complexities about which language/s to use in a multitude of scenarios, from education to government proceedings to social conversations. These complexities are compounded by the increasing influence of the Internet and other technologies in India, which in turn have increased international communication in outside languages. We will also explore applications of the new "tri-language formula" in Indian education.</p>	<p>Wednesday 3/14 2:00—3:30</p>
<p><i>Look for information about these other upcoming sessions:</i></p> <p><i>Current Sociocultural Issues in India — Girija Nagaswami — 3/21</i>  <i>Dance Troupe Performance/Post Performance Discussion — Suzanne Lang — during International Festival week, 4/3-4/5 (exact date TBA)</i>  <i>Teaching Indian Literature — Vijay Chauhan — 4/18</i></p>	

Sponsored by the Center for International Understanding at Community College of Philadelphia. Contact Lyn Buchheit at [lbuchheit@ccp.edu](mailto:lbuchheit@ccp.edu) or Lakshmi Gudipati at [lgudipati@ccp.edu](mailto:lgudipati@ccp.edu).

# Authentic Diversification: Re-Conceptualizing Our Approach to Adding Diverse Content to Courses

DEBONAIR OATES-PRIMUS

As dedicated educators we all recognize the need for diversity within our courses; however, many of us might not be doing it as effectively as we could be. As a result, some of our students fail to encounter the material as we anticipated. As English instructors we tend to cling to the standard texts, or maybe some of us are supplementing with dynamic, nontraditional authors, but diversifying readings is not enough. Taking a holistic approach to diversification can help students gain an appreciation for multicultural education and can facilitate constructive discussions about controversial issues. Diversifying a course means going beyond assigning texts from multicultural authors; it means creating a course where students can identify with the course material. It means building a community within your classroom where students are encouraged to explore outside their comfort zone. By designing courses that affirm and validate students' culturally enriched backgrounds, it shows them what diversity means for them as students and how it will affect their classroom experience.

Authentically diversifying curriculum would mean for us as educators to amalgamate different cultural experiences into all of our developmental and composition courses, thereby mainstreaming them and reinforcing the concept that multiculturalism is not a compartmentalizing of cultural identities, but an ethnic fusion that reflects our diverse student population. This comprehensive approach could prove to be immensely effective as instructors re-conceptualize their approach to adding diverse content to courses.

This is a two part workshop. The first session will focus on diversifying reading material, the second will focus on activities and writing assignments. We will cover how to:

- ◆ Add diverse content from nontraditional authors to courses effectively
- ◆ Tailor class discussion questions around social and political issues
- ◆ Thoughtfully select reading activities and materials that cover various issues of race, class, and identity formation
- ◆ Create in-class activities and formal writing assignments that enhance students' abilities to write personal narrative and consider identity formation

Session 1: Thursday, February 9th, 12:30-1:30

Session 2: Thursday, February 16th, 12:30-1:30

Debonair Oates-Primus teaches in the English Department.

# Practitioners' Roundtables: Interdisciplinary Conversations about Teaching

AMY ANU-BIRGE , LISA HANDLER, MADDY ROLSTON AND CONNIE WATSON

Did you write “examine my own assumptions about teaching and learning” on your list of New Year Resolutions? If so, you can check it off by coming to The Teaching Center for Practitioners’ Roundtables – a series of interdisciplinary roundtable discussions -- each on a different topic facilitated by a different colleague.

Bring a colleague from another discipline and get a complimentary tea or coffee.

<p><b>Levels of Difficulty</b>—If ‘too hard’ impedes learning and ‘too easy’ doesn’t spur it, how do you design your class to maximize the learning of all? Where do your notions of standards come from? Are your colleagues ‘tougher’ than you are? How hard are your readings? Your tests? Your problems and questions? Are you prone to what Craig Nelson has called “dysfunctional illusions of rigor” or could you increase your level of expectation?</p>	<p>Monday 2/6 2:30—3:20</p>
<p><b>Small Groups</b> —Small groups are one of the sure ways to get students engaged in their learning. Yet, small group work doesn’t always work so well. How do you avoid the pitfalls? How do you use small groups in your classes? What has worked well? Not so well?</p>	<p>Monday 2/13 2:30—3:20</p>
<p><b>Rubrics</b>—Despite many of our efforts, students often experience our evaluation of their work as arbitrary and capricious. And, from a faculty perspective, grading is often one of our most onerous tasks. Rubrics promise to help with both issues. Are you happy with yours or are you still shopping around? Is your rubric getting in your way or making you a better teacher?</p>	<p>Monday 2/20 2:30—3:20</p>
<p><b>Grading Writing In Non-English Courses</b>—When is a missing comma something to fuss over? What kinds of comments help students improve their writing the most? Do you ever wonder whether you’re a hard or easy grader? Wonder what grade your colleagues would give that paper? How do you deal with plagiarism? Come for an informal grade norming session to get a sense of all this. Non-English and English faculty welcome!</p>	<p>Monday 2/27 2:30—3:20</p>
<p><b>Ways to Assess Our Effectiveness</b>—How do you know you are doing a good job? How do you challenge your own assumptions about your job? What kind of feedback do you solicit from students? Does partaking in the scholarship of teaching and learning deepen our sense of efficiency?</p>	<p>Monday 3/12 2:30—3:20</p>

Amy Anu-Birge (English), Lisa Handler (Sociology), Maddy Rolston (English/Developmental) and Connie Watson (Psychology). Want more information? Contact Lisa Handler at [teachingcenter@ccp.edu](mailto:teachingcenter@ccp.edu).

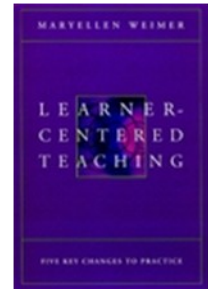
UPDATE FROM  
WEIMER  
"LEARNER  
CENTERED  
TEACHING"  
READING  
GROUP

FACILITATOR: RAVYN  
WILSON-BERNARD AND  
ANNETTE ONEMA

Members of this Teaching Center sponsored reading group, which met in Fall 2011, will be presenting on the outcomes of their experience reading Maryellen Weimer's *Learner-Centered Teaching* together during Professional Development.

Mary Hoeffel, Ravyn Wilson-Bernard, Elisa McCool, Fran Lukacik and Judy Susholtz as they explore what came out of questioning their own assumptions about what a successful classroom looks like, what makes learning happen, and what it means to teach well. Join them for this interdisciplinary and interactive discussion about learner-centered teaching, what it means and what it looks like.

Thursday, January 12th, 9:00-10:15 in The Teaching Center



## **“But I Write Like I Speak”: How Understanding Language Diversity Can Help Students become Better Interdisciplinary Writers**

JASON ESTERS

How many of us have heard this from students? Whether the statement works as a positive "a-ha" moment for the student as they struggle to become better writers, or as a defense mechanism that is triggered by the correction of their well-meaning instructors, the phrase signals an important realization for both students and instructors. This interdisciplinary workshop will present some scenarios where "Writing Like I Speak" is the central issue and will explore how a better understanding of Language Diversity can be helpful in responding to those issues. Lots of strategies, handouts, and resources will be provided!

Wednesday, March 14th, 12:20-1:15 pm

Jason Esters teaches in the English Department.

### TEACHING CENTER STAFF

Facilitator: Lisa Handler (Social Science)  
Teacher-in-Residence: Amy Lewis (English)  
Teacher-in-Residence: Fran Lukacik (Allied Health)  
Teacher-in-Residence: Melissa St. Pierre (Psychology)

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## Teaching Center

Mint Building M1-20

**Hours:** 10ish-5ish (M-R)

**Web:** <http://faculty.ccp.edu/dept/teachingcenter/>

**Email:** [teachingcenter@ccp.edu](mailto:teachingcenter@ccp.edu)

**Phone:** 215-751-8846

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