CTL March Newsletter

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

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Vincentian Mission: Opportunity and Responsibility – No. XXXVII

The Values and Methods of Environmental Studies

Frank Cantelmo (St. John’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, cantelmf@stjohns.edu)

In this series, Vincentian Research Fellows from across the University share their academic efforts to advance the Vincentian character of Saint John’s. Below Professor Cantelmo shares both the methods and the values that he transmits through his various courses on the environment. He describes his conviction that all must protect our “fragile biosphere.” This motivates him to teach critical thinking and to use a range of methods and experiences which inspire the students to involvement and lead to commitment beyond their student life.

In 1979, I left the Environmental Division of Texas Instruments in order to join the faculty at St. John’s University. The opportunity to impart knowledge and a respect for life to my students was the primary motivating factor underlying my decision to change careers. The intellectual rewards that come with teaching are extremely difficult to put into words. I simply view teaching as a constant source of inspiration, astonishment, learning and satisfaction.

My personal goals in educating our students are quite straightforward. Be the best that you can be, love and respect one another and be loving caretakers of our fragile biosphere. I absolutely believe that the only hope we have as a civilization resides in the proper education of our youth. I tell my students that people often have different opinions on a particular subject or interpret material in different ways. However, the one vital prerequisite for an educated, responsible person is to have a body of legitimate information or “facts” to draw upon. The greatest challenge then is to organize these “facts” in order to solve problems and develop critical thinking skills. To that end, I have instituted a number of critical-thinking exercises on the environment in my courses. I truly believe students leave my courses with a much more profound respect for our planet and the various trophic links connecting all life forms. This respect for our planet encompasses all life from the smallest and simplest organization to the most complex.

As co-chairman of the St. John’s Sustainability Committee and faculty advisor to the St. John’s Earth Club, I have supported a number of new initiatives on campus. Some of these include our productive organic garden where the money from the sale of produce is given to support the many wonderful activities sponsored by “Bread for Life.” The Garden is also a quiet place to refresh the spirit with thoughts and prayer. There are numerous other initiatives on campus including single stream recycling and educational initiatives for faculty, staff and students in order to make our St. John’s community more aware of the various sustainability options. We currently are on the verge of recycling all of our food waste on campus.

My commitment to environmental education goes far beyond St. John’s University. I engage in a number of volunteer service activities including teaching teachers how to present environmental science utilizing Long Island Sound as a case study. In turn, the teachers bring back new lesson plans and develop more innovative environmental teaching materials in order to illustrate what it means to be knowledge-
When we take groups out on the *Soundwaters* environmental tall ship, we have a “middle quiet time” where the students are told not to move or talk and just to listen to the sounds of nature all around them: the wind in the sails, the water lapping up against the side of the boat, distant calls of shorebirds. It is remarkable what students report feeling and what holistic connections to nature remain with them long after they depart the *Soundwaters* vessel.

The one common theme or thread that runs through all my activities is a profound respect for the earth’s resources and a deep sense of responsibility of stewardship so that future generations can also partake in the bounty and beauty of life. To this end, I have advanced a three “A” approach to our sustainability initiatives. The first A is for awareness which obviously involves educating individuals about sustainability issues; the second “A” is for a change in attitude in terms of what it means to live in a sustainable society; and the last “A” is for action in order to implement the societal changes.

Finally, as one of the Holy See Environmental Advisors, I attend meetings of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). In that role of advisor, I summarize the various meetings and action plans and submit these reports and activities to His Excellency, The Most Reverend Francis A. Chullikatt, Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations. The Holy See seeks to offer a “moral compass” at the various United Nations proceedings. The rich and transparent discussions that I have attended during the past five years have brought me a new global awareness and broader skills to enhance my teaching, my own education and my life as a global citizen.

Office of Grants and Sponsored Research (OGSR)

Clare Byrne (Office of Grants and Sponsored Research, byrnecl@stjohns.edu)

An email was sent recently about the 2012 OGSR Research and Interests Survey. Thank you to all who have already completed the survey. There is still time to complete this five-minute survey at [http://irsurveys.stjohns.edu/S11/OGSRResIntSpring2012/](http://irsurveys.stjohns.edu/S11/OGSRResIntSpring2012/).

Your answers will provide valuable information to help the Office of Grants and Sponsored Research better serve you in seeking appropriate funding opportunities. Please publicize this survey to other faculty members and administrators interested in applying for grants by sharing this link. The survey is designed to:
- Gather information that helps target opportunities forwarded to department chairs and other interested parties
- Find out more about faculty and administrator interests and background
- Remind you that the OGSR is here to help you find funding

For additional information about OGSR services, location and contacts please check our website at [http://www.stjohns.edu/academics/centers/grants](http://www.stjohns.edu/academics/centers/grants).

Thank you for helping us help you!
Faculty News

Professor Judy Cooperman (Fine Arts, coopermj@stjohns.edu) was selected to exhibit her photographic work that deals with women and the contemporary beauty culture in the juried exhibition, “Where Do We Go From Here? The Shape of Things to Come,” at the Wiseman Gallery, Rogue Community College in Grants Pass, OR and in the exhibition, “Celebrating Women’s Work,” at the Pen and Brush gallery in New York City (March 2012); and received a Special Recognition Award for her work in the Light Space Time’s exhibit, “All Women Art Competition,” (February-March 2012).

Dr. Maura C. Flannery (Computer Science, Mathematics and Science, flannerm@stjohns.edu) published an article, “Biology and Art: An Intricate Relationship,” in The American Biology Teacher (March 2012).

Dr. Joseph A. Giacalone (Economics and Finance, giacaloj@stjohns.edu) presented a paper, “Can China’s Monopoly of the Rare Earth Minerals Market Be Broken,” at the annual meeting of the American Society for Business and Behavioral Sciences in Las Vegas, NV (February 2012).

Dr. Flora Keshishian (Rhetoric, Communications & Theatre, keshishf@stjohns.edu) and Dr. Anthony Gabb (Administration & Economics, gabba@stjohns.edu) published “Commodified Education, Profit-driven Mass Media, and American Democracy: A Synthesis” in Explorations in Media Ecology (2012).

Faculty News:
If you would like to send an entry to “Faculty News,” the deadline for the April issue is April 2. We prefer that you email the information to CTL@stjohns.edu. Please have your entries follow the style presented in “Faculty News.”

Guest Lecture
Mississippi, Manhattan, and the Racial Politics of World War II
Jason Morgan Ward, Mississippi State University
April 13, 2012, 10:40am - 12:05pm
D'Angelo 410

On October 12, 1942, Mississippi vigilantes lynched two fourteen-year-old boys from a rusty river bridge. Twenty-four years earlier, the NAACP’s Walter White had traveled from Manhattan to Mississippi in order to investigate a quadruple lynching at the same bridge. In 1942, African American journalists branded Mississippi’s Hanging Bridge “a monument to Judge Lynch” and compared southern vigilantes to Nazis. Noting that whites lynched the boys while Congress debated a bill to outlaw the poll tax, Harlem’s New Amsterdam Star-News announced that the most “backward state in the entire union hung up another victory for Hitler.”

The 1942 lynching of Ernest Green and Charlie Lang connected mob violence in Mississippi to a wartime campaign for civil rights and a global war against fascism. The tragedy also prompted northern civil rights activists to question whether rural black southerners could and would fight back against racial abuse. Meanwhile, whites in Mississippi blamed civil rights supporters in New York and other northern cities for provoking racial violence. Even as African Americans connected their civil rights struggle to the war effort, southern white supremacists articulated their own definition of “Double Victory.”

For more information contact Elizabeth Herbin-Traint at herbine@stjohns.edu.
Celebrating Women’s History Month: Focus on Research
Andrew Sankowski (University Libraries, sankowsa@stjohns.edu)

As we celebrate Women’s History month in March, I would like to draw your attention to several excellent online resources, available through the Library’s Databases A-Z page. These resources contain repositories of primary and secondary materials.

**Women in Social Movements in the United States 1800 to 2000** (Alexander Street Press) contains 102 document projects and archives with over 4,050 documents and 51,000 pages of additional full-text documents, written by approximately 2,100 primary authors. It features a list of notable women with full-text articles by or about them. Coverage includes a virtual who’s who of American women, such as: Jane Addams, Harriet Tubman, Eleanor Roosevelt, Mary McLeod Bethune, Helen Keller, Susan B. Anthony, and Marian Anderson. For example, the entry for Susan B. Anthony features 33 primary sources and 177 secondary sources. The database also contains other features such as a timeline of women in social movements from 1636 (the Anne Hutchinson heresy trial) to 2000 (Women’s access to federal courts in the Violence Against Women Act voided by the Supreme Court in *U.S. v. Morrison*); an alphabetical list of social movements among which are the Equal Rights Amendment Movement, Woman’s Suffrage Movement, and American Civil Liberties Union; and book reviews.

**Women and Social Movements International, 1840 to present** (Alexander Street Press) provides access to approximately 3,500 sources related to worldwide leaders in social movements. Among those covered are such notables as: Margaret Sanger, Clara Barton, Winnie Mandela, Golda Meir, and Indira Gandhi. It also contains: playlists, chronology of events, and organizations. This database allows keyword searching to locate documents.

**Current Biography Illustrated** (Wilson) is a key source of biographies and references about contemporary women worldwide. It covers world notables from 1940 to the present, for example: Margaret Thatcher, Sandra Day O’Connor, Rosa Parks, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Eleanor Roosevelt, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Indira Gandhi, and Marian Anderson.

**EBSCO eBook Collection** provides a selection of many e-Books that can be utilized in distance learning or off campus research. To search for e-Books related to women’s studies, researchers can use the general keyword “women” to locate about 1300 items. More specifically, searching by specific names (e.g. Hillary Clinton) will yield results about contemporary eBooks. The term “women studies” yields 76 returns. “Women’s History Month” yields 210 returns.

**JSTOR** provides access to full-text articles, some going back as far as the nineteenth century. The **Feminist & Women’s Studies** section links to 29 women’s studies–related journals, including: *Feminist Review, Feminist Teacher, Feminist Studies, Gender and Society, and Women’ Studies Quarterly*.

**American National Biography Online** has a Women’s History section. This database features biographies of notable women among which are: Susan B. Anthony, Abigail Adams, Nelly Bly, Margaret Fuller, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Sojourner Truth, and Hetty Green. Each full-text article includes bibliographical references for further research.

The above databases are among the many resources available in the Library with content related to women’s studies. The Library monograph collection contains biographies, autobiographies, and the writings of notable women. Please check our online catalog for books in print and digital format.
Liberal Arts Majors: Pathways to a Career
Laura Smith (Career Center, smithl2@stjohns.edu)

When choosing a major, students ask, “What can I do with it?” or “What career will this major lead me to?” With some majors, finding the answer is straightforward. An Accounting major, for example, can consult the Occupational Outlook Handbook (bls.gov/oco), search for “accountant” and read a detailed description of an accountant’s work, educational requirements, and job outlook. For a History, Mathematics, or French major, the process of choosing a career path is more challenging. One cannot simply search for a career in “French.”

The Career Center provides resources and support to liberal arts students who are tackling this challenge. Just because one cannot search for a career in “French,” does not indicate a lack of options. Assessing interests and learning about potential paths, building exposure and experience, and strategically planning for the future leads students to be highly qualified and marketable. The following article will piece together the steps a liberal arts student will take on this pathway to career.

Assess
When selecting a career, students must begin with their interests. As a Career Counselor, I usually start by asking students about which classes and extra curricular activities they enjoy and why. Do they enjoy reading and researching? Is volunteering at the local elementary school what they love? Or is their passion serving as the leader of a student organization? To help with this reflection, I sometimes recommend a career assessment instrument in which students will respond to questions about their likes and dislikes, personality preferences, and skills. Together we interpret the results to identify career fields that deserve consideration.

With awareness of their interests and preferences, liberal arts students need information about the typical career directions of others. Some career options are obvious, while others may be surprising. An English major might be interested in the publishing field, but could also pursue management, education, or public relations. A Government and Politics major may gravitate toward public policy, but could also pursue non-profit administration, fundraising, or news programming.

I direct my students to sources where they can learn more about these career fields, but for deeper understanding, I look for first hand experiences that promote clarity and growth. Job shadowing and informational interviews are highly influential tools.

Experience
For liberal arts students, exposure to work environments can solidify career plans. In classes, they gain the theoretical foundation that prepares them for a variety of careers. In turn, observation of and conversation with experienced professionals gives the opportunity for practical application.

Job shadowing happens when a student follows and observes a professional in his/her work environment for a period of time. This can take place for a single day or over a period of weeks or months. Twice a year, the Career Center coordinates “shadowing days” facilitated by St. John’s alumni.

An “informational interview” is a conversation between a student and an experienced professional. During the interview, the student asks questions about the professional’s career background, industry, and personal advice. Like shadowing, the informational interview involves a direct connection to a person working in the field that the student is considering. Through a program called “COACH,” the Career Center maintains a database of alumni career mentors who are interested in providing informational interviews for students.

These opportunities help students confirm that the career field they are considering is the right fit for
their interests, skills, and values. However, sometimes the experiences reveal a mismatch. A work environment can be too unstructured or can be overly methodical. One career field could offer stability while another keen competition. Through job shadowing and informational interviews, liberal arts students are immersed in real environments that expose the true nature of the work and help them make well-informed choices.

**Strategize**
When liberal arts students know which career fields interest them, thoughtful decisions about coursework, activities, and experiences help position them for opportunities after graduation. The earlier students realize their career direction, the more time they can allow for implementing their strategy. As administrators or faculty who work with these students, we can impress upon them the need to consider their concrete plans early.

**Coursework**
Liberal arts students can consider a double major, minor, concentration of study, or class projects to develop specialized skills. For example, a History major might declare a minor in Law and Government in order to enhance her marketability for employment as a paralegal.

A student studying sociology who is interested in child welfare might write a research paper about public programs that help disadvantaged teens. The specialized knowledge acquired through these courses and projects can be displayed on a resume and discussed on a job interview.

**Internships, Jobs, and Activities**
As discussed earlier, first hand exposure to real work environments is tremendously influential on students’ future careers. In fact, related work experience can translate into a job offer after graduation.

For example, an English major might complete an internship in public relations. While the student is refining his writing and critical thinking skills in his major courses, he is also receiving specific practice drafting press releases or pitching media stories. This tangible experience will likely be a pre-requisite for an entry-level job offer.

In addition to external internship, work, and volunteer experiences, on-campus activities can be very significant. Acting as a leader for a student organization develops transferable professional skills; management, teamwork, organization, and attention to detail are highly valuable to employers and contribute to a strong resume. The more students know about their prospective careers, the better they will be at seeking relevant activities.

The fact that liberal arts students have so many career options is a gift as well as a challenge. Liberal arts students bring work ethic, communication skills, analytical, and problem-solving abilities; these skills are precisely what employers want. The objective is to help our students realize specifically how they will focus this potential on a viable and gratifying career.

**REFERENCES**

*University of Tennessee. (2011). What Can I Do With This Major. Retrieved on from:*


Interdisciplinary Research Roundtable Lunch:  
Writing Biography

The CTL’s biography luncheon this semester features Laura J. Snyder, Associate Professor of Philosophy in St. John’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. She will be discussing her book, *The Philosophical Breakfast Club: Four Remarkable Friends who Transformed Science and Changed the World* (Crown/Broadway Books, 2011). It was named a Scientific American Notable Book, an Official Selection of the TED Book Club, and winner of the 2011 Royal Institution of Australia Poll for Favorite Science Book.

Snyder is also the author of *Reforming Philosophy: A Victorian Debate on Science and Society* (University of Chicago Press, 2006), and numerous articles and book chapters. In addition, her work has appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*. She is currently writing a book about the relation between science—especially optics—and art.

In December, Dr. Snyder delivered the prestigious Dibner Library Lecture at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. This is the premier lecture in the history of science field. Past Dibner Library Lecturers have included British historian Richard Holmes, Anthony Grafton (Princeton), and Joyce Chaplin (Harvard).

This book is now available at the University bookstore at the customer service counter.

**Date:** Monday, April 30  
**Time:** 12:15 to 1:40 p.m.  
**Location:** Donovan Community Room

**To register:** Contact the CTL at CTL@stjohns.edu or ext. 1859.

Reminder:  All Full-Time Faculty Have a Digication Account

St. John’s University has recently partnered with the company Digication to make electronic portfolios available to all of our students over the next few years. Through our relationship with Digication, all full-time faculty and administrators get e-Portfolios as well. (We are still in the process of determining if and how we might make these available to part-time faculty.) If you wish, you can begin creating your e-Portfolio effective immediately!

To do so, go to [http://stjohns.digication.com](http://stjohns.digication.com). Take a few seconds to watch the very short video, then log in as you would to St. John’s Central.
Research Month 2012

The research activities of St. John’s students and faculty are increasingly diverse and intense: grant dollars continue to rise; publications are flourishing; students are presenting papers at conferences. We have good reason to celebrate our accomplishments. We expect that through Research Month activities the St. John’s University Community will become increasingly aware, mutually supportive and proud of these impressive activities. For more specific information go to:

Student Research Events
Faculty Research Events

Here is a summary of Research Month Events:

Monday, April 2
• Faculty Research Forum
• Reception Honoring Recipients of Grants
• Annual Faculty Book Reception

Wednesday, April 11
• Film Screening /Performance Art

Thursday, April 12
• Student Research Day: Poster Presentations, Queens Campus

Friday, April 13
• Fine Arts Presentations

Monday, April 16
• Interdisciplinary Research Roundtable Lunch: Research Methodology and the NYPL

Thursday, April 19
• Oral Presentations, Panel Discussions, and Roundtable
• Research Day Staten Island Campus

Saturday, April 21
• English Department Graduate Conference

Monday, April 23
• Interdisciplinary Research Roundtable Lunch: VISA and the University Mission
• How Can International Research Be Integrated Into Your Career?

Thursday, April 26
• CTL Fellows’ Presentations on Research in Teaching and Technology

Monday, April 30
• Interdisciplinary Research Roundtable Lunch: Writing Biography
CTL Fellows Program in Teaching with Technology
The Center for Teaching and Learning is pleased to announce this year’s call for applications for the CTL Fellows Program. The 2010-2012 Fellows are now completing their second year in the program and will be making presentations on Thursday, April 26 from 1:50 to 3:15 p.m. in the D’Angelo Center room 208. 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 support (excluding hardware) 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 eStudio 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.

- The deadline to apply is Monday, April 30, 2012!

Faculty Growth Grant Program
The Faculty Growth Grants are intended to provide support for faculty members and are designed to support:
- Integration of technology into instruction.
- Exploration of pedagogical principles and their integration into the curriculum.
- Development of groundbreaking courses in a department or program.

The upcoming deadline to apply for a Faculty Growth Grant is: April 30, 2012.
A Faculty Writing Retreat

**Location:** Institute for Writing Studies, Library Room 150, Queens Campus  
**Dates:** Saturday, March 24, 2012 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
**To Register:** Contact the CTL at ctl@stjohns.edu or ext. 1859; participation is limited.

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. Please remember that participation is limited; please RSVP at ctl@stjohns.edu or ext. 1859. If you have any questions, email Anne Geller (gellera@stjohns.edu) or Maura Flannery (flannerm@stjohns.edu).

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

Announcement from the Office of Online Learning and Services

**The Sloan Consortium** is an institutional and professional leadership organization dedicated to integrating online education into the mainstream of higher education, helping institutions and individual educators improve the quality, scale, and breadth of online education. Membership in the Sloan Consortium provides knowledge, practice, community, and direction for educators. Sloan-C offers a variety of online workshops to enhance faculty members' knowledge of effective online learning. These workshops cost $345.

St. John’s University has joined the College Pass program which reduces the price to $100. St. John’s Office of Online Learning and Services will reimburse the $100 when faculty members seek approval in advance (just to be sure that we do not exceed our budget) and submit the certificate of successful workshop completion.

Please contact Elizabeth Alexander (alexander@stjohns.edu), or at 718-990-2353.