Center for Teaching and Learning
Newsletter

Vol. 16, No 2 October 2010

CTL October Newsletter

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

Highlights from our October issue include:

Using the Web to Engage Students: Part I
Maura C. Flannery

Create Your Own Web Site with Campusguides

Faculty News

Vincentian Mission: Opportunity and Responsibility-No. XXIX in the Series: Ambiguity and Ethics
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The Office of Grants and Sponsored Research (OGSR): Complete Support for your Sponsored Projects
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Responding to the Higher Education Act: Student Consumer Information
Christine M. Goodwin

WAC and the CTL Invite You to a Faculty Writing Retreat

Classroom in the Clouds Brown-bag Lunch Series

Blackboard Workshops

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

Remember: The best places to look for faculty-related information are the CTL Webpage and the CTL Teaching and Learning Forum.
There are as many ways to use the Web in teaching as there are teachers. In this series of articles I’ll explore a few of them. I am hardly suggesting that you use them all; that would lead to mental overheating for both you and your students. Rather, think of this series as a smorgasbord on which I am tempting you with a variety of delicacies, some of which you might ignore and others you might want to really dig into. After some preliminary remarks, I’ll focus on some resources that could be used in a variety of disciplines. Future articles will deal with mapping, image archives, communication tools, and research tools.

Why Use the Web
Everyday there are more and more resources available on the Web. They can bring variety into the classroom and using them can also help students learn information literacy skills: how to evaluate information and dig down into sites to find needed items. This is the world students will inhabit and just as we introduce students to the books and journal articles we have found useful, we can do the same with web resources.

Metaphors
Metaphors abound in the world of technology, in part as a way to make that world more accessible to neophytes. The Web is one of those metaphors that has been so well-worn that it is hardly noticed as such. Two newer metaphors that have a bearing on teaching are cloud computing and open education. The cloud is the world of computer storage space composed of the vast array of servers all over the world. While in the past, you probably stored your word processing files on your hard drive, now you can store them on SkyDrive, a Microsoft product that you can access from your St. John’s Central homepage (if you need help with setting up an account, just contact the Technology Learning Center). The advantage of storing information in the cloud, is that you can access it from any computer. Open education means that teaching is less insular because faculty can access resources created by other faculty. Merlot is a huge database containing links to all kinds of online resources faculty in many disciplines have created. Another is the MIT Open Courseware initiative, where more and more of that university's courses are available online. Another way to look at open education is that you no longer have to limit yourself and your students to one textbook, but can open things up by using the wealth of reading material available on the Web.

A Few Things to Remember
If your head is spinning from the variety of technology tools and resources available, don’t despair. Start small. Try just one new tool, and share just a portion of some great Web resource with your students. It is definitely a good idea to know a resource well before you use it in class. Don’t try to do web searching while you are teaching, unless you are just trying to find the date someone was born, or some other simple piece of information. Anything more can lead to problems: a really tacky pop-up or redirection to some inappropriate site. Even when you stick to what you think is an academic topic, you never know where it will lead. DNA, for example, stands for Dance New Amsterdam. One day, I was
searching at home, not in class (thankfully), for a clip of an educational film on YouTube. It turned out that its title was also the title of two totally inappropriate films. All this searching for sites and learning new tools is time consuming, but it’s also a great personal learning experience. On the Web we are all students, and what better way to approach teaching than as a perpetual student.

**Treasure Troves**

- **TED Talks** If you haven’t discovered this site, then you are probably going to spend some time exploring it. The talks vary in length, but are short enough to show in class. They do have a certain breathless quality, but they are filled with fascinating ideas by leaders from many different fields. I think it would be difficult to find a discipline that isn’t represented here in some way. I am now rushing to finish this article so I can look at one with the title “The Roots of Plant Intelligence.”

- The **Smithsonian** website is, as you would image, absolutely huge just like the institution itself. Many of its resources are available for you to use on your Web-site, because this is a government site.

- The **Library of Congress** site is also amazingly rich, and available for your use.

- **Archive.org** is a place to find copyright-free resources including books, images, videos, and audio recordings. This is also the home of the WayBackMachine which will take you back to what a website looked like at some point in the past. This is great when your favorite site has been redesigned, and now you are clueless as to where to find things.

- The **Census Bureau** may not seem like a very interesting site, but think about it—where else would you find so much information about what is going on in the US now and has happened in the past.

- **Globalization 101** is a site you will want to explore if you are looking for ways to infuse a more international perspective into your teaching. This is rich portal that provides links to a wealth of resources; the Issues in Depth page alone is phenomenal.

- Blogs and Wikis in Your Field—I can’t guess what the blogs and wikis in your discipline are, but I can assume that there are a number of them and that they are worth exploring. They not only can provide interesting insights you can share with students, but they can nourish your own research as well.

**A Grand Web**

I must admit that most of these resources were pointed out to me by others. I was going to mention a number of people by name, but as I began to list them, I realized that I could never manage to include everyone. Why? Because just like the Web itself, the way we use this resource is web-like, with one person mentioning a site, which another person then gives hints on using, and so on. It is like Darwin’s tangled bank—there’s a grandeur to it.

**Create Your Own Web Site with Campusguides**

Want to learn how to easily create and publish your own Web site. This workshop will include a brief introduction to Campusguides and its various uses at St. John’s. Please bring your laptop for this hands-on training.

**Date:** Thursday, October 28  
**Time:** 3 to 4 p.m.  
**Location:** St. Augustine Hall room 307  
**To register:** Contact the CTL at CTL@stjohns.edu or at ext. 1859.
Faculty News

Professor Elizabeth Albert (Discover New York, alberte@stjohns.edu) showed three paintings in the group exhibition, “Quixotic Beast,” at the Under Minerva Gallery in Brooklyn.

Professor Linda Butti (Fine Arts, buttil@stjohns.edu) gave a lecture on “Frida Kahlo” at St. John’s University (September 2010); her work has been displayed in the “Fall Invitational” at Andrews Art Museum (October-November 2010) in a benefit for the NJ Foundation for the Blind hosted by the American Society of Contemporary Artists (October 2010) and in the “Creativity Continues” Invitational Italian Artists exhibit at Westchester Community College (October-November 2010).

Dr. Zhe-Sheng Chen (Pharmaceutical Sciences, chenz@stjohns.edu) received a grant for his anticancer study of Chinese herbs from Primary Care Medicine Association (October 2010); gave a talk, “Advances in Personalized Chemotherapy for Cancer and Anticancer Drug Research,” at the First Congress (Guangzhou, China); gave seminars at Central South University (Changsha, China) and Chinese University of Hong Kong (China); invited two visiting scholars Dr. Junjiang (John) Chen (MD., Guangdong Pharmaceutical University, China) and Miss Qisi Lu (medical student, Southern Medical University, China) to work at his laboratory; presented with students two papers, “Analogues of OSI-930, a Novel Dual c-kit and KDR Tyrosine Kinase Inhibitor, Reverse ABCG2-mediated Multidrug Resistance,” and “PDE Inhibitors as New MDR Modulators” at the annual North American ABC Genetic Workshop National Cancer Institute-Frederick, MD (September 2009).

Professor Connie J. Frisch-Cherniak (Fine Arts, frischcc@stjohns.edu) was the featured photographer for “Illusions” at CPG Gallery in Staten Island (September-October 2010).

Dr. Maura C. Flannery (Computer Science, Mathematics and Science, flannerm@stjohns.edu) presented a paper, “The Botanist as Artist” at the Botany 2010 Conference in Providence, RI (August 2010) and published an article, “Mimicking Nature, or At Least Trying To,” in The American Biology Teacher (September 2010).

Dr. Joseph A. Giacalone (Economics and Finance, giacaloj@stjohns.edu) presented a paper, “Medical Tourism: Profiling an Emerging Industry,” at the annual meeting of the Northeast Business and Economics Association in Morris-town, NJ (October 2010).

Dr. Anna D. Martin (Economics and Finance, martina@stjohns.edu) co-authored the article, “CEO Gender: Effects on Valuation and Risk,” in Quarterly Journal of Finance and Accounting (2009).


Dr. Sandra E. Reznik (Pharmaceutical Sciences, rezniks@stjohns.edu) published a letter to the Editor in Ethics and Medics (2010), in response to a commentary on her article entitled “Plan B: How Does It Work?” that was published in Health Progress (2010); was the featured speaker in a teleconference panel discussion, focused on the mechanisms of action of various emergency contraceptives, sponsored by the National Institute of Reproductive Health (September 2010).
Vincentian Mission: Opportunity and Responsibility-No.XXIX in the Series: Ambiguity and Ethics

Paul Gyllenhammer (St. Johns College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, gyllenhp@stjohns.edu)

In this Series, Vincentian Research Fellows from across the University share their experiences in actualizing the mission through their research, teaching and service. Below, Dr. Paul Gyllenhammer describes his efforts to assist students who have had little exposure to philosophy, grow in knowledge of outstanding philosophers but also to find place in their own lives for “reflection time to judge and to govern ourselves responsibly” and “to live honestly.” His approach facilitates the Mission statement concept: “analyze and articulate clearly what is, but also develop the ethical and aesthetic values to imagine and help realize what might be.”

Every year, I teach philosophy courses to undergraduate freshmen students at St. John’s. The vast majority of the freshmen have never taken such a course before and they come to class with a broad sense that philosophy raises odd questions, such as, “If a tree falls in the forest, and no one is there to hear it, does it make a sound?” They are, of course, correct in this assumption. Indeed, the spirit of philosophy is centered on perennial questions, which obviously have no definitive answers. Wisdom (sophia) springs from the capacity to question, only to the degree that we learn to love (philia) the process of questioning. What on earth could this mean, and how can this be taught in the classroom? First, let's look into the meaning of the love of wisdom.

In a world where results matter, philosophy is a peculiar discipline. Socrates, an icon of the philosophical life, is renowned for saying that, “Human wisdom is worthless.” Still he “Knows that he does not know anything,” and, in this way, he possesses wisdom. Is Socrates kidding? What kind of wisdom comes from claiming not to know anything? Isn’t Socrates simply opening the door to a live-and-let-live kind of attitude for, if people cannot know anything, then why bother arguing for this or that? But here’s the trick: Socrates’s central task in life is to reveal to others that they do entertain hard-headed prejudices about the nature of things as if they were unquestionable. As the “gadfly” of Athens (you know, the green colored horse-fly that bites off chunks of flesh), Socrates’s mission is to expose a person’s prejudices in public, leaving the interrogated person angry and humiliated. Of course, Socrates does not directly intend to humiliate the person. The humiliation is a result of having the truth of one’s intellectual arrogance revealed in the glaring daylight of an on-looking public. And that arrogance, says Socrates, consists in “Thinking you know something when you do not.”

Socrates’s mission is distinctly political. He is an idol buster for the good of the community. So, when he sees someone who is a leader in the community, he senses that this leadership role has gone to the person’s head. People look up to the leader for answers, and put their trust in his or her wisdom. Unfortunately, Socrates sees that the wisdom proffered by the leader is more godly than human. The weakness of the people is found in their tendency to need an earthly god to lead them, and there is always someone willing to exploit this weakness and take on the role. By exposing the ignorance of the leader to the people, the humiliation that ensues is clarifying and healthy for everyone. The leader is just one of us, a fallible human through and through. The leader’s ultimate sense of the nature of things is riddled with vagueness and ambiguity.

In the governance of ourselves, Socrates’s overtly political mission can serve as a guide. There are two dimensions to the human being: the engaged person and the reflective person. Is it possible to train ourselves to see the destructive prejudices that govern our own practical affairs? Is it possible to be a Socrates to oneself? This is seemingly impossible since the reflective self would have to come to the practical self with a view from outside of itself. How could this be done? I like to think that this is where my philosophy class can help.

(continued on next page)
In the freshmen course, I take a historical approach to philosophy, spending enough time with about four or five great thinkers, who have differing grand narratives or comprehensive views on the fundamental questions of life, so that students acquire a real sense of the inner workings of those philosophical positions. I let the students know that learning about these thinkers is not some ritualistic exercise developed by philosophy departments to keep them in business. To learn the thoughts of the great thinkers is to allow ourselves the reflective room to judge and to govern ourselves responsibly. The great thinkers are like Socratic friends, who can help us be on guard for those prejudices that rule our lives without our open and informed consent. Philosophy can help us be more objective about ourselves, which for Socrates is made possible by the virtue of humility. Philosophy cannot give answers to the ultimate questions of existence, but it can help us navigate our lives honestly.

Do You Want to Become More Engaged with Students?
The Department of Student Life would like to collaborate with you and provide students with opportunities to engage with faculty outside the classroom. Here are three ways you can become more involved:

Become a Faculty Moderator
Through our “FOCUS” program, faculty members can assist student organizations by serving as a faculty moderator. Faculty moderators are able to share their wisdom, experience, resources, and influence to help organizations provide high-quality experiences. The faculty involved with student organizations will create the critical co-curricular academic link between outside-the-classroom programming and the academic experience. The leadership of the student organization, faculty member, and Student Life liaison will work to facilitate meaningful and purposeful interactions between the organization and its leaders.

Faculty Forums
We would like to create a “Faculty Forum” series where faculty members can have engaging roundtable discussions with students in an informal setting throughout the year. Faculty members can address topics in their field of study or research.

Involved in our Leadership Programs
Student Life provides 3 Student Leadership Programs: LEAD Student Leadership Program, Women In Leadership Program, and Servant Leadership Program. We are looking for more faculty members to serve as facilitators of the workshops we offer. For more information about the Student Leadership Programs, please visit our website: www.stjohns.edu/campus/queens/studentlife/leadershipdev

If you are interested in becoming involved in any of the above Programs, please contact Natalie Maio, Associate Director of Leadership Development, at 718-990-2103 or maion@stjohns.edu. Student Life looks forward to working with you this year!!

Faculty and Student Engagement
The Office of Student Life hosts a large number of events which students and faculty can enjoy together. These are opportunities for you to interact with your students outside of the classroom. Here are a couple of items that might be of interest to you and your students:

- Student Engagement Brochure
- “Reading Memoirs” Book Discussion Group
The Office of Grants and Sponsored Research (OGSR): Complete Support for your Sponsored Projects

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

The Office of Grants and Sponsored Research is a full-service sponsored programs office, dedicated to assisting University faculty and administrators with grant proposals and projects. The office assists in: identification of appropriate funding opportunities; preparation of complete and responsive grant proposals; regulatory compliance issues; negotiation of agreements and contracts; and establishing subcontractual arrangements with other universities, labs and hospitals. In line with the University’s Strategic Plan, this year we particularly encourage proposals that seek to advance the strategic themes of Mission, Engagement and Global.

Additional information is available at http://intranet.stjohns.edu/about/departments/provost/grants. A few opportunities and programs are summarized below. To learn more about them or other sponsored program or research issues, please contact us and we will be happy to assist you. The office is located in Newman Hall, Room 108, telephone: (718) 990-6276.

Some Upcoming Events and Opportunities: Grant Workshops

Despite the challenging economic climate, grant opportunities continue to be available in both academic and administrative areas. The Office of Grants and Sponsored Research (OGSR) offers workshops this semester to provide essential information about grant writing procedures and policies. Please encourage members of your areas to take advantage of these workshops which are led by Jared Littman, Director of OGSR. They will be held in St. Augustine Hall (Library) Room 308 from 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.

- Thursday, October 21: Creating a Budget for a Grant Proposal
- Tuesday, October 26: The Proposal Submission Process in an Electronic Era

To register: Please respond to Adrianna Berlingerio at berlinga@stjohns.edu.

National Institute of Health (NIH) Application Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NIH Program</th>
<th>Dollar Limit</th>
<th>Award period limit</th>
<th>Applications Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Project Grant Program (R01)</td>
<td>Generally no specific dollar limit</td>
<td>3 – 5 years</td>
<td>October 5, February 5, and June 5.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small Grant Program (R03)</td>
<td>Maximum $50,000 of direct costs per year.</td>
<td>2 years; not renewable</td>
<td>October 16, February 16, and June 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Conferences and Scientific Meetings (R13)</td>
<td>Amounts vary</td>
<td>Up to 5 years</td>
<td>April 12, August 12 and December 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Research Enhancement Award (AREA, R15)</td>
<td>$300,000 in direct cost over entire project period</td>
<td>Up to 3 years</td>
<td>October 25, February 25, and June 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Award (R21)</td>
<td>275,000 in direct cost over 2 years</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>October 16, February 16, and June 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Trial Planning Grant (R34) Program</td>
<td>Usually maximum $100,000 direct costs</td>
<td>Usually held to one year</td>
<td>October 16, February 16, and June 16</td>
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Other Events

- Research Collaboration Luncheon – Meet and collaborate with other St. John’s researchers
- Fulbright Scholar Program Workshop - Meet with a representative from the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES)
- INFO Ed International SPIN Profile / Funding Area of Interest Form – Tools to assist in finding funding opportunities based on your research interests.
Responding to the Higher Education Act: Student Consumer Information Page
Christine M. Goodwin (Director of Data Management, Analysis, and Reporting, Office of Institutional Research, goodwinc@stjohns.edu)

The Higher Education Act requires colleges and universities to disclose particular information to students and parents as well as to potential students/parents. To make it easier, St. John’s has established a one-stop Student Consumer Web Page found at http://www.stjohns.edu/about/general/consumer_information.stj that contains links to these important topics. It is also a resource for faculty, staff, and administrators to use when responding to questions about the university or assisting students in finding information. Information available includes financial aid, student diversity, retention rates, graduation rates, career center, computer use and file sharing, health and safety, students with disabilities, and campus security. Feel free to take a peek yourself or provide the link the next time someone asks you a question about St. John’s.

WAC and the CTL Invite You to a Faculty Writing Retreat
The Faculty Writing Retreat on Monday, November 1 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. 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 colleagues at other institutions who regularly host faculty writing retreats – all tell 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. And, if you would like some feedback on your writing, we are quite sure you will be able to find another colleague who would also like feedback – and the IWS has wonderful spaces for such exchanges. But you are not required to share your writing or seek feedback. This day is about spending time writing, writing, revising, writing, revising and writing among your colleagues who are doing the same; then ending each day by celebrating the feeling of having gotten some substantial writing done.

There’s good evidence that writing retreats are valuable, especially if faculty arrive with realistic goals, use the weeks leading up to the retreat preparing to write (researching, thinking, organizing), and use the weeks following to keep writing without losing momentum. Perhaps some faculty writing/response groups might even form out of this retreat. Research shows such groups help faculty become more productive.

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

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.
Journal Club: Lost Arts of Teaching

Does technology really improve teaching? Is technology a substitute for good teaching? These are some of the questions suggested by this article. Please join us for a discussion of what constitutes good teaching and how technology can foster it.

To read the article: “Lost Arts of Teaching”

Wednesday, October 27
1:20 to 3 p.m.
Library room 110, Queens Campus

To register: Call the CTL at ext. 1859 or email us at CTL@stjohns.edu.

Classrooms in the Clouds

Please join Online Learning and Services for “Classrooms in the Clouds” a series of brown bag lunches devoted to exploring issues in distance learning pedagogy, hybrid or blended courses, and other varieties of Web-assisted instruction. The focus of the lunches will be on faculty group discussion; it will be a place to bring new paradigms and innovations, share best practices, and discuss problems as they arise. Topics may include: constructing community, developing a synchronic spontaneity, using wikis, blogs, gaming, podcasting, social networking, and exploring many other tools for teaching online across disciplines.

We are looking for faculty who would be willing to make a short presentation (15 minutes) at the start of lunch. Do you have a pedagogical tool, recent innovation, or notable experience to share? Please contact Dr. Jennifer Travis, travisj@stjohns.edu to schedule your talk.

Meetings are scheduled for Tuesdays, November 9th and 30th in Bent Hall 277 from 12-1 p.m. For additional information contact Elizabeth Alexander at: alexande@stjohns.edu.

Blackboard Workshops

These Blackboard 6 workshops cover structure and organization, functionalities and navigation. Some of the new functionalities include editing your own posts, creating course announcements, the ability to see who is online in your class and IM to them, file, quiz and message board functions, along with student tracking features.

Faculty without previous online or hybrid courses will need to learn Blackboard 6 to create new courses within empty Blackboard 6 shells.

Join these Blackboard 6 workshops to learn the valuable skills needed to navigate the new Blackboard 6 with ease. The rooms have computers, however, if you have a laptop, it is recommended to bring it to the workshop so you are working on a machine which is familiar to you.

Basic Intro, Announcements, Mail and Discussion Board - Wednesday, October 20, 1:30-2:30 in SUL 214

Students, Files and Backups - Thursday, November 4, 3:00-4:00 in SUL 205

Grades, Assignments and Quizzes - Tuesday, November 16, 1:30-2:30 in SUL 205

Questions can be directed to Prof. Edith Chasen-Cerreta, Institute of Core Studies, Scientific Inquiry at: chasene@stjohns.edu.