Center for Teaching and Learning Newsletter

Dates to Note!!

Tuesday, February 2
Journal Club: Thinking Outside the Classroom
12:15 to 1:15 p.m.
Library 110

Wednesday, February 3
Teaching Honors Courses
Noon to 2 p.m.
Rosati Conference rm, Sl

Wednesday, February 10
Library/Faculty Collaborations
Noon to 1 p.m.
Library 110

Tuesday, February 16
The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning as a Way to Improve Student Performance
12:15 to 1:15 p.m.
Library 110

Wednesday, February 24
New Faculty Luncheon
Noon to 1 p.m.
Library 110

Thursday, February 25
Journal Club: Minds on Fire
2 to 3 p.m.
Library 110

To RSVP phone us at ext. 1859 or email us at CTL@stjohns.edu.

CTL January Newsletter

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

Highlights from our January issue include:

Vincentian Mission: Opportunity and Responsibility
The 350th Anniversary: Mission of charity, Justice and Systemic Change

Mary Ann Dantuono

Faculty News

Engaging Students in the Course Evaluation
Marie Mark

The First Annual Undergraduate Applied Social Justice Research Essay Competition

Where to Look

CTL Spring Calendar of Events

Faculty News

If you would like to send an entry to “Faculty News,” the deadline for the February issue is February 1. 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 place to look for faculty-related information is http://www.stjohns.edu/ctl.

Mary Ann Dantuono, J.D. (Vincentian Center for Church and Society, dantuonom@stjohns.edu)

In this Series of essays, Faculty Research Fellows from the Vincentian Center for Church and Society and the Vincentian Chair of Social Justice share their experience in actualizing the Mission through their research, teaching and service. In this column, Mary Ann Dantuono, who in addition to her service at St. John’s serves as a Faculty Expert for the Holy See Mission at the United Nations and teaches Catholic Social Thought at Molloy College, discusses the interrelationship of charity, justice and systemic change. During this 350th anniversary year of the deaths of St. Vincent and St. Louise, it is appropriate to reflect on the Vincentian emphasis on methods and programs which build sustainable structures and systems. It is also fitting to consider the special situation of women and children and to recognize St. Louise, a strong advocate for women who were in the 17th century, and continue to be, disproportionately the victims of poverty and discrimination.

In establishing the Systemic Change Commission of the Vincentian Family, the Very Rev. Gregory Gay, C.M. stated, “We are called upon to start actions, especially political actions, to eradicate the causes of poverty and unite in solidarity for justice in favor of the poor, because unjust systems created by selfish hearts have caused social, political and economic poverty.” As we enter into this jubilee year for the Vincentian Family, the 350th anniversary of the deaths of St. Vincent and St. Louise, we are challenged to examine the role of Vincentian Higher Education with a systemic change approach. What contributions can we make to further the efforts to achieve the alleviation of poverty and elimination of unjust systems?

In January of 2009, Patricia P. de Nava, a member of the Systemic Change Commission addressed our University Community in the Vincentian Chair of Social Justice Lecture. As a member of the commission she sought first to understand the concept. “We had to learn to see the world anew and to introduce new dimensions and wider perspectives. It was imperative to understand why some Vincentian projects are successful and change the lives of many poor persons and why many others are only palliative and maintain the prevailing standards of poverty.”

The Vincentian systemic change approach to poverty is never a quick fix, but rather is creative, practical and sustainable. It requires integrating concepts that confirm an individual’s dignity, encourage personal growth and self-determination, and alleviate societal issues that hinder a person’s full participation in society. It requires analysis of the root causes of a situation and considering all the systems that affect the situation as well as individual needs and concerns. Systemic change looks to create long-term effects for people and communities. In identifying systemic change projects, the Commission established five criteria: 1. Long-range social impact; 2. Sustainability; 3. Replicability; 4. Scope; and 5. Innovation--transforming traditional practices. As scholars in a Vincentian University, we can expand knowledge of the concept and also provide analysis of its successes and failures from various perspectives.

For example, as a faculty expert at the United Nations, I along with colleagues, will continue the discussion of the role of women in development. As we pass the 30th Anniversary of the Convention For The Elimination Of All Forms Of Discrimination Against Women and approach Beijing+15, the “feminization of poverty” sounds an ominous toll not just for women, but for the family and society as a whole. It is imperative
that we seek new ways for women to exit poverty and become empowered as equal members of society because the impoverishment of women globally is growing, not diminishing.

Women make up 70 percent of the world's 1.5 billion people living in absolute poverty (less than $1 US dollar a day) yet women perform 66 percent of the world's work, produce 50 percent of the food, but earn 10 percent of the income and own 1 percent of the property. In the United States, the poverty rate is higher for women as well. In 2007, 13.8 percent of females were poor compared to 11.1 percent of men. The percentages vary but the poverty rates are higher for women in all racial and ethnic groups, age groups, and women with or without children. Women are paid 77 percent of what men earn, even with the same qualifications. Additionally, women spend much more time than men providing care for children, the elderly and disabled family members. This “work” is not recognized or compensated, yet it is an invaluable contribution to society.

The path to empowerment and systemic change requires access to education, access to job training, jobs, and credit. It requires laws that provide equality, equal protection, security and property rights. These achievements must be not only de jure but de facto. Securing implementation of the law by training judges, law enforcement personnel and the media is required to change attitudes and ensure the path to empowerment. This path must also include challenging various cultural norms when they infringe on the dignity of the human person. Additionally, as we look at all the systems impacting a particular woman and women in general, we need to examine and re-examine how women are viewed in society and the role of men in the care work required to raise children, care for disabled family members and the elderly. This is the broad perspective needed to see the world anew and to introduce new dimensions and sustainable solutions.

In research and in the classroom as we enter the second decade of the 21st century, and 350 years since the death of St. Vincent and St. Louise, we continue the Vincentian mission by contributing to a greater understanding of the Vincentian systemic change approach. As we move forward in this anniversary year, let us commit individually and collectively to devote intellectual energy to exploring the systemic change approach within our own disciplines, in our service projects and programs, and in sharing an interdisciplinary perspective on this concept. When reflecting on the story of the Good Samaritan, Frederic Ozanam stated, “Charity is not sufficient. It treats the wounds but does not stop the blows that cause them. Charity is the Samaritan who pours oil on the wounds of the traveler who has been attacked. It is justice’s role to prevent the attacks.” I suggest that the systemic change approach is the “scholar of the law” who asks the first question in the story of the Good Samaritan—“And who is my neighbor?” This is the question that has the potential to eradicate the causes of poverty, unite us in solidarity for justice in favor of people who are poor throughout the world, and prompt us to view the world anew leading to new understandings, knowledge and sustainable solutions for a more just and peaceful world.

1ASD, 2005
Faculty News


Dr. Maura C. Flannery (Computer Science, Mathematics and Science, flannerm@stjohns.edu) published an article, "The Mirage of Health," in The American Biology Teacher (November/December 2009).

Dr. Sandra E. Reznik (Pharmaceutical Sciences, rezniks@stjohns.edu) presented a seminar entitled "From Mice to Microarrays: Identifying the Key Players in Infection-Associated Preterm Birth" to the Department of Applied Sciences at Winthrop Hospital, Mineola, NY; published an article entitled "What Does Science Tell Us About How Plan B Works?" in Health Progress and served as an ad-hoc member of the NIH Pregnancy and Neonatology (PN) Study Section (October 2009).

Dr. Richard Stalter (Biological Sciences, stalterr@stjohns.edu) published the article, “Community Development Following Gamma Radiation at a Pine-Oak Forest, Brookhaven National Laboratory, Long Island, New York,” in the American Journal of Botany (December 2009).

Dr. Charles Wankel (Management, wankelc@stjohns.edu) co-published a chapter, “Is the Fight against Corruption Based on Programs or Values? Intel Corporation Case Study,” in Biznes Prawo Etyka [Business, Law, Ethics] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Akademickie I Profesjonalne Spolka, 2009).

Faculty News

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Engaging Students in the Course Evaluation
Marie E. Mark (Institutional Research, markm@stjohns.edu)

By now, everyone whose course was evaluated during the Fall should have received their reports. As part of our continuing and expanding efforts to increase student participation in the course evaluation, Student Government Inc. assisted us. SGI implemented several new methods of outreach among students including: placing signs on tables throughout the Library reminding students to complete their evaluations; arranging and advertising locations for laptop setups throughout the University where students could access and complete their evaluations; and creating and displaying posters promoting the course evaluation at various locations on campus.

I would like to share some suggestions that others have made about how to continue to engage students in the course evaluation, beginning at the start of the Spring semester. For example, during the first class, you could describe the course evaluation process to new students and share some of the feedback received from students in the Fall, as well as explain how you use that information to change your course. Also, you could share the following link to the Frequently Asked Questions about the Student Course Evaluation (which includes a link to the evaluation form) on the Office of Institutional Research’s website: http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/online/faqs.stj

You might also want to mention the course evaluation on your syllabus. Another proposal would be to ask students for feedback about your course at mid-semester which would allow for changes to be made before the following semester. If you would like further information about how to accomplish a mid-semester assessment of your course, or, if you have any questions or suggestions concerning the course evaluation, please contact me at markm@stjohns.edu or x6998.

One final suggestion to engage students (which I know some of you already do) is to send an email to your students at the start of the course evaluation period requesting them to participate in the evaluation and informing them of its importance. You could also inform them in this same message of the approximate time it takes to complete, about 10 minutes.

Engaging students in the course evaluation is an ongoing process that requires the input and support of all of us. I hope you find the aforementioned suggestions useful.

The First Annual Undergraduate Applied Social Justice Research Essay Competition
Sponsored by St. John’s University Libraries and The Friends of the Library
The competition is open to all current St. John’s University undergraduate students of any discipline.

FIRST PRIZE $500
SECOND PRIZE $300

Essays will be judged by the following criteria:
* Excellence in undergraduate research with extensive use of the St. John’s Libraries’ collections
* Demonstrated ability to evaluate and synthesize library resources
* Shows evidence of developing an understanding for the processes of research and inquiry
* Cogent explanation of relationship between this research and applied Catholic social justice teaching
* Displayed originality of thought and depth of research
* Clarity of the writing, organization and proper documentation
* No more than 12 double-spaced pages (entries can be between 5 and 12 pages) using standard 12-point font
* Properly cited and formatted using MLA, APA, Chicago or appropriate discipline citation standards

(continued on page 8)
WHERE TO LOOK
There’s so much good information on the web that it’s impossible to keep up with it. That’s where colleagues come in handy. There are a number of generous souls who, when they find something interesting on the Web, take the time to send me the link. Over the past few weeks, here are some of the gems they passed along. I know I am certainly missing some that were sent—that I didn’t think to save, so I apologize to the people who I haven’t cited.

An Artist’s Ideas
One of the great values of the Internet is the ability to watch great videos on YouTube. Yes, there’s a great deal of junk there, but also many, many jewels. Take for example, a video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAT7mQ8swS4) that Paul Fabozzi of the Art Department did describing how he came to create a series called Spectral Variants. It has been displayed in the lobby of 601 Lexington Avenue, formerly known as the Citigroup Center, and Paul explains how this series developed from walks he took around the city, including in the vicinity of this building. This is a nice introduction to his work and to the thought processes of an artist. Watching it might also whet your appetite for other videos you might be able to use in class. (Sent by Julie Upton)

How Is the Internet Changing the Way You Think?
The Edge Foundation’s mission is to promote the investigation of issues at the junction of science and culture. Among its projects is a question it posts at the beginning of each year, and for which it solicits answers from leading intellectuals and from the public. This year’s question is about how the Internet is changing the way we think—definitely an idea that has been in the air for some time, but one in need of much explorations. A visit to the web site that deals with answers to this question (http://edge.org/) is well worth the trip, though it can be time-consuming since there are links to so many good articles and ideas. (Sent by Bill Keogan)

Teaching Differently
In the January 3, 2010 issue of the Chronicle of Higher Education there was an article about Elaine Smokewood, an English professor at Oklahoma City University and how her teaching changed after she was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) or Lou Gehrig’s disease (http://chronicle.com/article/Taught-by-a-Terrible-Disease/63347/). In the article, Jeffrey Young describes how since Smockwood developed ALS she has gone from an active, dynamic teacher in the classroom, to an online-teacher who listens more and allows her students to be more active learners. She has lost her ability to speak, so she uses a voice synthesizer, limiting the amount she can say. She sees this as a good thing because she no longer sees as the most important person in the room. Now she views her students as pivotal to the success of a class and her students have risen to the challenge. ALS is obviously a drastic reason for altering your teaching style, but this story is a reminder that we can all do better if we just take a close and critical look at what we are, and are not, doing in the classroom. (Sent by Susan Schmidt-Horning)

Tan and TED
The novelist Amy Tan has done a presentation for TED, which is available as a video cast (http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_tan_on_creativity.html). TED is a nonprofit organization devoted to “ideas worth spreading.” They host conferences and then post the presentations on the web. There is a fascinating variety to these, and you are bound to find some that you’ll love. The Amy Tan video is witty and interesting, whether you want to be a writer or even more creative in any field. (Sent by Heidi Upton)
Center for Teaching and Learning: Spring 2010 Calendar of Events

We hope many of the CTL events listed below will interest you. Please take a look at our calendar and phone us at ext. 1859 or email us at CTL@stjohns.edu to RSVP for one or more of these events. There will be a detailed announcement in the St. John’s University Web Digest for each event.

Student Engagement

Three Great Faculty Ideas for Student Engagement: An Introduction**
Steven Graham, Kristin Prevellet, and William Torgerson
Tuesday, January 26, 12:15 to 1:15 p.m., Marillac 330

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning as a Way to Improve Student Performance**
Steven Graham
Tuesday, February 16, 12:15 to 1:15, Library 110

Helping Students to Analyze Readings**
Kristin Prevellet
Wednesday, March 3, 2 to 3 p.m., Library 110

The Pedagogical Workshop as a Form of Faculty Development**
William Torgerson
Wednesday, March 31, 2 to 3 p.m., Library 110

Faculty Development

Journal Club: Thinking Outside the Classroom**
Tuesday, February 2, 12:15 to 1:15 p.m., Library 110

Library/Faculty Collaborations**
Wednesday, February 10, noon to 1 p.m., Library 110

New Faculty Lunch**
Wednesday, February 24, noon to 1 p.m., Library 110

Journal Club: Minds on Fire**
Thursday, February 25, 2 to 3 p.m., Library 110

Women's History Month: Working Women and Economic Independence, 1865-1920**
Lara Vapnek and Sumitra Shah
Tuesday, March 2, 12:15 to 1:15 p.m., Library 110

Journal Club: In Praise of Education as a Time-Release Capsule**
Thursday, March 25, 2 to 3 p.m., Library 110

Staten Island

Teaching Honors Courses**
Rachel Hollander
Wednesday, February 3, noon to 2 p.m., Rosati Conference Room

Incorporation Global Themes into the Classroom**
Monday, March 1, 12:15 to 1:15 p.m., Rosati Conference Room

Journal Club: In Praise of Education as a Time-Release Capsule**
Monday, March 22, 12:15 to 1:15 p.m., Rosati Conference Room

Exploring the Vincentian Mission**
Ellen Boegal
Wednesday, April 7, 12:15 to 1:15 p.m., Rosati Conference Room

Research Month

Faculty Research Forum
Thursday, April 8, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., D’Angelo Center 416

Interdisciplinary Research Roundtable: Writing Biography**
Julia Upton, RSM
Monday, April 12, noon to 1:30 p.m., Law School Private Dining Room

(continued on next page)
**CTL Calendar of Events continued**

Interdisciplinary Research Roundtable: VISA**
Richard Sinatra
Monday, April 19, noon to 1:30 p.m., Library 110

CTL Fellows’ Presentations on Teaching and Technology**
Danielle Ezzo, Paula Lazrus, Charles Livermore
Wednesday, April 21, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m., Bent Hall 277B

Interdisciplinary Research Roundtable: Global Education**
Matthew Pucciarelli
Monday, April 26, noon to 1:30 p.m., Library 110

To register: Call the CTL at ext. 1859 or e-mail us at CTL@stjohns.edu.

**The CTL Certificate Program:** If you attend four or more of our events during the semester you will receive a certificate at the end of that semester and all of the sessions will be listed on the certificate.

(Research Essay Competition continued from page 5)

Research projects may be either based upon independent research or a class assignment, and must have been completed during the 2009-2010 academic year. By submitting an essay for consideration, applicants certify that the essay is his/her own work, and that all sources have been given proper credit. All essays must be written in English. Essays will be reviewed by an academic committee.

Applicants are required to submit their contact information, a brief abstract, and a bibliography, along with a letter of recommendation from a supervising faculty member, no later than February 1, 2010.

The deadline for submission of the essay is February 26, 2010. Essays should be sent electronically as an attachment (MS Word or PDF format) via the St. John’s University student email account. Send the essays to Caroline Fuchs at fuchsc@stjohns.edu or Kathryn Shaughnessy at shaughnk@stjohns.edu with the subject line “2009-2010 contest submission.” Essays should contain a title page that includes 1) essay title, 2) student’s name, 3) student’s email address, mailing address & phone number, and 4) name and contact information for supervising faculty.

Winners will be honored at a library reception during Research Month in April, in which they will give a short presentation on their research topics. Their essays will be published on the library blog. For further information concerning the contest and submissions to the essay competition, contact Caroline Fuchs at fuchsc@stjohns.edu or call 718-990-5050.