### CTL March Newsletter

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

Highlights from our March issue include:

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

**Faculty News:** If you would like to send an entry to “Faculty News,” the deadline for the April issue is **April 1**. We prefer that you email the information to [CTL@stjohns.edu](mailto:CTL@stjohns.edu). Please have your entries follow the style presented in “Faculty News.”

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### Dates to Note!!

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<td>Monday, March 28</td>
<td>Teaching Classes with ESL Students 1:30 to 2:50 p.m. Library room 110</td>
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<td>Monday, April 4</td>
<td><em>Interdisciplinary Research Roundtable: Technology</em> Noon to 1:30 p.m. Library 110</td>
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<td>Tuesday, April 5</td>
<td><em>Interdisciplinary Research Roundtable</em> Noon to 1:30 p.m. Rosati Conference room, Staten Island Campus</td>
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<td>Thursday, April 7</td>
<td><em>CTL Fellows’ Presentations on Teaching and Technology</em> 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. D’Angelo Center 416A</td>
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<td>Monday, April 11</td>
<td><em>Writing Biography</em> Noon to 1:30 p.m. Library 110</td>
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<td>Wednesday, April 13</td>
<td><em>Faculty Research Forum</em> 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. D’Angelo Center 416</td>
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<td>Monday, April 18</td>
<td><em>Interdisciplinary Research Roundtable: VISA-Related Research</em> Noon to 1:30 p.m. Library room 110</td>
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To RSVP email us at [CTL@stjohns.edu](mailto:CTL@stjohns.edu) or call ext. 1859.
Report Card on Assessment of Learning at St. John’s as Evidenced through WEAVEonline

Steven Glogocheski (Associate Director of Academic Assessment, glogochs@stjohns.edu)

Assessment of student learning is critical to student success. As described by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education www.msche.org, our regional accrediting body, in its Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education publication: “Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution’s students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.” As a follow-up to our self-study and Middle States reaccreditation in 2006, St. John’s obtained a web-based tool called WEAVEonline to manage the assessment cycle for all academic programs. This includes Mission/Purpose; Goals; Outcomes/Objectives; Measures and Achievement Targets; and Findings and Action Plans. There are also various assessment, audit, and other reports which can be generated from the system and used for discussion, development, and implementation of strategies for improvement.

The following graph represents the percentage of programs at St. John’s that had information in the corresponding assessment areas on WEAVEonline during the 2009-2010 academic year. The good news is that almost all programs have documented program mission, goals and objectives. On the other hand, there are large gaps in the critical areas of measures, targets and findings/action plans.

We encourage all faculty to become familiar with the WEAVEonline system to ensure that program goals and objectives are being met, to share best assessment practices, and to offer suggestions for improving student learning and student success. Particular attention needs to be paid to increasing the measures, targets, findings and action plans, also to closing the assessment loop. We are all engaged in
providing the best possible learning experience for our students. Assessment is one critical piece in this process. WEAVEonline can help us in our assessment efforts.

**Support for WEAVEonline**

School/College WEAVEonline Coordinators, are the primary individuals responsible for inputting (or assigning appropriate individuals to input), programmatic data:

- St. John’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: Dr. Michael Wolfe, Dr. Kelly Rocca (Associate Deans)
- College of Professional Studies: Dr. James O’Keefe (Associate Dean and Professor)
- The Peter J. Tobin College of Business: Dr. Victoria L. Shoaf (Dean), Dr. Adrian Fitzsimons (Professor)
- School of Education: Dr. Richard Sinatra (Associate Dean of Academic Affairs), Nancy Garafus (Coordinator of Accreditation and Program Registration)
- School of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions: Dr. Sandy Zito (Professor), Anthony C. Marziliano (Assistant to the Dean), Dr. Marc. E. Gillespie (Associate Professor)

For Institutional Support and to gain access to the system contact Steven Glogocheski at glogochs@stjohns.edu

In addition, a complete overview of assessment at St. John’s University, along with our Institutional Assessment Plan, can be found at: http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys

**Writing Biography**

Those interested in writing a biography or in exploring history through the lens of individual lives are invited to a discussion with Dr. Frank Brady, Professor of Communication Arts and Journalism in the College of Professional Studies and author of ENDGAME.

This book relates the meteoric ascent and confounding descent of enigmatic genius Bobby Fischer. Drawn from Dr. Brady’s own association with Fischer, the author also employed family archives, FBI and KGB files, and Fischer’s own emails. It is an odyssey that limns Fischer’s life from a childhood of poverty, to being for a short while one of the most famous people in the world…and then a fall from grace in his becoming a notorious recluse; a story that resembles a Greek tragedy.

This book is available at the University Bookstore.

**Date:** Monday, April 11  
**Time:** noon to 1:30 p.m.  
**Location:** Library room 110, Queens Campus

If you would like to attend it is imperative that you contact the CTL at x1859 or CTL@stjohns.edu as seating is limited.
In Defense of Twitter; or, Why We Should Give a Tweet

Caroline Fuchs (University Libraries, fuchsc@stjohns.edu)

There are those among us who would argue that Twitter is just another disruptive technology that interferes with our daily lives, diverting us from our tasks and preventing us from being productive members of society. Twitter, they would say, is a tool for the mindless—a public platform on which to report the most mundane, inane nonsense. Serious people do not use Twitter. It has no place in the grown-up world, let alone in higher education. Twitter, plain and simple, is just waste of time. Or is it?

First things first: what exactly is Twitter?
Twitter is a “real time” social media tool that allows for the sharing of information “in the moment.” It runs on a microblogging platform that allows users to post updates online in snippets of 140-character or less, including spaces. These posts or updates are called “tweets.” Users can “follow” you – (subscribe to your tweets) – and you can follow them (read their updates). By default, tweets are made public on the internet, but users do have the option to set their account to “private,” which means that others must request permission to see their status updates. Twitter functions are also available through SMS—making it possible to “follow” users and receive updates from Twitter through your cell phone number or IM contact information.

Twitter also integrates with other social networking tools such as Facebook and blogs, as well as other Web pages—even CampusGuides! Twitter also provides RSS, which allows news aggregators to subscribe to individual feeds. Oh, and, it’s free! Anyone with an email address can sign up for an account.

For those new to Twitter, it’s important to remember that unless you have set your account as “private,” your tweets will appear on a public “timeline” in reverse chronological order. Tweets are associated with the Twitter-user who posted them and are linked to that user’s profile page, on which also appears the user’s timeline. The user’s profile page also includes a brief “bio,” a list of her followers, a list of whom she is following, and any lists (groups) associated with that account.

By putting the “@” sign in front of a user’s name (i.e. @cgfuchs), users can talk to one another directly, and mention or reference another user. Twitter allows you to share information or updates: just type “RT” (i.e. retweet) in front of the original message and then repost—but be sure to reference the original author! A user can even add a keyword or subject to her tweets by adding a hashtag (“#education” or “#edu”), which is searchable across the Twitter platform. Keep in mind that since there is a character limit for each update, when sharing webpages or links it’s useful to use an URL shortener (such as bit.ly or tiny.url) to reduce the number of characters in your tweet.

So who’s using Twitter?
Yes, you can find celebrities and lots of (regular and irregular) people on Twitter. But did you know there is a growing number of other entities who are now tweeting? You might be surprised to find that a number of your colleagues are already active Twitter users—and that they are using their accounts for professional purposes. In addition, an increasing number of colleges and universities, high schools, teachers, libraries, corporations, publishers, organizations (profit, non-profit, for-profit), clubs, and various other groups now have a presence on Twitter.

So what’s the value in using Twitter?
The 140 character limit forces you to be clear and concise – and, for those of us who enjoy puzzles, it can become a mental challenge to say what you have to say within those constrains. This has a way of removing the “clutter” from the conversation. Twitter can also be a useful tool with which to integrate into a particular community – users will quickly find other users who share a common interest or point-of-view. It’s a fast and easy way to create a dialogue, share information and stay informed on current
issues and trends. Follow a publisher in your field or discipline to get information on newly released books: follow a journal or newspaper to get breaking news. Post information about your upcoming presentations or research. Send out a query. Ask for an opinion. Get updates from an organization. Join a group. Stay in touch with colleagues – make a new friend!

And why should we care?
There are other reasons for academics to enter the Twitter-sphere. Twitter has the inherent potential for increasing student engagement. Using Twitter, teachers can post class assignments and deadline reminders, make announcements, pose questions or present discussion topics. And, even more simply, might not a group of students work together to take collaborative notes during a lecture or share information when studying by making use of the hashtags? (For more on this topic see the article “The effect of Twitter on college student engagement and grades”)

Twitter is a robust networking tool. Through strategic searching of Twitter users and subject-specific hashtags, it’s possible to connect and converse with colleagues in your discipline or field of study – whether they are members of your department at St. John’s or at another university across the globe. By mining your followers’ followers – and those whom you follow—your community of “friends” can multiply exponentially. In addition, many conference organizers now create a Twitter hashtag for their event so that attendees can post and share updates, comments, summaries, etc. This not only allows for collegial networking, but enables a dialogue among those in attendance—and creates the opportunity for others to “follow” from afar. For example, the American Library Association 2011 Annual Conference has created a Twitter presence: @alaannual, #ala2011.

Twitter provides real time “in the moment” information. Anyone with a Twitter account was privy to first-hand updates and stories of the recent revolution in Egypt as these unfolded – and, for anyone who was an eye-witness to the events, Twitter became a platform to disseminate facts and updates as they occurred, to communicate with the outside world, and to keep in touch with family and friends. Within seconds individuals and news organizations were able to publish, post, and re-post the breaking news. Interactive discussions on the revolution took place within Twitter-sphere, providing a platform from which to give voice to a variety of opinions and commentary, as well as to exchange information. Imagine the journalistic possibilities here! And imagine, also, the way this might affect how journalism is taught—and learned—in colleges and universities!

And Twitter has the potential to become a great research tool. Because it allows users to attach key-words to tweets, it is possible for users to sift through the tweets on a particular subject – or by a particular user.

Yes, there is downside to Twitter
Twitter can indeed become a distraction and there is potential for information overload—so limit the time you spend on Twitter and choose carefully the people and organizations you wish to follow. As an asynchronous broadcast service, there is no guarantee that any individual tweet will be read—or responded to. And, let’s be honest, there are still plenty of useless posts like “My cat just meowed” to filter out.

But remember
Twitter is a quick and easy “real time” social media tool that encourages participation, conversation and the sharing of information with a great potential for use in education—and all in 140 characters, or less! Intrigued? Join the conversation!

For more information on Twitter in Education, visit http://stjohns.campusguides.com/twitter.
Introducing Community of Science (COS) Funding Resource Database

Jared Littman (Director, Office of Grants and Sponsored Research, littmanj@stjohns.edu)

The Office of Grants and Sponsored Research has acquired the use of the renowned Community of Science (COS) funding resource database. COS is the largest, most comprehensive database hosting available grant opportunities, providing users with more than 25,000 records representing over $33 billion in funding.

To access COS, please visit http://www.cos.com/

COS provides clear and concise information pertaining to current grant opportunities available to scholars throughout the world. Sponsors include private foundations, public agencies, national and local governments, and corporations. These sponsors provide support to disciplines such as physical sciences, social sciences, life sciences, health and medicine, as well as arts and humanities. Monies provide funding for many purposes, including research, collaborations, travel, curriculum development, conferences, fellowships, postdoctoral positions, equipment acquisitions, and capital and operating expenses.

COS provides its users with easy and intuitive searching, and offers customized search options for users of all levels ranging from general to advanced queries. In addition, each COS Funding Opportunities Record prominently notes key information such as program title and abstract, award denomination, sponsor contact information, eligibility requirements, funding alert notices, and deadline notices.

The Office of Grants and Sponsored Research will continue to provide the St. John's community with substantial and reliable information pertaining to all aspects of sponsored programs. We will provide our faculty and administrators with COS user training throughout the course of this semester and beyond. The acquisition of COS emphasizes our strong commitment to make the best resources available at the disposal of our researchers. If you have any questions concerning COS, or would like to establish an individual account, please contact Christopher Egan, Assistant Director, at eganc@stjohns.edu for assistance.

Interdisciplinary Research Roundtable Lunches:

Technology
The use of technology is now pervasive in academic life. Please join us for a discussion of how we can use technology most effectively in our research on Monday, April 4th from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Library room 110 on the Queens Campus. We'll touch on some of the latest uses of technology and why you might want to investigate them. Several CTL Technology Fellows, Caroline Fuchs, Paula Lazrus, and Kevin Rioux will share their ideas and experiences.

VISA-Related Research
The Ozanam Scholars Program, which is part of the University's Vincentian Institute for Social Action, celebrates a milestone this May when its first cohort of students graduate. They have all been involved in capstone research projects and are being mentored by a number of our most distinguished faculty. Please join us for a discussion of this work on Monday, April 18th from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Library room 110 on the Queens Campus. Richard Sinatra, the Chair of the Faculty Research Consortium and faculty members Andrew Ferdinandi, Francine Guastello, Robert Pecorella and Joanne Robertson-Eletto will describe the action research they've been supervising.

If you would like to attend one or both of these events it is imperative that you contact the CTL at x1859 or CTL@stjohns.edu as seating is limited.
**CTL Fellows Program in Teaching and Technology**

**Application deadline: Monday, April 18, 2011 Deadline**

The Center for Teaching and Learning is pleased to announce this year’s call for applications for the CTL Fellows Program. The 2009-2011 Fellows are now completing their second year in the program, and will be making presentations on **Thursday, April 7**. They have done impressive work integrating technological learning tools into their teaching. You are invited to apply to join this endeavor which provides encouragement and support for those interested in exploring how to enrich their teaching as well as their students' learning through technology.

- This program is structured as a faculty learning community with the focus on assisting faculty in developing the technological aspects of their courses. This program is not targeting those who are technologically savvy nor those at the opposite end of the spectrum, rather the focus is on taking faculty the next step, no matter where their starting point.

- Fellows serve for two years. The first few months are used to develop their projects.

- There are usually ten Fellows, drawn from full-time faculty throughout the University.

- There is a simple, **one-page application form** outlining the course and the technological aspects the applicant would like to enhance.

- The program begins with a one-day retreat in early Fall at which the Fellows develop their plans and discuss how best to structure the program.

- Fellows are obligated to meet at least once a month to explore relevant literature, to discuss plans, to deal with concerns, and to report on the status of their projects. There will also be guests invited to share their expertise in areas relevant to the Fellows' projects.

- Each Fellow will be funded up to $2,000 for materials to enhance technological aspects of their course or to attend a workshop or conference to develop their knowledge or skills related to teaching with technology.

- Support from the Technology Learning Center and the University Libraries is an essential part of this program. The support is primarily in the form of expertise which the faculty can draw upon to achieve their goals. Specific individuals will be identified as liaisons with the Fellows Program.

- Fellows are expected to make presentations and other forms of “publication” so that their efforts are communicated to other members of the faculty, particularly to members of their home departments or divisions. One of the best means to communicate with the larger higher education community would be through electronic course portfolios.

**Please join us for this great opportunity to learn more about the many different ways technology can enhance teaching and learning on Thursday, April 7 from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. in DAC 416A with the 2009-2011 CTL Fellows:**

- Jennifer Chiu, College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions
- Caroline Fuchs, University Libraries
- Stephen Llano, St. John’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Qi Lu, St. John’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Kathleen Marks, College of Professional Studies
- Benjamin Silliman, The Peter J. Tobin College of Business

**To register:** Contact the CTL at **CTL@stjohns.edu** or ext. at 1859.
The Next Faculty Writing Retreat
Date: Saturday, April 2, 2011 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Location: Institute for Writing Studies, Library Room 150, Queens Campus
To Register: Contact the CTL at ctl@stjohns.edu or ext. 1859; participation is limited.

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/acontent.php?pid=71651&sid=589816.

Student Research Week
Student Research Week 2011, to be held April 13-19, is a platform for students to present their works of academic research and scholarship. It is not limited to the sciences or the traditional interpretation of the word “Research.” All are invited to attend these special activities co-sponsored by the Office of the Provost, the Women in Science Society (Office of Grants and Sponsored Research), the McNair Scholars Program, and the Institute for Writing Studies. Click here to view a list of Research Week activities.

Faculty Research Forum
As part of Research Month, the Office of the Provost and the Center for Teaching and Learning would like to invite you to the annual Faculty Research Forum on Wednesday, April 13. This event is an opportunity to explore some of the research our colleagues are working on and to discuss their projects. The research displays will be set up between 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. in the D’Angelo Center room 416.

The Annual Faculty Book Reception
The Institute for Writing Studies and the University Libraries, in conjunction with the Office of the Provost are pleased to announce the 14th Annual University-Wide Reception honoring those faculty members who have published a book since March 2010. The reception will be held on Wednesday, April 13, 2011, in the Institute for Writing Studies, St. Augustine Hall, Room 150, from 3:30 until 5:30 p.m.

We hope that you are able to join us!!