



Center for Teaching and Learning Newsletter

Vol. 20, No 8

April/May 2015

Dates to Note!!

Monday, May 18
[Technology Exploration](#)

Tuesday, May 19
[Faculty Writing Retreat](#)

Summer Technology Lunches
Thursday, June 4
Thursday, June 11
Thursday, June 18
Thursday, June 25
Thursday, July 2

For more information and to register visit:
<http://campusguides.stjohns.edu/ctlevents>

Remember: The best places to look for faculty-related information are the [CTL Webpage](#) and the [CTL Forum](#).

Follow Us on Twitter
The CTL is pleased to announce that it is now on Twitter [@sjuctl](#). Follow us for the latest news in teaching and learning as well as announcements of upcoming events.



CTL April/May Newsletter

The *CTL Newsletter* is distributed electronically every month during the academic year.

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Support for Competitive Research

Christopher Egan (Assistant Director, Office of Grants and Sponsored Research, eganc@stjohns.edu)

Dr. Rachel Zufferey of the St. John's College Department of Biological Sciences was awarded a \$495,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health's Support of Competitive Research (SCORE) Program, in response to her proposed research *Fatty Alcohol Synthesis and Virulence in Leishmania*.

Leishmania is a parasite that causes important human diseases called leishmaniasis in the tropics and subtropics worldwide and, thus, represents a major public health problem in the developing countries. Worldwide, three hundred million individuals are at risk, and more than two million new cases are reported every year. Treatment of leishmaniasis is unsatisfactory because most current drugs used are highly toxic and/or only modestly effective. Further, there is no effective vaccine against this disease so far, which emphasizes the critical need to develop novel and more effective anti-parasitic therapies. The goal of the research proposal is to better understand how the factor lipophosphoglycan is made as this factor is critical for the parasite to establish an infection and cause disease. Results from this research will provide a basis for the development of better antiparasitic drugs and of a much needed safe vaccine against leishmaniasis.

Dr. Ales Vancura, Chair of the St. John's College Department of Biological Sciences stated "We are very happy for Rachel, and want to congratulate her on this outstanding academic achievement. This SCORE grant will enhance the research environment at St. John's University and will provide undergraduate and graduate students with many opportunities to learn the fundamentals of biomedical research. This is a very exciting time for the Biology department, since the majority of our faculty members currently have extramural research funding, and at the same time, our student enrollment has been increasing. Our students want to be involved in our research, and increasing scholarship and external funding will increase student engagement and satisfaction, and will contribute to the academic reputation of SJU."

Dr. Simon Moller, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Research stated "I would like to congratulate Dr. Zufferey on her recent NIH SCORE grant award, which is a major achievement not only for Dr. Zufferey but also for the Department of Biological Sciences and St. John's University. The current NIH funding climate is extremely competitive and this accomplishment by Dr. Zufferey underlines her commitment to research and the integration of research into the learning experience of our students."

The objective of the SCORE program is to foster the development of faculty at minority serving institutions serving individuals from groups underrepresented in biomedical and behavioral research in order to increase their research competitiveness and promote their transition to non-SCORE external sources of funding. Additionally, SCORE seeks to enhance the institutional research capabilities to facilitate further faculty research. These objectives are expected to translate into an increase in the numbers of individuals from groups underrepresented in biomedical and behavioral research professionally engaged in these areas of research.

Research based learning forms an integral part of the education value chain. The University community commends and congratulates Dr. Zufferey on this outstanding accomplishment, and recognizes her commitment to the academic excellence and the pursuit of wisdom which flows from free inquiry.



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Maureen Weicher

CAMPUS GUIDES: CTL TEACHING AND LEARNING FORUM

The site's main aim is to highlight the great teaching strategies developed by St. John's faculty.

Please visit: <http://stjohns.edu/campusguides.com/ctlforum>.

Follow Us on
Twitter

**Technology Exploration: May 18, 2015**

As the summer gets underway, join us for a look at technologies and approaches that you might want to try out during your vacation in preparation for the Fall semester. All sessions will be held in Bent 277 A & B.

8:30 - 9:00 a.m.**Breakfast****9:00 -10:30 am****The New CampusGuides***Team from Springshare*

Springshare, developers of LibGuides (CampusGuides), E-Reserves and related suite of tools provided by the University Libraries. The Libraries are upgrading CampusGuides in May. This is your opportunity to learn firsthand about creative uses of the new CampusGuides beyond those you already love: creating course websites, share content; multilingual and mobile friendly.

10:45 am - 12:15 pm Game-Based Learning*Sandra Abrams, School of Education*

Games are being used more frequently and successfully in higher education. This session will deal with the types of games that can be used to deepen learning and increase student engagement.

12:15 -1:00 pm**Lunch and Emerging Technology Demo****1:00 - 2:30 pm****Introduction to WebEx***eStudio staff and a representative from WebEx*

WebEx is software that is hosted by Information Technology and can be used for online meetings as well as for online classes. This presentation will provide the basics on this tool's capabilities.

REGISTER NOW!**Summer Technology Luncheons**

This summer there will be a series of workshops where faculty will explore several topics in teaching with technology. Here is your opportunity to learn about tools that could engage your students and create an exciting active learning environment in your classroom. All sessions will be held in **Bent Hall 277A** from **12:30 to 2:30 p.m.** and lunch will be served.

Mark you calendar!!

Thursdays, June 4, 11, 18, 25 and July 2

More information will be posted shortly on our [website](#).

SJU Davis Library Mobile App

The St. John's Davis Library has launched a free mobile app that lets you:

- Search the catalog of the Manhattan Campus Library, place holds & renew items
- Manage your Library Account
- Search Library Databases
- Search The Davis Library Digital Archives
- Check for course offered in the School of Risk Management
- Stay up-to-date on Library news
- Check SJU calendar of events
- Ask us a question
- Connect with social media

Faculty News

Dr. Irene J. Dabrowski (Sociology and Anthropology, dabrowsi@stjohns.edu) co-presented a paper, "Gaudium et Spes and the Transhumanist Movement," at the Catholic Studies conference, The Church in the Modern World: Teaching and Understanding *Gaudium et Spes* after 50 Years, at the University of St. Thomas in Saint Paul, MN (March 2015).

Dr. Maura C. Flannery (Computer Science, Mathematics and Science, flannerm@stjohns.edu) published a review of E. Charles Nelson's *John Scouler: Scottish Naturalist* in *Archives of Natural History* (Spring 2015).

Dr. Aleksandr V. Gevorkyan (Economics and Finance, gevorkya@stjohns.edu) published two chapters: "Asset-based Reserve Requirements" and "Central Bank Bills" in *The Encyclopedia Of Central Banking* (Edward Elgar, http://www.e-elgar.co.uk/bookentry_main.lasso?currency=US&id=15438).

Mr. Anthony C. Marziliano, Ms. Gina M. LaPan-Dennis, Dr. S. William Zito, Dr. Marc E. Gillespie (College of Pharmacy – Assessment, marzilia@stjohns.edu, lapang@stjohns.edu, zitos@stjohns.edu, gillespm@stjohns.edu) published "Embracing Students as Equal Stakeholders in a Culture of Assessment" in *Assessment Update* (January 2015).

Professor Mary Noe (Criminal Justice & Legal Studies, noem@stjohns.edu) presented a paper, "Cyberbullying," at the MBAA International Conference in Chicago, IL (March 2015).

Dr. Richard Stalter (Biological Sciences, stalter@stjohns.edu) presented a paper, "A Prelimi-

nary Study of the Vascular Flora of Strawberry Swamp, Georgetown Country, South Carolina," at the South Carolina Academy of Science at Furman University, Greenville, SC (April 2015).

Professor Syed Uddin-Ahmed (Discover New York, uddinahs@stjohns.edu) published "Democracy in Crisis: The Telecommunications Act of 1996" in the *International Research Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies* (March 2015).

Dr. Ann C. Wintergerst (Languages and Literatures, winterga@stjohns.edu) published an article, "Getting My ESL Class Started," in *Idiom* (Fall 2014); was elected to the TESOL 2015-2016 Nominating Committee which met at the International Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Annual Convention, Toronto, Canada (March 2015).

Dr. Yun Zhu (Economics and Finance, zhuy@stjohns.edu) co-authored two papers: "Political Uncertainty and Bank Loan Contracting" in the *Journal of Empirical Finance* and "Corporate Social Responsibility and Financial Performance: An Analysis of Bank Community Responsibility" in *International Journal of Banking, Accounting and Finance*.

Faculty News:

If you would like to send an entry to "Faculty News," the deadline for the September issue is **August 17**. We prefer that you email the information to CTL@stjohns.edu. Please have your entries follow the style presented in "Faculty News."

CTL Fellows on Research in Teaching and Technology

On April 23, the 2013-2015 CTL Fellows presented on their projects which deal with integrating technology into their teaching. Over the two years of their fellowship, they explored active learning strategies and technologies that you might also find useful in your teaching. Short descriptions of their projects follow along with links to their PowerPoint Presentations:

[Building the eBook Collection at St. John's University Libraries](#)

Maureen Weicher (University Libraries, weicherm@stjohns.edu)

Nearly twenty years have passed since most academic libraries began to acquire online journals in earnest, and though the transition from print to digital has been rocky at times, for most scholars this has

become an accepted and even welcome development. It has taken a good deal longer for eBooks to gain traction in academic libraries. Only during the past few years, has St. John's – like many other libraries – shifted its preference to acquiring new books in electronic format when possible and appropriate. Some of the reasons are similar to those behind the earlier transition to eJournals – including support for distance learners, enhanced discoverability and ubiquitous access, and the need to repurpose library space for learning commons, collaboration, and other activities.

Some of the challenges are similar as well. They include apprehensiveness about whether eBooks are the same as "real books" in terms of content or permanence, and whether screen reading is suitable for deep learning. There are new interfaces to learn, and some are clunkier than we might like. And due to the digital rights management software (this allows eBooks to be downloaded while protecting the publisher) the user experience may not be as seamless as eBooks marketed direct to the consumer, such as those on B&N or Amazon.

At St. John's University Libraries, we have found that most students use eBooks on their laptops – not off-line or on eReaders. eBook usage has increased over tenfold in the past three years. During this time, the Library subscribed to the EBSCO academic eBook collection, which contains nearly 140,000 titles. The Library is also an early adopter of eBooks on JSTOR. In addition, the Library has eBooks on Oxford, ACLS, ScienceDirect, Gale, and other platforms.

During the transition to eBooks, the Library initiated new ways of building the collection. With Demand Driven Acquisition (DDA) on the EBSCO platform, students and faculty choose from a pre-selected pool of eBooks – but the Library only purchases those that are actually used. Though transparent to the reader, DDA enables the Library to maximize the value of its spending, minimize "dusty shelf" books, and provide better coverage for emerging or cross-disciplinary subject areas.

[Storytelling and Student Engagement in the Digital Age in Science Education](#)

Roberta Hayes (St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, hayesr@stjohns.edu)

The core curriculum at St John's University aims to instill an appreciation and development of lifelong learning, scientific literacy and civic engagement in all students, including non-science majors. *SCI 1000C: Scientific Inquiry* is one of the key core curriculum courses designed to achieve these goals, specifically focusing on critical thinking, information literacy, and quantitative reasoning in the context of scientific literacy and social issues. These are skills that transcend a single course and provide added value to a liberal arts education.

Moreover, SCI 1000c presents the fundamentals of the scientific method and the basics of research as a mechanism to determine knowledge about nature, as well as an introduction to science in society, and scientific ethics. However, many non-science majors have pre-conceived notions about "science," which some fear and some dislike, based on past experiences.

During my CTL Fellowship I investigated digital storytelling platforms, such as [Storybird](#) and Frames, ultimately returning to electronic portfolios and [Digication](#) as a media-intensive, creative mechanism to engage students in every day "science in the news" as well as historical scientific discoveries in infectious disease, or key debatable issues in Environmental Sustainability. Students were trained in class on software usage and assignments were submitted and archived via the Digication e-portfolio platform, along with personal reflections. The most engaged students were those that could "make it personal" and who could see how scientific issues might impact their personal life.

It was hoped that the use of novel and creative technology would increase students' level of engagement and interest, as well as result in greater participation and self-motivation; and there were various degrees of success. Some students flourished, but others struggled with the new technology. There were time constraints and limitations on the ability to teach and practice the technology in class. Additional in-class and extracurricular workshops could have been beneficial. Creating a complete story requires organization

time management, information literacy and the ability to thread an integrative theme throughout the created artifact, which is often not an easy task. Research on students learning preferences tells us that we must include experiential learning in the classroom and engage students as participants responsible for their own learning for it to be most effective. Lecturing alone often puts the audience to sleep. Storytelling can evoke emotions and move people to action.

[Incorporating Social Media into Graduate-Level Education Courses](#)

Randall F. Clemens (School of Education, clemensr@stjohns.edu)

In education, students have increasingly incorporated social media into their daily lives. Educational leaders, in contrast, have created policies that limit access to and use of the technology in classrooms and schools. Apprehension stems from a lack of understanding about how to harness the benefits and prevent the risks of social media. Within the last few years, however, principals and teachers have provided examples of successful social media uses. As a result, a critical need exists in graduate-level education programs to expose students to, and have them practice, various forms of social media.

The purpose of the project was to familiarize graduate students with the affordances and constraints of social media—[Twitter](#), in particular—in order to engage a variety of audiences. I kept notes on my experiences throughout my two years as a Center for Teaching and Learning Technology Fellow. During that time, I integrated social media into two graduate-level courses—a principal preparation course and a qualitative research course. Assignments encouraged students to examine and use Twitter. There were opportunities, threats, successes, and failures. I developed strategies for fellow educators to incorporate social media into course content and activities. However, I found that implementation is an on-going process, reevaluated and revised at every step.

[Using Cloud-Based Concept Mapping Tools to Facilitate Teaching and Learning](#)

Xiaojun (June) Chen (School of Education, chenx@stjohns.edu)

In my CTL Fellowship project, I explored the integration of cloud-based concept mapping tools into education technology coursework, allowing teacher candidates to develop cross-curricula thematic thinking. Used as visual inquiry tools, cloud-based concept mapping tools can help students explore more connected relationships among different disciplinary concepts. When teacher candidates gain the skills to use concept mapping and cloud-based collaborative tools in classroom pedagogy, they help their students achieve deeper understanding of the intertwined concepts across subject areas. The presentation demonstrated a Concept Mapping Project that was developed for collaborative teaching and technology integration coursework. Tools, strategies and lessons learned were shared.

[Creating Collaborative Teaching Environments In and Outside the Classroom: A Design Thinking Approach](#)

Joan Ball (The Peter J. Tobin College of Business, ballj@stjohns.edu)

The culmination of a two-year exploration of the use of technology to facilitate collaboration, this research suggests that employing design thinking processes can be a useful way to help students to identify and use mobile and online tools for creative problem solving. Using the National Student Advertising Competition course as an experiential learning context, challenges were identified for students who do creative work without a dedicated space to store and maintain the results of their brainstorming and ideation sessions. Online tools were introduced to students in an attempt to address some of these challenges, however it became clear over the course of this study that co-creating outcome-based solutions/processes with students rather than dictating them results in more consistent and sustained use of tech solutions in and outside of the classroom. The substantial learning curve for new tools—even simple ones—was a consistent and noteworthy observation that warrants further research.



CAREER CORNER

Decreased Enrollment and Increased Job Prospects Making Law Schools a Hot Commodity Once Again

William L. Murphy, Esq. (Career Advisor, St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, murphyw@stjohns.edu)

Law school is now a "buyers' market." Something, perhaps the beating law schools have been taking in the court of public opinion of late, is scaring folks off. Applications for the Fall 2014 entering class were down 37% since 2010, and - according to figures just released by the [American Bar Association](#) - the incoming class in 2014 stood at less than 38,000, the smallest in over 40 years. What about the 2015 applications? While it's too early to tell, LSAC [reports](#) that there are 88,926 Fall 2015 applications submitted by 13,816 applicants as of 12/12/14, a drop of 9.1% from 2014.

Additionally, while the employment rate dropped, grads still found more jobs overall than in 2012. And as the *Wall Street Journal* noted, [big law firms](#)—the kind that offer those fat, six-figure salaries that law schools like to advertise—continued to pick up their recruiting. Employers might not have been able to absorb the crush of lawyers who left campus, but hiring seems to have at least stabilized.

"Legal employment is picking up," according to Robert Harrison, Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Financial Services at St. John's University School of Law. "Not at the same levels as before because law practice has changed but there has been a steady, steady, steady rise in legal employment. At the same time, law school enrollment has dropped. The lines are intersecting now and the market is reaching equilibrium between grads and jobs."

Assuming a legal job market that remains stagnant for the next two years, current admission data from the American Bar Association dictates that we can expect that about 91% of the class of 2016 will find long-term, full-time work, compared with about 72% last year. About 73% would be in full-time, long-term legal jobs, compared with 58% last year. Essentially, employment rates would look [similar](#) to those in [2007](#), when the mid-2000s legal hiring wave crested. That year, about 92% of graduates were employed, and 76.9% obtained legal jobs.

Generally, you see an increase in applications during economic slumps as students wait out the bad job market. According to Harrison, the initial spike in applications peaked in 2010 as dwindling job prospects dramatically turned the tide. "The effects of the recession were felt dramatically in legal hiring. Many attorneys were fired and not replaced by younger lawyers. 2011 and 2012 were the worst years" said Harrison.

Fewer people are applying to law school worrying there will be no job waiting for them on the other side. And, indeed, some recent graduates are having a terrible time of it. The National Association for Law Placement recently released its [first look](#) at how the J.D. class of 2013 fared on the job market and overall, it was not pretty. For the sixth year running, the employment rate fell, as schools produced a record number of graduates for an industry without the room for them.

A law school faced with fewer applicants must either lower its admission standards or shrink its class size. Regardless, schools are now competing feverishly for good students. An applicant who, a few years ago, would have been wait-listed at a top twenty school, may now find herself with a scholarship. "More than half of the entering class at St. John's Law receives a scholarship," Harrison noted.

He also shared many of the initiatives our own law school has enacted to actively recruit top students, internally and externally, including the "3+3" and "Red Storm Scholars" programs. "3+3" allows internal, undergraduate seniors who have completed all requirements of a major by the end of junior year

to enroll as a first year law student during their senior year by utilizing free electives. This enables a student to complete both a Baccalaureate and Juris Doctorate degree within only six years. To qualify, all applicants must meet all other law school admission requirements.

The “Red Storm Scholars” program is the product of an American Bar Association rule change allowing 10% of a law school’s entering class to bypass the LSAT requirement provided their undergraduate GPA is 3.5 or higher and SAT or ACT scores meet or exceed the 85th percentile. “The advantages are clear,” said Harrison, “this change encourages applications by easing the stresses of the application process.” While St. John’s Law’s “3+3” and “Red Scholar Programs” may be combined for internal applicants, Harrison also points out students who already have an LSAT score are ineligible for the latter.

Now, of course, law school is not for everyone. It should not be a fallback if a student does not know what to do with the rest of his or her life, nor is it something that should be chosen on a whim. It is hard work, and without passion, a student probably will not succeed. It is important to do research when applying, and ultimately deciding whether or not to attend, law school.



Leveraging and Expanding Graduate Assistant Education Through Active Participation in Course Materials Design

Mark Tannian (College of Professional Studies, tannianm@stjohns.edu)

David Herling (Graduate Assistant, College of Professional Studies)

This article is an account of how the prior education of a Graduate Assistant (GA) can be directed towards teaching, course development and enriching the GA’s learning. While redesigning the course titled CUS 1185 “Data Security and Cryptography,” I needed assistance with refining and testing laboratory assignments. I envisioned the implementation of a cryptographic application from the class textbook which involved the creation of a functional secure channel written in the Java programming language.

I enlisted the help of Mr. Herling, a Graduate Assistant from the Division of Computer Science, Mathematics and Science (CSMS) and graduate student in the MS in Data Mining and Predictive Analytics program — launched in Fall 2014. Mr. Herling was not the only one in a new role at St. John’s University — that fall was my second semester as a full time Assistant Professor within CSMS in the College of Professional Studies. We were charged with implementing the secure channel program per the pseudo code provided in the class textbook. Translating a conceptual design into a functional application is challenging. It is necessary that a functional secure channel be achieved prior to establishing the conditions and resources that make up a laboratory assignment.

Mr. Herling is a recent graduate of the Computer Science program at St. John’s University who has taken CUS 1185 in its previous form, and was already familiar with cryptographic techniques. As such, Mr. Herling was capable of software development and able to provide an undergraduate student’s perspective as far as capabilities and experience. Being able to teach Mr. Herling in a one-on-one setting, allowed me to develop a sense of what ideas were confusing and what was readily understood. During these discussions the proposition of how to best utilize the finished product was discussed. Specific programming concepts were matched with class pre-requisites and student experience to prevent advanced coding techniques from obscuring the cryptographic learning opportunity.

The collaboration did encounter a few challenges. I was teaching a full course load while redesigning CUS 1185. Mr. Herling’s duties as an graduate assistant were varied and necessarily preempted any assignment generated outside of the CPS office. All parties discussed and understood these obstacles before embarking on this collaboration, but interruptions to the GA’s workflow unsettled his work on this project. Another challenge was our limited availability for face-to-face discussion, which averaged one

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[www.stjohns.edu/
CTL](http://www.stjohns.edu/CTL)

This newsletter is published monthly during the academic year by the Center for Teaching and Learning.

Managing Editor:
Lisa Getman



hour per week. Mr. Herling relied on these weekly meetings with me to obtain feedback, guidance, debugging and clarifications. The implementation of a secure channel must be constructed with precision or you risk corrupted communications and vulnerabilities. From a short-term perspective, it was risky to rely on Mr. Herling for deliverables to be utilized within the semester at hand.

Going forward, the collaboration is continuing, and the secure channel project is ongoing. The plan is to develop a lab sequence that has students work on modules that align with the course topics and that assembles into the bulk of the secure channel. CUS 1185 is offered every semester; the accompanying labs can be incorporated into the course as they become available. Through this experience I developed a sense of what ideas were confusing and what were readily understood, helping to refine both lecture and class materials. Mr. Herling benefitted from the experience as well, developing a further understanding of principles and best practices in cryptography. In time students of CUS 1185 will benefit from the opportunity of developing a functional and practical application of modern cryptography. Involving GAs in course development efforts can be mutually rewarding, particularly when a faculty member can accommodate timing related risks.



Faculty Writing Retreat

Date: Tuesday, May 19

Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Location: Institute for Writing Studies, Library 150

The Faculty Writing Retreat offers you the opportunity to commit to a day of writing surrounded by your colleagues who will have made the same commitment as you. Published research – and our own experience from previous St. John's Faculty Writing Initiative writing retreats we've held – tells us the positive energy of being around faculty peers who are also writing (and struggling to write) helps faculty get substantial work done, even in one day.

As to the schedule for the retreat, you will arrive and begin writing. We are certain there will be much writing advice to be shared during lunch, which will be served at 12:30pm. We hope you will be able to join us.

If you would like to learn more about writing retreats or you are interested in research about faculty writing productivity, go to the CTL Forum Writing Page at <http://stjohns.campusguides.com/aecontent.php?pid=71651&sid=589816>.

[REGISTER NOW!](#)

Final Exam Schedule

The final exam schedule is available at: <http://www.stjohns.edu/academics/office-registrar/final-exam-schedule>