

teaching,  
scholarship,  
service

an anthology of  
faculty statements



**TEACHING, SCHOLARSHIP,  
SERVICE: AN ANTHOLOGY OF  
FACULTY STATEMENTS**



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**Faculty of Gustavus Adolphus College**

**Folke Bernadotte Memorial Library**  
St. Peter, MN

TEACHING, SCHOLARSHIP, SERVICE: AN  
ANTHOLOGY OF FACULTY STATEMENTS

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# Introduction | Barbara Fister

One of the most important and demanding faculty committee assignments at Gustavus Adolphus College is serving on the Personnel Committee. Nine faculty elected by their peers evaluate the work of their colleagues and makes recommendations to the administration and Board of Trustees both at the time of tenure (usually after a six-year probationary period) and again when faculty apply for promotion to full professor. These decisions are important, both for the candidate who, if tenure is denied, has to seek work elsewhere, and for the committee members, who must evaluate each candidate's fitness for long-term employment at the College.

To a large extent, a college *is* its students and the faculty who teach them; all the rest is there to support those two groups working together. Because teaching and learning is at the heart of what we do, the committee evaluates their colleagues in multiple ways, including classroom visits, reviewing student evaluations of teaching, examining the candidate's syllabi, scholarly works, and record of service, and reading letters submitted by colleagues both at the College and from other institutions. Candidates submit a record of their work along with a statement in which they describe how they approach teaching, what their scholarship is about and why it matters, how they have served the college, and how all of these things align with the college's mission.

When I served on the committee some years ago, I was impressed by the scholarship submitted by candidates. I was fascinated by the classes I visited (and reminded of how much I don't know). And I was inspired by the statements, eloquent reflections on what these scholar-teachers do, what they believe, and how their work and their identity as scholars and teachers is tied to the mission of the College. It seemed a shame that they were read by so few.

That's why I asked colleagues who have gone through the process in recent years if they would mind sharing their statements, from which this anthology is drawn. Some of the contributors were candidates for tenure, and others were further in their career and being considered for the rank of full professor. Each of these faculty members has gone on to new teaching responsibilities, additional scholarship, and new kinds of service. These statements reflect their thoughts when they were up for tenure or promotion to full professor rather than their current record of accomplishments. Still, these writings do present a snapshot of how thoughtfully faculty approach their work as teachers, scholars, and members of an educational community.

Browsing through these statements will give readers some insight into who these teacher/scholars are, what they do, and how their life's work contributes toward making the college a very special community. I think you will be inspired, just as I was.

***Acknowledgements.*** This project is one of several efforts that librarians at the Folke Bernadotte Memorial Library are making to support open access to scholarship. I am indebted to Hugh McGuire, founder of PressBooks, to the John S. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning for providing me a grant to attend THATCamp Publishing in Baltimore in October, 2011, to the THATCamp community for inspiring this project, and to the Gustavus faculty who were generously willing to share their statements with the wider community. Chapter titles are drawn from their statements.

PART I

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Teaching

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# The Best Teachers are Tinkerers | Pam Kittelson

“It is not the strongest of the species that survive nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.”

*Author unknown, commonly misattributed to Charles Darwin*

As a first generation graduate, college opened doors that were not only closed, but also opened ones I never knew existed. College changed my life. Correction, a liberal arts college changed my life. As such, I firmly believe in the transformative power of place like Gustavus where students not only gain understanding of a major subject, but develop an interdisciplinary understanding of how and why the world may work, nurture curiosity and become intellectually resilient in the face of change. At Gustavus, I also have found opportunities to develop skills as a teacher, mentor and researcher while contributing to a mission of a student-centered, interdisciplinary education.

**Current Practices.** Biology is the study of all life on this planet, of continuity and change, of intricate process conserved or newly invented, of the wild, diverse and mysterious. I have always found the subject intriguing. I enjoy sharing and exploring life with students. Teaching provides an opportunity to discover fascinating phenomena, revisit old ideas and to see how new experimental data are integrated. My objectives with students are to increase fluency and interest in the natural sciences, build practical skills applicable to work or advanced studies, and to help students become well-rounded citizens, capable of making informed decisions for their families and the community.

I love biology, but without students my excitement would wane. Students are collaborators in the experience. The quality (i.e. excellence) of my work is highlighted when students reach a higher level of competence, when they are proud in what they have learned, when they realize that their potential and interest can be nurtured through independent means, or when they appreciate the subject, even if initially reluctant. I recently overheard a conversation that impressed me; a student said “as I was listening to everyone’s presentations

yesterday, I got tears in my eyes. We were researching so many interesting subjects about plants' unique adaptations and yet plants are so underappreciated." I couldn't ask for a better outcome; she expressed enthusiasm for biology, for the learning process, and showed an overall appreciation for other forms of life. Thus, enthusiasm, interest in my work, and quality of my work are interconnected with students' experiences exploring the material.

To fulfill class objectives, I use the scientific method because it is a profoundly effective way to know and understand the world. During labs and field trips my students test hypotheses, collect data, analyze information and present conclusions. They must be capable of reading, constructing and interpreting a variety of data sets and graphs. On exams or homework, they must understand and manipulate equations that describe biological phenomena. A good science education should furnish students with the ability to ask important questions, design appropriate experiments to test hypotheses, and draw conclusions from statistical summaries or other data. These approaches help students develop logic and critical understanding.

I am a broadly trained biologist who can teach across a wide range of subdisciplines. As a 'big picture' ecologist, complex interactions, context and contingency matter more than reductionism. That said, students in my classes still must synthesize a tremendous amount of material. I encourage students to become self-directed without dictating a single way to answer the question, but I also emphasize that some answers are more accurate than others. I encourage them to build a synthetic understanding, and critically evaluate rather than simply memorizing and reciting. My goals are to prepare students for complexity, and to encourage them to contribute to the process of building explanations. I enjoy my role as a guide, not simply a purveyor of information.

Students possess a range of learning styles, so I use a variety of teaching methods and tools (e.g. student presentations, discussions, simulations, hands-on work, case studies and models). I challenge students to take control of their own learning. For example, I post lectures on Moodle and students work through the material outside of class; the next day we process the information. In lecture students also are forced to apply or evaluate material. A student states in an evaluation, "She pushed us to figure out things using available resources and think creatively and deductively rather than just give us all the answers." I set up labs employing a variety of specimens from herbaria, museums or surrounding habitats. I take students into the field to ask questions, illustrate ideas or patterns. By incorporating more active learning into class, my students have the opportunity to excel in their strengths and develop new methods for integrating the material. Students lead discussions and must contribute to the group by both understanding and actively discussing issues. I build case studies to demonstrate the dynamic nature of biological discovery and its relevance to their lives. I teach across the curriculum by incorporating mathematics, statistics, geography, physical



science, philosophy, literature and history. These subjects easily fit with biology courses, piquing student interest.

Writing, computational and verbal skills are incorporated into my courses at all levels. I want students to refine skills as communicators. In advanced courses I assign short reports based on data they collect; the limited page length makes the students focus on clarity and brevity. Larger writing projects are also required and include literature reviews, grant proposals or research papers broken into steps so they can build a cogent product. On longer papers (~12 pages) students interpret and synthesize a large amount of research. I require that they exchange and critique drafts, and discuss strategies for improvement. Students learn how to modify their papers while realizing that writing is a process that benefits from time, editing and perspective. Students report significant improvement in writing abilities. Like writing, effective public speaking extends across the curricula and is a major requirement in each class I teach. Students give informative presentations or present independent research results in symposia. I also use different approaches when students discuss primary research articles. For example, after a brief period in small groups, students explain graphs or statistical analyses, they read opposing sides of issues and debate, or they choose a paper and lead the discussion. Students also must be able to express themselves using quantitative data. Usually these data are in the form of tables, models, graphs or statistical summaries. I expect students to develop quantitative reasoning skills and many assignments reinforce this expectation. I allow students to work together to analyze data, but they must be able to do it independently on other assignments or exams. They also must effectively use visual and quantitative expressions when developing oral or written arguments. As we progress, students become more fluent reading and discussing cutting-edge research, comfortable questioning one another and critiquing material, and comfortable developing evidence-based arguments.

Many of my students say that I am tough, but fair, which is a high compliment. One student commented, “She was flexible, but still pushed us. You learn an incredible amount without it seeming like it’s too much to handle. She’s challenging in a way that makes you determined to measure up to her standards, but not in a frustrating way.” I do have high standards for my students as well as myself; I challenge students with higher order assignments and exams, and in discussions, laboratories or lecture activities. I ask them to integrate information and experiences; I expect them to engage with diverse ideas and with one another. I have spent time trying to figure out what they mean by fair and how my teaching may embody it. I think that they mean that I am very clear with objectives and what basic knowledge they are expected to demonstrate. I provide guides to assist acquisition of knowledge; I give them ample opportunities to apply and synthesize in low stakes situations so that when they encounter similar harder questions on the exam they tackle it with

confidence. I also am available to help them in the journey. I try to understand where they are coming from when answering questions. I always get papers, exams and assignments back to them no later than a week after they turned it in. I tell them what they did right, compliment improvement and excellence, as well as suggest ways to modify approaches that are off-base. I acknowledge when I get something wrong or am unclear. Most of all I respect them as individuals and let them know that their grades are only a small part of their intellect. My methods help students at all levels succeed and raise their performance so that they can be well prepared for future endeavors.

The Wabash Study on the Liberal Arts reports characterizes good teachers as those that express clarity and organization, enthusiasm in material and pedagogy, and promptly provide feedback. These teaching practices coupled with challenging courses had the greatest effects on promoting academic and personal well-being, leadership, openness to ideas and ‘otherness’ and enhancing life goals. I’ve tried to take these results into consideration and I spend a lot of time thinking about course organization, clarity in communication and how I can foster their development via timely and constructive feedback.

### *Course development*

“Evolution is a tinkerer.” Francois Jacob

Many experts in education suggest that the best teachers are those that tinker; their classes are constantly in the process of modification. I evaluate and modify approaches in my classes based in part on student feedback and my own perspectives. I may be teaching the course for the eleventh time, but I commit to changing several aspects of the course each time. I formulate objectives and work backward to develop assignments and experiences that lead to these outcomes. Labs are updated, added or deleted each year. I alter post-lab assignments, discussion articles, case studies, simulations, tutorials or in-class activities. What follows are a few select examples of changes:

**Bio202 (Evolution, Ecology and Behavior)** A series of research seminars at UMT inspired me to develop a Hawaiian Island adaptive radiation assignment where students do research on one of the many groups (over 12 groups) that have undergone speciation events after arrival onto the archipelago. The activity provides students with a sense of how evolutionary processes on islands work. Ultimately they investigate, critically examine and reconcile loads of data that exist regarding evolution of species, and leave with a better understanding of how evolutionary processes can generate diversity.

In terms of teaching, Bio202 is a challenge as well as a reward. It is a large team-taught course (80 students) that comes at a crucial transitional time in their intellectual development (sophomore year shift to critical analysis and synthetic thinking), and it is a required class comprised of students with diverse interests. Recent evaluations suggest that I need to enhance organization, especially of class notes. Last year I overhauled my approach to lecture notes. In previous years, I used overheads and slides to pose

questions or post data that we worked through in class. Previous classes could readily organize their lecture notes accordingly, but in recent years fewer students accommodate this multi-‘media’ approach. I now provide them with an outline, graphs and diagrams and leave space for them to work through the activities sprinkled through lecture. However many supporting visuals print too small and do not have enough space to work out the activities. I refuse to supply them with all the notes and answers because I think it leads to too much passivity, so this component of the course is still a work in progress.

**Horticulture (IEX)** – I developed a portfolio project where students complete 18 assignments related to horticulture during the January term. The portfolio documents their progress in learning and doing horticulture while visually displaying the evolution of their aesthetic and design sense. It also was intended to be a resource guide for their future landscapes. This project was received very positively by students the first year that I assigned it, but in 2009 students expressed that some of the assignments were ‘busy work’ or that I was too demanding. I am in the process of modifying the assignments to ensure that the objectives are sound and a meaningful learning experience, but it is unlikely that I will completely pull back from the time I require they devote to January term.

**Plant Physiology (Bio377)** is a writing course (WD). I assign lay and professional writing assignments each year. In 2008 they wrote popular press essays as well as lab reports and a literature review. This year I added Wikipedia entries and deleted the essays. The Wikipedia entry generated a lot of excitement after they realized the paucity of plant-related entries. Using a multi-staged process they uploaded excellent contributions on subjects such as: abscission, plant circadian rhythms, cytoplasmic male sterility, and plant nutritional deficiencies such as magnesium, boron and sodium.

I also like to consider my courses holistically and how they complement other experiences in the curriculum. I read articles about teaching, I keep my eye open for how others teach similar courses (via the web and professional societies) and I attend conferences where we talk about teaching.

**Experiential components.** Field experiences are powerful opportunities to learn and retain material. In addition to getting my classes outside for labs I have facilitated wilderness experiences. I was a co-leader for a Everglades canoe trip where we designed a curriculum to build leadership skills and I for first-year orientation in the Boundary Waters. I taught a field-based class in California for several January terms. Time in wilderness is precious to me and I love sharing the beauty of it with others. I also was faculty director for the Social Justice, Peace and Development semester in India. I still struggle to succinctly articulate all that I learned in India regarding teaching and learning. It was a subtle but profound and meaningful shift in my attitude and approach to teaching. I better understand students, I better understand their

motivations and I better understand the power of an experiential education that includes components of social and environmental justice.

**Program development.** I have been part of conversations and meetings that have resulted in two Environmental Studies curriculum overhauls. In 2002 we developed the Introduction to ES course and the Senior Seminar. This year, we proposed a new core of ES classes: geochemistry, social science, conservation biology, humanities, and senior seminar. The first two are brand new classes. We also changed the requirements associated with the ES tracks; I was involved in discussions and decisions about course requirements for the life science track.

In the Biology Department I researched and promoted options that led to two major changes to Bio101. We developed a new non-majors course (Bio100) so that non-majors had options beyond Bio101. We also broke up the large 'feedlot-style' courses where we crammed 170 students each into two lecture sections. We now teach six smaller Bio101 courses (n=45-55). The students and many instructors prefer smaller classes for a variety of good pedagogical reasons. Across campus negativity about Bio101 has attenuated. These positive outcomes led to smaller courses in Bio102 and 201. I also have led conversations that review our core curriculum and collaboratively we have built quantitative, literacy and writing skills in our core in a step-wise manner. Since I teach in two core classes (the first and last) I take seriously my role at developing these skills.

This year I am Director of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Peer Mentoring Program. Brenda Kelly shaped and directed the program in its first year. The program has four objectives for students in introductory biology and chemistry courses (Bio101, 102, Che107, 141): to increase engagement in the subjects, promote development of learning skills and knowledge, to better understand the ethos of scientific inquiry, and create a supportive community of student-scholars. During the semester, students are required to go to 80% of the one hour sessions, which are led by peer mentors. I hire and train 13-17 Chemistry, Biology and Biochemistry majors as peer mentors. I help develop a semester long curriculum of supplemental activities in collaboration with the faculty teaching these courses. I also run weekly meetings that preview and assess the weekly activities; these meetings also give participating faculty the opportunity to better understand what students might understand or struggle with in their classes. For the peer mentors I conduct a one day orientation on peer teaching and facilitated a second experiential event intended to build leadership skills. We have begun to analyze outcomes. Relative to non-peer mentoring groups, we have observed that students possess increased independence and confidence in problem solving, a sense that science is collaborative, better critical thinking skills, increased interest and preparedness for independent research and interdisciplinary endeavors. Peer mentors deepened their understanding of the subjects, learned more about

group dynamics and learning styles, improved interpersonal communication and problem solving strategies, and gained better leadership skills. Peer mentors reported high levels of confidence personally and academically, a better understanding of what faculty face in teaching as well as pride in their peer mentoring role.

***Mentoring.*** Good teaching practices extend beyond the classroom and include quality non-classroom interactions. An important aspect of my job is to be available to students, to serve as an advisor and/or as a mentor. I currently have 42 advisees and write loads of recommendations for these and other students each year. Students find me approachable and accessible. In office hours I encourage effective study habits and show them different methods to enhance in- or post-class analysis and synthesis. My door is also open for conversations about vocation and life paths. I try to meet each student where they are at, but I also try to push them onto those less familiar trails. I am very interested in subjects outside the sciences (once a liberal arts student, always a liberal arts student) and encourage well-rounded growth. This year I am serving as an advisor for an interdisciplinary individualized major related to Social Justice, and I recently sponsored two independent projects on alternative physical therapies (yoga) and the ethnobotany of turmeric.

***Participation in workshops and seminars.*** Good teaching practices often are inspired by others. I stay abreast of teaching pedagogy and enjoy talking about teaching. After a Collaboration Conference I presented a summary about supplemental education programs that I thought would serve our students well; these ideas ultimately led to the development of our HHMI Peer Mentoring Program. A workshop for professors at the National Tropical Botanical Garden (Kenan Fellowship) led to the development of three new activities for Bio101, Bio202 and Plant Physiology. David Fienen invited me to participate in Teagle II discussions regarding high impact pedagogy at liberal arts colleges and it renewed my interest in how our peer mentoring program is a form of high impact pedagogy that can be more widely promoted and shared with other colleges. I also was invited by Dean Maguire to attend a NSF Project Kaleidoscope conference that discussed ways to transform science education and its facilities. This conference led to several physical changes in classrooms and labs with the goal of promoting interactive learning. This summer I participated in an ELCA World Hunger Workshop where I helped develop an active learning curriculum that addressed issues related to hunger and water. On campus I attend and present at Faculty Development sponsored events. I enjoy learning from talented colleagues and I have acquired new tools as a direct result of Kendall Center activities. Opportunities to present at Faculty development also allows me to reflect and share strategies or activities that have worked well for me.



## A Deep and Long Lasting Source of Happiness | Matt Panciera

When I first came to Gustavus I already had extensive teaching experience and as is the case with experience, especially in the profession of teaching, it is all useful. But I would say that since coming to Gustavus I have made fundamental changes in my teaching philosophy that have had a profound effect on all my interactions with students. If I had to boil these changes down to their essence, it would be that my teaching has become much more student-centered. This is not to say that the subject matter of my discipline is not important in my classes. In fact, I probably “cover” more material in my classes than ever before. Rather, I have come to realize that the most lasting and significant learning, in quantity and quality, happens when the students discover an inner motivation to do the work of the class.

I have found that I can best help students develop this inner motivation in a number of ways. First, my own enthusiasm and attitude towards the subject matter are crucial. I have come to see that students very much respond to the tone I set in class. Difficult material is best approached with an understanding of its complexity, but more importantly with confidence that the students can master it. My belief in their potential is a powerful catalyst. I also think it is important to model for them the joy I feel when I am learning. I burst with questions when I read ancient literature; I love fitting together the clues in Pompeian graffiti until I see some pattern emerge that no one has ever seen before. Students should be inspired to see the excitement that is inherent in true learning; and hopefully they will come to understand that this can be a deep and long lasting source of happiness for their entire lives.

Second, although students sometimes say they would prefer an “easy” class or an “easy” major, most of them understand that anything of value requires a great deal of effort. And ultimately they will only commit themselves meaningfully to work of real value. As a result, standards must be high, and students of all levels should feel challenged.

Third, while I incorporate many different types of assignment into a class, I believe discussion and writing are most central to their intellectual growth;

for it is in these activities that the students wrestle with ideas most directly. Discussion reveals to them the dynamic nature of the creation of ideas, where their own thoughts on a topic affect the understanding of the group and vice versa. They see that learning is a collaborative venture and begin to appreciate that there is often a wider wisdom to be found in the group. It is also here where they discover the excitement of seeing ideas develop and change in ways they had not envisioned beforehand. Although I have come to value discussion much more in my classroom, in many ways writing still stands at the core of the intellectual experience in my courses. In writing they experience learning as a more solitary and reflective activity, with many sometimes difficult stops and starts as they read and reread, think through questions, sort through evidence, and slowly transform ideas from the head to the page. There is joy here too, in the little flashes of insight that accompany the process and especially at the end when they realize they have created something that did not exist before.

Fourth, it is absolutely crucial that the students rediscover their own true curiosity. I often feel that this is probably my greatest challenge as a teacher, but it is not an intractable one. Education at any levels requires some measure of simply “knowing the material”, but too often this has become the dominant paradigm. They envision the central task as a transfer of knowledge from my head (or the textbook) to theirs. Yet this alone is not exciting enough for them to retain many of the “facts” they might acquire in the course nor does it lead to much intellectual growth. If, however, they develop the instinct to ask questions that they really want answered, suddenly the dynamic has changed; now they are driven from the inside to “know the material” and go far beyond that. It also makes the course relevant to them in ways that I might not have thought of. This ultimately leads to life-long learning and it makes teaching much more exciting for me. My courses are no longer circumscribed bodies of knowledge, but rather my teaching ideally establishes a foundation upon which students build and discover things that I had not planned.

Finally, I have come to realize that sometimes “less is more.” In other words, there are times in the semester-long span of a course where I do not need to squeeze out every last drop of learning in the way I had planned; it can be preferable to allow a day that had been organized with a particular goal in mind to go its own route. The benefit is always considerable in terms of energy level that arises from the spontaneity and discussions that range far and wide, but which show a deep engagement with the ancient material and its modern significance.

To illustrate how I have put the teaching philosophy described above into practice I would like to discuss in depth a few representative courses, as well as provide student comments to show their reaction to my teaching.

CUR 100 (Historical Perspective I), the first course in the curriculum 2 sequence, has had probably a greater impact on the way I teach than any other



course – in some ways it is most responsible for my development as a teacher, but it also shows the subsequent effects of my change. Historical Perspective I is an intensive introduction to the liberal arts and the life of the mind through a survey of western history from ancient Mesopotamia up to the Renaissance (with a strong focus on the Greeks). I inherited a great course, but while teaching it now on four occasions, each time with a different colleague, I have taken the lead in making changes that have further strengthened the course. There has always been a lot of challenging reading (2000+ pages as 2 students lamented in our end of term review revue in 2005), but I have added more – for example selections from the history of Herodotus – that have brought out even more the historical emphasis of the course. I have also rewritten many of the daily reflection questions to emphasize central, philosophical questions about history – for example, concerning the relation of “reality” to historiography – which has given the course greater continuity. I have done the same with the two essays that are assigned in the course, and I have streamlined the research paper to emphasize their observations and analysis of primary sources for the topic which they have chosen. In order to focus their efforts (and calm those overwhelmed by the amount of material) I have selected key terms, events, and people from the textbook for which they need to be prepared in the midterms and final exam. Towards the end of the semester I have incorporated many more creative assignments – for example, after reading some letters of Marsilio Ficino whose work was inspired by ancient literature I ask them to create something in response. They enjoy this immensely, especially the invitation to imitate the Renaissance intellectuals in creating something for their own age by taking off from an ancient idea. I also put in place an end of term session (known as the “review revue”) so they can blow off steam and prepare for the exam by retelling the history that they have learned in the course through skits and songs.

The things I have increasingly emphasized in the course grow out of the student-centered approach discussed earlier. First, I make them aware from the beginning that this is their course and their learning from each other in discussion is central to the experience. I did not always do this. I was naïve my first year in thinking they would talk about the reading just for the sheer pleasure of the ideas. So the next year I announced to them on the second day that I would sit outside the circle and only listen to their discussion of Gilgamesh. There was stunned silence, and for the next 50 minutes the conversation went in fits and starts, but every year I have been amazed at how this beginning sets the tone for their participation throughout the semester. I do not abdicate my responsibility to lead the group on many days, but I do work hard to vary my approach in getting them to talk: small group work is the best – everything from simply having them pair up to read each others’ response paper and then discuss, to “historical haiku” (what’s the gist of the reading in 17 syllables?) – but I also have them debate, and make

prepared presentations. Second, I make clear to them that for me, and for their grade, the writing stands at the intellectual core of the course. In my first year I did not often collect the daily response papers. This was a huge mistake and since then I have collected them regularly and commented on them. All the formal papers go through 2 drafts, between which I guide them through considerable rereading and rewriting. This year in fact I am trying something new to see if I can get the students to attend to my comments more carefully: instead of writing extensively on each paper, I will grade them more quickly in shorthand and have meetings with each student where they will take notes from our discussion on the things they need to do differently on the second draft. I am hoping that I can communicate much more and more effectively in person rather than giving them advice that they may not understand in my poor handwriting. Just the opportunity to evaluate whether they have understood the reading, which often is the problem of the paper, may make this worthwhile. And I use the research paper, which is on a topic of their choice, to emphasize the importance of becoming almost compulsively inquisitive, asking questions at every turn. In combination with this I stress that I am most interested in their assessment of the primary sources to answer such questions. The time will come at a later point when they can consider what modern scholars have said on their topic, but for now they need to think through the topic on their own. This gives them a wonderful sense of freedom and opportunity – no longer are they just gathering the expert opinion of others, but many of them suddenly feel like they have a part to play in the creation of knowledge. Finally, throughout the course I try to support them as well as challenge them and in everything I do I model my own joy of learning.

Introductory Latin has always been one of my favorite courses to teach. Even though it includes very little writing or discussion in the traditional sense, it still stands as a good example of my overall educational philosophy. The opportunities for learning are so varied that I sometimes describe it as cross training for the mind. The history of Latin and the grammar they give me many jumping off points to introduce various aspects of linguistics. Latin vocabulary provides the key to understanding a vast new storehouse of English words and I regularly incorporate this sort of expansion of their English vocabulary into the course. The fact that our textbook focuses on the youthful Horace provides a rationale for bringing his poems, translated, into class for discussion. In the first year that I taught Latin, as the country was gearing up for the Iraq war, we read Horace's Cleopatra Ode which is a sympathetic portrayal of her suicide at a time when she was Rome's sworn enemy and Horace himself wrote with the full support of the Roman leader Augustus. Similar discussions concerning Roman history and culture are possible at an infinite number of points throughout the course. For example, I have made a wax tablet and shown the students how difficult it is to write with a stylus – there is a reason the Romans preferred very linear scripts! I

have also given them a sample of the things that Pompeians liked to scrawl on their walls and taught them how to read graffiti, even when it is full of mistakes that even a 2<sup>nd</sup> semester Latin student would not make!

Yet the primary focus must remain on the language. Because most Gustavus students have had no experience with Latin in high school, almost all our majors go through the beginning Latin or Greek sequence and therefore it is paramount that they establish a solid foundation in the language. I have found that soft pedaling the difficulties of the language does no one any favors, especially if they continue on and read real Latin in later years. Typically I require a lot of memorization of grammar and vocabulary, and my tests always consist of long portions of freshly created Latin stories by me so that they truly must demonstrate that they are mastering the ability to read (rather than memorizing the stories in the book). I am not, however, averse to the sort of fun that language classes are quite good at. Eric Dugdale and I began having our introductory students write Latin haiku, a poetic form that actually works quite well with the compact nature of the language. And I have been known to lead my class in a rousing version of “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes” (the Latin – *caput, umeri, genua, digiti* – is actually quiet catchy), construct Latin crosswords, dramatize the daily reading, and play Latin boggle. Even with this delicate balancing act of teaching the language responsibly, introducing the Romans, and keeping a difficult subject spontaneous and fun, I feel I have been very successful at giving the general Gustavus audience a worthwhile and interesting language experience at the same time as preparing our majors well. The numbers in Latin during my time here have generally been healthy and growing.

The last class I would like to discuss is Greek 304, which is a new course on the Greek orators that we recently put into the curriculum. In order to demonstrate my teaching philosophy in detail I wanted to look at just a few courses more closely; but in order to give you confidence that these were not aberrations, that in fact the student-centered approach has taken hold deeply with me, I chose three very different classes in terms of subject matter, assignments, and focus on either general education or the major. At first glance any upper level Greek course would seem to lend itself to a specialized, almost pre-professional sort of teaching. They are typically small, taken by very good students who are intending to go on to graduate school, and full of esoteric material. If I ever wanted to teach in a graduate-seminar style, Greek 304 was my chance. But what happened, in retrospect, surprised me and showed me how much I have changed. At the same time as I was covering the material in a way that resembled some of my own graduate courses – large quantities of reading, a definite focus on the language, the reading of scholarly articles and commentaries – I really approached the course in the spirit of CUR 100 – in the spirit of a general education course. I kept big questions at the forefront and was constantly thinking about what I wanted them to take away from this

reading in case they never came this way again – my highest aim was to have them discover a joy and inner motivation to know more about this stuff. The result was, in my estimation, the best upper level language class I have ever taught – and this was a set of authors and genre that lies as far outside my area of expertise as any I have been asked to teach.

One of the most important things I did was to push all the Greek reading to Mondays and Fridays. This made for very long assignments in the original language on those days, but I made clear to them that we were not going to translate every word. They were responsible for it all so I expected them to come with passages where they had questions or particular topics of interest that they wanted to discuss. This inspired them to take more ownership of the class, both in terms of declaring where they had had difficulties but also in finding things that truly interested them. Then I reserved Wednesdays for the discussion of English articles and other activities. This had the effect of forcing us to take a break from the minutiae of the language and consider larger questions on a recurring basis. We were regularly talking about big issues concerning both rhetoric and law on those days and the discussion ranged from the ancient world to the modern and back again. There was even one Wednesday where we met down at the Nicollet county courthouse to watch legal proceedings in order to have a better sense of both the physical space but also the rhetoric of a modern trial. As the course went on I became more and more infected by a spirit of trying new things and one Friday we met down at Patrick's bar to do our reading. To my surprise not only did they stay on task for the assigned time, but we all sat and talked about Greek orators for a second hour! One week I had them write their own short speeches (in English), complete with the sorts of rhetorical moves that were common in ancient legal oratory, and they delivered them to the class. I think that the effect of all this "fun" was that it made them more tolerant of the large amount of Greek I was insisting they read and even the 4 hour midterm and final exam.

I am also very proud of an assignment in which I had them contribute to a joint analysis on a speech of Lysias that does not currently have a scholarly commentary. It is one of the best assignments that I have ever set up for a class. I asked them to write up at least one page per week and it could be anything from the summary of an article or book chapter that somehow was relevant, to their own original analysis of some problem or question in the speech. They really took this idea and ran with it. For the first time in my teaching career I had students regularly reading scholarly articles that I had not assigned and coming into class wanting to share what they had found. An unusual feeling of responsibility and interest to educate each other took hold. They also began developing ideas from week to week. Instead of writing little one page papers on different topics each week which might have seemed an easier way to fulfill the assignment, they chose to go deeper and deeper modifying earlier ideas and discovering the complexity of almost anything they worked

on. Not only was this more pleasurable to read than any other student work I have ever assigned, it also showed, especially in their choosing to explore an idea in greater depth, an unusual development of intellectual maturity which we hope for towards the end of a student's experience in college. And I felt that I had finally gotten it right – it came about because I had put the right sort of structure in place, but then I was smart enough (or lucky enough) to get out of their way and let them find their own path.

Finally, I would like to mention that I regularly advise a large number of students, especially when I am teaching the 2 sections of Curriculum 2. In fact, the advising of the first year students is my favorite because it is the time when they most need to think about the big questions that will change their life – what their talents and passions currently are, what they interested in but perhaps afraid to try, whether they are constructing their future from their own vision or someone else's, and how they can make a difference in the world. I feel that in my first few years I was just passable as an advisor, making sure their questions about the mechanics of college (credits, majors, etc.) were answered, but not going much beyond that. Recently I had done a better job getting them to think of the bigger questions described above. And just this past year I have taken much more time with each one individually to ask about the emotional side of their beginning college – leaving their families and friends, making new friends, living with a roommate, etc. It is all important because it all affects their educational experience.



## Thinking and Doing, Not Watching and Listening | Tom LoFaro

Since my promotion to Associate Professor in 2004 I have continued to innovate and grow as a teacher. I have modified techniques and developed new materials for familiar courses. I have taken on new courses and challenges. And I have developed new courses both singly and in collaboration with departmental colleagues. My excellence as a teacher of mathematics does not come just from my mastery of the material, but rather from a continued concern of how best to engage and motivate my students.

Probably the most effective way to engage students is to be enthusiastic about the material. I believe that I am exceptionally passionate about mathematics at all levels and this comes through in the classroom.

Of course passion is not enough; it must be complemented by preparedness and materials that allow the students to become engaged in the subject matter. Students have a tendency to use a math textbook as a source of problems and worked examples and do not read the text before coming to class. In the past we used a web-based program to assign what we called “prep problems.” This system worked, but it was pretty inflexible because it took a significant amount of time to publish the questions and was cumbersome to adjust when the schedule inevitably varied. To address these shortcomings, I have gone back to using a written “problem of the day” at the start of many class periods. I find that this still prompts the students to read the material, but gives me the flexibility to prepare questions that address either the current topic or to review and reinforce previous ideas and techniques that will be needed during that class period.

In our department we try to emphasize that mathematics is best learned by “thinking and doing, not watching and listening.” As a consequence, we try to mix traditional lecture with in-class problem solving sessions. I have significantly increased the amount of time I devote to this more active approach, especially in 100 and 200 level courses. As a consequence, I have also developed a larger repository of worksheets, activities, and projects for these classes. This is especially true in MCS 118/119 “Calculus with

Precalculus Review.” Barbara Kaiser and I developed this course and we have small group classroom activities most every class period. We think that this is especially important in a course that is designed for students who are under-prepared for a college level calculus course and are more prone to the anxieties that accompany this background deficiency. Closely monitored classroom activities provide me with an opportunity to give one-on-one instruction to students who need additional direction and allow me to discover common misconceptions so that they can be addressed to the entire class.

I am also a strong believer in the importance of in-depth projects and have always used them in the applied mathematics courses that are my specialty (MCS 253, 357, 358 and PHY 230). In this context, a project is much more than a word problem. It is generally a guided mathematical modeling project that utilizes the mathematical ideas that have been recently covered. These projects require students to model a physical phenomenon, analyze it mathematically, and then write (and sometimes present) a short report on the project. In fact, this process is almost the entire content of MCS 358, Mathematical Model Building. Last year, I began using projects in MCS 122 Calculus II and was very pleased with the outcome. The students seemed to enjoy the projects and I think that they helped me demonstrate the value of the material and how it might be applied in their future studies and endeavors.

As mentioned previously, Barbara Kaiser and I together proposed and developed the two-semester sequence Calculus with Precalculus Review (MCS 118-119). The department felt that a having traditional precalculus course (that did not fulfill a general education requirement) and then having these students take MCS 121 (Calculus I) might not be as successful as having an integrated course that focused on calculus but approached precalculus material in a “just in time” manner. The course is structured so that every major calculus topic is revisited multiple times throughout the two semesters. For example, when MCS 119 began in the spring semester we started the semester by discussing derivatives and their applications: topics that were first presented in MCS 118. In this revisit, however, we introduce some applications that we did not discuss in MCS 118. Derivatives will be discussed two additional times during the semester when we discuss exponential functions and again when we discuss trigonometry. Moreover, we will review the precalculus concepts necessary to master these materials when we begin these topics. We believe that this approach allows sufficient time and practice to master calculus concepts and techniques while at the same time reviews important precalculus ideas when they are needed.

In addition to classroom teaching responsibilities I have been active in advising and the direction of Honors Theses. Honors Theses are not terribly common in the MCS Department and I have directed four of these since coming to Gustavus. Of particular note is the thesis by Tim Dorn that led to the publication of a joint paper in the journal *Genetics*.



## Looking Forward Rather Than Backward | Priscilla Briggs

*“The teacher’s role is not that of simplifying the content, but of providing unfamiliar content and the setting for learners to step from their current level to a higher level of understanding.”*

I came across this quote in a text by Lev Vygotsky, a sociocultural theorist, while doing research for a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) Project in the summer of 2005. This quote was enlightening in that it helped me understand how to better meet my biggest challenge as a teacher: how to teach independent creative and conceptual thinking.

In my first years at Gustavus, I focused on transitioning from an art school to a liberal arts environment. Teaching is, of course, a learning process, so I was also a student facing unfamiliar content. The Gustavus student was a new student population and the liberal arts an unfamiliar context for me. At an art school, all students major in a specific discipline of the visual arts (painting, photography, sculpture, etc.) to earn a BFA, versus the general BA art major at Gustavus. Art schools generally require a lengthy core curriculum of courses equal in number to the total course requirements for an art major at Gustavus. Such a core curriculum includes various foundations courses as prerequisites for further study. Because our department at Gustavus is small, our beginning courses for each discipline are listed as general education courses, with no prerequisites, in order to maintain healthy enrollment. As a result, the majority of my students are non-majors who are often taking the first art class of their college experience, requiring that I address basic foundational concepts rather than building on prior knowledge. Adapting to the small liberal arts environment of Gustavus was a process full of challenges, some of which are ongoing, so I would like to address those challenges as a way to describe my work as a teacher.

The first challenge was that my position as a New Media instructor was a new one in the art department (an area of study new to many colleges and universities across the country at the time). A major ramification of this is that I, in large part, started from scratch with courses and equipment. When I first

came to Gustavus, I inherited a class titled *New Media* (ART-250). This was an ambitious title in that New Media is an enormous umbrella under which many disciplines fall. The term “new media” is meant to encompass the emergence of digital, computerized, or networked information and communication technologies in the latter part of the 20th century. In the studio arts, new media can include digital imaging and photography, digital video production, net.art and interactive media, 3-D animation and various interdisciplinary fields of study. The visiting professor, which taught the course before me, included digital photography, video, and web art in his curriculum. Feeling this was too much to cover in one course, I removed the web art component. However, the class was still difficult to teach because student interest and performance often fell when we arrived at the more complex and challenging section of the course dealing with Video Art. In order to improve this situation, I created two courses, *Digital Photography* (ART-256) and *Video Art* (ART-258), to cover the basics of the still and the moving digital image, consecutively. This structural change greatly improved student interest and performance in each discipline and made the classes more enjoyable to teach as a result. There was more time for the student to: master one discipline instead of skimming the surface of a few; explore relevant contemporary theories in more depth; and become skilled in the appropriate software rather than getting a brief introduction and moving on. Eventually, I also introduced three advanced courses: *Video Art II* (ART-3), *Digital Photography II* (ART-386), and *Interactive Media* (ART-360). In the context of the visual arts, “interactive media” refers to work that allows for active participation by the viewer. The *Interactive Media* course was meant to delve into complex concepts, software, and modes of presentation. With this class, students could use the building blocks of the still and moving image within the interactive environments of performance and public art, net.art (art which uses the web as a medium, sometimes self-referential, rather than a platform), and installation art. In 2004, I received a Bush mini-grant to attend two one-week intensive classes on Flash software, an interactive media tool, at the School of Visual Arts in New York. I used this knowledge to create tutorials on the Flash software for my Interactive Media class. This past year, I introduced a basic version of the course titled *Introduction to Interactive Media* (ART-260). At this point, I feel I have finally established a sustainable two-year cycle of the eight courses I now have on the books.

A second challenge I have faced at Gustavus, has been confronting students’ preconceived notions of what art is and what an art class entails, as well as my own expectations of what knowledge or ability with which students would come to class. Part of the challenge is teaching general education courses in which art majors are often out-numbered by non-majors. Another factor in the equation is the general marginalization of the study of art in secondary schools in the U.S. For many students, there is an expectation that art classes will be “fun and easy”. I try to make my classes fun, but when

students complain that the work is hard, I tell them it is not my goal to make it easy. The student population I have now are often taking the class as an “interest” rather than a “focus” and are sometimes unprepared for the amount of time necessary to do well in a studio art class, expecting to focus on skill-building alone. I have worked on ways to correct these misconceptions. First, I stress the time factor on the first day of class and there are always a few students who drop right away if they think they will not have enough time in their schedule to succeed in the class. I think this is a proactive measure that prevents predictable student failure and increases the morale of the overall class because the students who remain in the class are committed and focused.

In order to prepare students to confront their preconceived notions, I begin the Digital Photography class by asking them to discuss the following questions: “What is art?”, “What is the purpose of art?”, “What is an artist’s role in society?”, and “What is the role of art in the artist’s life?”. I show contemporary artwork on the first day of all my classes (and throughout the semester) to give students a feel for what we are going to be doing. Many students’ ideas about art are based on Modern Art that is a century old. Contemporary artwork is conceptual and intimidating. When I show the work, I introduce basic concepts and then ask the students to analyze the work themselves. This helps them demystify contemporary art and become more comfortable with the idea of making it. For instance, some students have signed up for *Interactive Media* not really knowing what it is. On the first day of class, we discuss the process of interactivity, looking at examples of how active viewer participation is necessary to either experience or complete an art piece.

I have also altered my grading system in order to accommodate non-majors. Studio art classes are about the process rather than the product; they should be about progress and skill-building rather than individual project outcomes. In all of my academic experience, college professors of studio art did not grade individual assignments, but simply gave one grade at mid-term and another at the end of the semester as an evaluation of process and skill development. For the visual artist, grades are not as relevant as they are for other disciplines. It is the work itself that is judged to determine whether a student gets into graduate school, gets a job, or wins a grant. A report card will not get you a gallery show. Because this traditional grading system seemed to create too much stress for general education students who do not plan to be artists, I began to give grades on individual projects so they could self-monitor their “performance”. A side effect of this is that student creativity is sometimes stifled, or paralyzed, because they are too concerned with how to get an “A” on a particular assignment rather than following their own creative flow. Ultimately, creative experimentation requires the occasional failure.

I have increasingly provided students with additional opportunities for feedback in response to confusion about grades. Grades in the studio arts are not based on right and wrong answers, but on degrees of mastery of

craft, of concept development and of aesthetics. Group critiques occur at the end of each project, so students each receive feedback from their entire class. Then I require that they revise their projects accordingly and write a self-assessment. I then write comments and a grade on their self-assessment. This past year I experimented with this process by developing a grade sheet, which outlines the specific elements on which they are graded, for each project in the Video Art class. Because the students expressed appreciation for the grade sheets, I will continue to develop these for each class in an attempt to demystify the grading process as much as possible.

During my initial years at Gustavus, I was also very concerned with the difficulty students had developing visual concepts despite having been shown many examples and receiving much personal feedback. This topic became the focus of my Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) project. My initial goal was to figure out how to break conceptual thinking into steps in order to simplify the process for students. I gave a journal assignment asking students to record their thinking about their projects so I could study them and try to discern patterns of thinking. As I refined the assignment, I changed the title of the assignment from a “journal” to a “concept notebook”. Then, after reading the ideas of Lev Vygotsky, I also realized it is not my job to simplify the process of creative and conceptual development, but to make students aware of the process. I broke the concept notebook into three parts: Ideation, Concept Development, and Self-Assessment.

In the next class, I decided that instead of having students hand in a notebook, I would require a self-assessment after each project and then a revision of that project. I revised the final assignment for my Digital Arts class to try this method out. The final assignment is self-defined with the guidelines that students should begin with one idea that organically evolves into something else as they work through the project. The point of this is to emphasize understanding of the creative process by requiring the following things each week for the 4-week duration of the project: small group critiques of their work prints; a subsequent written assignment redefining of the project according to feedback from the small critiques and self-assessment; and new work to be shown the next week. I was pleased that the students responded very well to this assignment and said they felt they better understood the creative process and how visual concepts evolve. I felt I had finally found a process that works, and I restructured all my introductory level class assignments to fit this model.

My last point is about group critique and discussion. Once, a student complained that I was critiquing them at a level to which they had not yet risen. I explained how the critique functions as a bridge to get to that next level of understanding. A critique is our form of assessment in the arts, but it is different from a typical exam in that it looks forward rather than backward. In order for this kind of group assessment to really be successful, the students

must be honest and vocal. I have devised various methods of critique and discussion that have greatly improved class participation. Some successful methods include asking students to take turns leading a conversation about each others' work for group critiques, and having student's form small groups to critique each others' work-in-progress.

Overall, in all my courses I teach a balance of skill and conceptual thinking, stressing the necessary interweaving of the two. The semester assignments model this approach and the final assignment is left open for the student to self-define. Each assignment is introduced with viewings of relevant artworks (historical and/or contemporary), readings that should supplement student understanding of concepts and theories (as well as provide food for thought for their own work), and examples of previous student work for that same assignment. For instance, the first assignment for the Digital Photography class is to create a series of three images that subvert the original meaning of magazine ads by scanning the images, removing the text using Photoshop, and then inserting their own meaningful text. To prepare for this assignment we look at and discuss the work of artists who use image and text and/or advertising to address issues of identity and representation (e.g., Barbara Krueger, Adrian Piper, and Matt Siber). I also have them read two relevant texts for discussion: a letter to the readers by Time Magazine about their controversial cover photo illustration of O.J. Simpson, and an excerpt from *Ways of Seeing* by John Berger in which he discusses publicity images and how they function in contemporary society. These readings, which address ethical and theoretical concerns, are supplemented by technical demos and skill-building exercises in Photoshop.

I also want my students to gain confidence in their ability to make decisions about their own work. There is a fine line between guiding them toward those decisions and then cutting them loose to figure things out on their own. This requires lengthy conversation with each individual student. I give them responsibility for defining their final projects—this also allows them to follow a personal interest. I make them responsible for critiquing each others' work—this also nurtures their ability to discuss artwork. And I try to respond as much as possible to their course evaluations. For instance, one student in the Video Art class suggested they have more room for experimentation and another suggested I assign group projects. I am hesitant to assign group projects for a number of logistical reasons, but also because I want every student to be involved in each step of the production process to make sure they master those skills. As a compromise, I changed my curriculum for the class by eliminating one project and replacing it with two skill-building exercises that allow them to work in groups on ungraded projects. These assignments encourage experimentation, and because they are ungraded, the students do not have to worry about failing. I try to give students every opportunity to succeed. For instance, they are allowed to revise or redo any project at any

time up until the end of the semester in order to improve their grade for that project. My goal is to make my classes rigorous, but enjoyable learning experiences.

Running a studio art course requires choreographing a mixture of lectures, demonstrations, hands-on lab work, reading and discussion, and critiques. In addition to pedagogical challenges, there are also logistical challenges. My greatest logistical challenge accompanied the development of new courses for the art department that necessitated the purchase of a good deal of expensive high-tech equipment. During my first year at Gustavus, we had four video cameras for 34 students to share. I distributed the equipment during class after drawing a flow chart outlining when each student would have access outside of class and what time they would have to hand the equipment off to another student. I put in a proposal for more equipment, and a faculty member from the Communications Studies department put in a similar request for the Broadcasting classes. We both received the funds we requested and pooled our resources to finally purchase the cameras, tripods, lighting kits and microphones necessary to teach our classes.

The next task was to figure out a venue for distributing the equipment. The end result was a checkout system operated by Media Services that has evolved from a paper trail to an online service. The facilities and equipment for the digital classes have improved greatly, but the absence of a budget line for repairs or replacement of equipment as well as the lack of a dedicated digital arts lab and Director of Instructional Technology create further challenges that I hope can be resolved in the future. One major goal is the establishment of a long-term plan for a set periodic replacement of equipment.

I have gone into detail about equipment concerns in order to relay the amount of time and effort devoted to the ongoing chore of acquiring the equipment and facilities support necessary for my students to do their work in a professional fashion. Student interest in the study of digital media grows every year, with more and more students wanting to create self-defined majors geared toward media studies or filmmaking. There are, on average, three students per year at Gustavus who create self-defined majors. In the past four years I have been an advisor for four such majors. The art department, in general, is a hub for much interdisciplinary or self-defined study, including Independent Studies. I have advised an average of 5 independent studies per year since coming to Gustavus, many of which involve video production. The independent study format provides students the opportunity to produce lengthy video projects that are not possible within the limited course offerings. For instance, a group of students worked together on a filmmaking project that spanned two semesters and was screened for a full house in Wallenberg Hall. The independent study format also allows students to pursue a specific subject in a depth that is not offered in the art department (e.g., cinematography, alternative darkroom processes, and 3-D modeling).

An issue of concern to me when I taught the Senior Seminar for Art Majors during the Fall 2004 semester was the lack of an established visiting artist program, which I believe is necessary for studio art programs (especially for a small liberal arts college in a rural location). To bring visiting artists, I received funding from the Center for Vocational Reflection (CVR) for local artists to lecture about their own working process and to critique the seniors' work in preparation for the senior exhibition. I invited 5 artists, each working in a different medium and at varying points in their careers, and a gallery curator. This kind of interaction is invaluable for artists, who need feedback from many perspectives. The visiting artists helped students understand what it means to *be* a practicing artist and how each artist's creative process is different. My Senior Seminar students were greatly inspired by the visiting artists and each wrote a letter to the CVR to describe this experience. As a result, the CVR agreed to fund a pared-down version of this program for the 2005-2006 Senior Seminar. Although I was not teaching Senior Seminar that year, I did work with my colleagues to help organize the five visiting artists.

After teaching the Senior Seminar during the Fall 2004 semester, I organized 4 nights of critiques for senior art majors in the spring to help them prepare for their Senior Exhibition. Since then, the art and art history department has redesigned our curriculum so that the Senior Seminar spans the entire academic year, giving senior art majors the continued support they need in preparation for the Senior Exhibition.

There are also excellent visiting artist lectures in Minneapolis at the Walker Art Center and the University of Minnesota. I try to take at least one fieldtrip with students per year (the limit of my budget) to visit galleries and museums and attend a lecture in Minneapolis. This is especially important for my Video Art class, because much art, especially video installation, needs to be seen in person in order to really experience the work and understand how the presentation can affect the meaning. Also, much video art and film is not available, or too costly, to bring to the classroom. This past year, we visited the Walker Art Center's *Brave New Worlds* exhibit, a showing of international conceptual artists that considered the "present state of political consciousness, expressed through the questions of how to live, experience, and dream". In conjunction with the exhibit, Walid Raad, a Lebanese artist, gave an artist lecture, presenting his conceptual historical archive *Atlas*, which is comprised of fabricated written, photographic and video documentation.

My time at Gustavus has been a great learning experience for me in which I have stepped to a higher level of understanding. My teaching has been informed and enriched by many of the wonderful opportunities for faculty development available at Gustavus, by my own efforts to communicate effectively and connect individually with my students, by feedback from the students, and by both the successes and failures of my teaching reflected in my students' work.





## Engaging Students as Colleagues in the Learning Process | Margaret Bloch-Qazi

Teaching is about engaging individuals in a process of discovery in order to understand the world. Excellent teaching encompasses more than appropriate content and effective technique: it is about engaging individuals as colleagues in the learning process. Simply put, I make an effort to teach the individuals composing the class rather than a class as a whole. I see my classes as learning communities that differ based on the individual participants. While I state high expectations for student learning and performance, how we achieve the objectives can be modified to accommodate the individuals involved. I get to know my students as individuals; I listen to them, trust them, and am willing to be open with them (to a certain degree). It begins with learning my students' names and interests. I work to incorporate these interests into class material and to acknowledge student-sources of expertise. These include research experiences students have had and even their hobbies. For example, when exploring the topic of insect flight, one student, a pilot, shared information about plane flight and we compared and contrasted insect wings to those of airplanes. I admit when I make a mistake and take responsibility for correcting the problem. I encourage students to take intellectual risks. I care deeply about my students and I continually strive to engage them in a discovery of the biology in order to help them develop as curious and critically thinking citizens of the world.

*Biological Explorations.* To engage students in a discovery of the biological world, I express my fascination with the small, squishy, and sexy aspects of life: invertebrates and reproduction. I both share and solicit unusual stories about common animals and the practices of unfamiliar animals. Together, my students and I observe living organisms both in the laboratory and in the field. We watch, listen, touch and sometimes taste to learn about the living world. Students in my First Term Seminar (FTS) Bugs, Sex and Rock-n-Roll (FTS 100-009) and Entomology (BIO 376) have reported that creating insect

collections heightened their awareness of insects in general. I also introduce my students to the biological questions underlying my interest in these topics. To re-purpose a Gustavus Adolphus phrase, I am asking and encouraging students to ‘ask the big questions’ in the biological world. For example, “If an asexually reproducing arthropod can produce twice as many offspring as a sexually reproducing arthropod, why would any arthropod bother to reproduce sexually?”, “How do small animals experience their environment differently than us?”, and “Why alternate between haploid and diploid phases of a lifecycle?” I think these efforts are generally successful as several students note in their evaluations that they were initially not excited about taking either Bugs, Sex and Rock-n-Roll or Invertebrate Zoology (BIO 241), but developed an appreciation for the subject over the course of the semester.

*Information Literacy.* For students to learn to become independent learners, they need skills in information literacy. I work to help students develop skills in locating information and ‘decision rules’ to evaluate what they find. In all of my classes, students are asked to identify, locate and evaluate sources of relevant information. In introductory level classes we discuss differences between scholarly and popular sources of information as well as primary and secondary sources. These conversations (hopefully) also emphasize the essential nature of academic honesty as much of our understanding of phenomena rests on the word of others. At the advanced levels, students are expected to incorporate primary literature into reviews, reports and research proposals. Through tutorials and repeated use, students learn to use the library to identify sources of information in text and web formats.

*Critical Thinking.* Biology offers one way to interpret the living world. Rather than teach all of the observations/facts about a topic, I am working to emphasize the important questions and to use information (both new and from memory) to develop unique responses to these questions. This process requires the type of critical thinking that Nord defines as “*not just a matter of applying the rules of logic (much less scientific method). It is a matter of thinking and feeling empathetically with others, of engaging one’s imagination, of having access to a wealth of facts about the possible effects of alternative actions, of discerning patterns of meaning in experience, of looking at the world from different perspectives*”[1]. This definition acknowledges the value of deductive and inductive reasoning, but challenges us to go further and think divergently – creatively – to synthesize an understanding of the world. My students and I approach this through case studies, hypotheses that are tested in the laboratory, classroom activities and discussions.

I help students further develop their critical thinking skills in Invertebrate Zoology using a model proposed by Broadbear[2]. The semester is organized into five units each of which focuses on what are described as “ill-structured problems”. These are not carelessly-posed, but are complex questions with multiple appropriate responses such as: “Identify three unique biological

characteristics of the protostome-deuterostome ancestor.” Students develop a response to the prompt in the form of a short research paper that follows a specified format. While they work on their papers, we explore relevant animal phyla in class and lab and discuss primary and secondary literature related to the unit topic. Students are responsible for incorporating information from additional scholarly sources as they develop their response to the prompt. Their responses undergo formative peer and instructor review and are revised before a final paper is turned in. Finally, students reflect on their process by evaluating their own performance on several criteria. They identify strengths and areas in need of strengthening and identify actions to improve their critical thinking skills. This informed ‘experiment’ to help students strengthen critical thinking skills is the basis of an ongoing Scholarship of Teaching and Learning project.

I do similar types of activities on a smaller scale to encourage critical thinking in my other classes. For example, in *Bugs, Sex and Rock-n-Roll*, we discuss whether there are any circumstances under which the insecticide DDT should be used and what governing (or other) bodies should make decisions regarding its use. To arrive at independent answers, students learn about malaria, mosquitoes, pest control strategies and risk assessment. We role-play to explore different perspectives on the subject (as representatives from Partners in Health, the World Wildlife Fund, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the World Health Organization). In organizing material this way, students engage in a creative process requiring the use of accurate factual information to generate a novel answer. This type of problem-based approach to learning has been recommended, as it more closely resembles how experts approach intellectual challenges.[3]

*Modeling Engaged Learning.* For students to develop mastery in a subject area, it is useful for them to see mastery modeled. I serve as a model for my students by showing that not knowing/understanding is where learning begins, having high expectations for accuracy, and thinking carefully, critically and creatively about biological phenomena. I share my sense of wonder (*not* befuddlement) in the natural world. In Organismal Biology (BIO 102), I encourage students to ask questions about the course material. While some questions can be answered immediately, other questions such as “What happens when the wind gets knocked out of you?” or “Why are some people ticklish?” I cannot answer. I am open about not knowing the answer and may hypothesize or ask the students to hypothesize a response based on what we already have covered on the topic. I do this to intentionally demonstrate that learning begins with a question and that their curiosity is a valued part of learning. In providing an answer, I explain how I found the information to illustrate sources of accurate information and that it is important to evaluate sources of information[4]. In all of my classes, we discuss selected readings. In my 300-level courses [Developmental Biology (BIO 382) and Entomology],

these discussions focus on primary literature. Rather than direct what they need to learn from a paper, I attempt to engage students in a discussion as a colleague. This approach is intended to both model how scientific colleagues interact and encourage the accurate assessment of a series of experiments. I ask questions to clarify or re-focus the conversation and I correct inaccurate information. Finally, I make efforts to bring other professionals into my classes. I have had Gustavus Adolphus alumni talk about their entomological jobs in Bugs, Sex and Rock-n-Roll and biologists discuss their research in Organismal Biology and Developmental Biology. I think this helps students see diverse models of biological careers and what skills they will need to develop as a professional.

*Independent Research.* Independent laboratory research is one of the most effective ways of helping people learn about biology. It allows students to experience the joy inherent in the scholarship of discovery and is credited as the experience that inspired many research scientists to pursue their careers[5]. Independent research develops all of the skills identified above: knowledge of content and conventions in biology, evaluating sources of information, critical analysis as well as the value of collaboration. I incorporate these experiences into all of my classes. For example, several laboratory exercises in Organismal Biology are designed such that students develop hypotheses and design experiments to test their ideas about biological phenomena. In Entomology, students write a research proposal to address an entomologically-related question of their choosing from an integrative perspective. Students in Developmental Biology design and conduct their own experiments presenting their findings in research posters at the end of the semester. In Directed Research (BIO 396), students engage in original research screening part of the *Drosophila* genome for chromosome regions associated with female sperm storage.[6]

I also invest heavily in out-of-class (extracurricular) research experiences. I have had 17 undergraduate collaborators during my five years at Gustavus Adolphus (their names are listed in my *curriculum vitae*). These students have made unique contributions to my research program in a variety of ways. We meet every week as a group to read books, discuss primary literature or present experimental results. As they learn about my experimental system, they develop ideas and engage in the scientific process by conducting experiments, applying for funding from the local Sigma Xi chapter (4 students to date), presenting their results in the local Sigma Xi research symposium as well as at a regional meeting (1 student, Isaac Weeks '09). Some students develop research questions that overlap with my research interests. These become senior honors theses. I have advised one student through a thesis and two more students have had their proposals approved by the department and will conduct the research this fall. Of note, a recently-accepted manuscript "Sick of Mating"[7] is from a student's senior honor's thesis (T. Miest '07). I

think this paper reflects a true collaboration between Tanner and me. Students participating in research in my lab have moved into productive scientific careers. Elizabeth Murray ('04) is a PhD candidate in the Entomology program at UC Riverside, one of the top entomology programs in the country. Tanner Miest is in the MD/PhD program at the Mayo Clinic. Their research experiences helped clarify their interests in scientific careers and provided them with skills and knowledge contributing to their being successful candidates to their respective programs.

### **Habits of Practice**

In all of my classes, I work to provide an organized approach to learning stating clear learning goals that are addressed using a variety of approaches. I provide 'road maps' for learning by providing either lecture outlines with figures or the PowerPoint presentation itself for lectures, and questions for consideration on discussion topics. I watch the class and pace activities to keep them moving but not leave individuals behind. I am deliberate about using a variety of approaches (e.g. lecture, group work, case studies, discussion) to explore content and concepts. For example, students in Bugs, Sex and Rock-n-Roll learned about honeybee orientation to food sources in class. This was followed by a trip to the Arboretum where they were given a description of a specific queen bee waggle dance a compass, calculator and meter tape. They were responsible for working in groups to locate their nectar/pollen reward. In Organismal Biology before lecturing on phenology (developmental changes associated with the seasons), I ask students to spend three minutes writing how *they* know it is spring. We then explore what cues other organisms use to resume development, reproduce and migrate. During classes I regularly ask students questions to informally assess their understanding of material. I provide focused and prompt feedback. I generally make two or three major recommendations for improvement and I return work (whether formative or evaluative) within a week of having received it.

I continue to learn about my teaching and student learning by reading books, attending workshops[8], talking to colleagues and listening carefully to my students. I solicit feedback from students in the form of anonymous evaluations and informal conversations. I ask them what works and what challenges them. I make attempts to modify classes to meet student needs. I realize that there are many things I can do to become more effective and I am working to address these at a reasonable pace. For example, for several years, my evaluations in Organismal Biology contained comments that I was being too picky when grading. While I am still not clear to what extent this reflects introductory-level students adjusting to increased expectations, I still had a nagging feeling that somehow I was not effectively communicating my expectations for learning. This past year, I provided students with review sheets summarizing important vocabulary, concepts and practice questions. When I wrote my tests, I checked that the questions I posed related directly to

content from the review sheet. At the end of the semester the average grade in the lecture portion of the class was approximately one percentage point (0.9%) higher than in the previous year, but students seemed less anxious and frustrated with the tests. I still think that my tests ask students to apply and evaluate concepts (i.e. I was not giving them the questions before the test) but the guides appear to help the students understand what my expectations are. In general, I try to identify three things to revise for a class each semester. I also hear that there are some experiences that students value such as the Entomology journal club and I work to keep these engaging and challenging.

*Advising.* My attention to students as individuals is also apparent out of the classroom in my commitment to student advising. I have a large number of advisees – 57 at the end of the 2007-2008 school year (I am responsible for this situation and am practicing saying ‘no’). My advisees fall into three subpopulations: current/former FTS students, biology majors with broad interests, and students with interests in veterinary medicine. I have individual meetings with most of these students twice a year. I advise them about academic and professional requirements, am available to serve as a sounding board as they explore vocational options, write letters of recommendation, and follow-up on students receiving academic awards and warnings. As the pre-vet advisor, I advise students about course requirements for admission to veterinary school and strategies to improve their probability of acceptance. I have organized visits from Scott Dee, D.V.M., PhD., a faculty member at the University of Minnesota School of Veterinary Medicine and Gustavus alum, taken students to visit Northern Plains Dairy, the largest commercial dairy in the area, and attended the American Veterinary Medical Association meeting in Minneapolis to meet admissions personnel and learn how to more effectively advise students. At the University of Minnesota’s veterinary medicine program, the median age of the entering class is close to 25 years (S. Dee, personal communication) and fewer than 10% of all applicants are accepted (although for regional applicants, the acceptance rate is approximately 27%: <http://www.cvm.umn.edu/education/prospective/Profile.html>). It is currently harder to get into a veterinary program than medical school. Of the six students who I am aware of have applied to vet school over the past five years, four have been accepted to veterinary programs and one plans to re-apply next year. The record of acceptance for Gustavus students would therefore suggest that they are well-advised.

In summary, I collaborate with my students to learn about the biological world. In doing so, both the students and I continue to develop our curiosity, compassion and critical consideration of the world.

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[1] Nord WA. 1995. Religion and American Education: Rethinking a National Dilemma. Chapel Hill: UNC Press.

[2] Broadbear JT. 2003. Essential elements of lessons designed to promote critical thinking. *The Journal of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. 3(3): 1-8.

[3] National Research Council. 2000. *How People Learn; Brain, Mind, Experience and School*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Chapter 2, How experts differ from novices; p 31-50.

[4] Unfortunately, these interesting questions are rarely asked in subsequent years, so I never look particularly clever by knowing the answers the second time around!

[5] Reviewed in: National Research Council. 2003. *Bio 2010: Transforming Undergraduate Education for Future Research Biologists*. Washington, DC: The National Academic Press.

[6] This was presented as a poster, "Engaging students in the scholarship of discovery using a *Drosophila* deficiency screen", at the Society for Developmental Biology annual meeting July, 2008.

[7] Bloch Qazi MC and Miest TS. Sick of mating: Sexual transmission of a pathogenic bacterium in *Drosophila melanogaster*. In press, *FLY*

[8] I have attended several conferences hosted by The Collaboration (Deep learning; Promoting student engagement & retention), a Pew workshop on quantitative literacy, Innovations in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning on liberal arts campuses, and sessions at national biological society meetings devoted to teaching.





## Skills that Promote Moral Engagement | Peg O'Connor

I have become more convinced in recent years that my job as a philosopher, and more particularly as an ethicist, is to teach people valuable skills that enable them to engage in productive, respectful, and transformative moral inquiry and dialogue. My teaching philosophy seems to simplify the more years I teach: equip students with the ethical and conceptual tools to live in a highly complex, rapidly changing and diverse world. I am prepared to say that nothing is harder than this. At the same time, nothing is more rewarding.

One of the courses I regularly teach is Philosophy 247: Applied Ethics. This course is the exemplar of my pedagogical approach. The course revolves around acquiring certain skills that promote moral engagement and facilitate the transformation of long-term trenchant debates. Some of the skills involve identifying the conflicting or clashing values, ranking priorities and considerations, identifying competing rights, values, and virtues, learning how to listen (the big challenge), reframing problems, evaluating the facts, seeing what each side gets right, judging cases to be similar or dissimilar, and turning problems into opportunities. An example will help to clarify the virtues of this skill-based approach. Our class was having a very heated discussion about an article in the *New York Times* about a mother living on a Native American reservation who had started to sell drugs in order to support her family. Initially students were outraged; there was little to no room for understanding how someone might reach the conclusion that selling drugs is an acceptable or even the only way to provide for one's family. We then started comparing her actions—selling drugs both on and off the reservation—with other acts that parents might undertake in order to provide for their families. While in general there is disapprobation of stealing, all the students conceded that they would be willing to steal if all other options had been exhausted. From there we were off on an exploration of options, and what counted as legitimate one. We started gathering facts about the exceptionally high rates of unemployment on reservations, which is accompanied by some of the greatest poverty in the country. This raised the question of whether some people are

more worthy or deserving to be parents on the basis of their economic class. That started to make some people very uncomfortable while others thought it was a reasonable consideration. At the end of the discussion, some students had more empathy for the mother, while others had little and saw her as a traitor to her people (which prompted another question about whether whites can be traitors to their race in the same way), while others identified poverty and hopelessness as the problems and wanted to explore ways to address them and not just demonize this one person.

Discussion is my primary teaching tool I utilize in the classroom, and I find it is an ongoing challenge to create good productive conversation. With courses the content of which is centrally moral and political, I am constantly interrogating myself about my role as a teacher. How well am I creating an environment in which all students can learn and participate? I am aware of the tremendous power I exercise in the classroom and the ways in which students often believe (mistakenly) that the key to a good grade is agreement with the teacher. I foreground this concern, and make it a point to discuss this very dynamic with my students at the beginning of each semester, and to revisit it throughout the term.

Often it is the case that students like small group discussion but are reluctant to speak in a larger group. The classroom can go from a veritable buzzing beehive of activity to silence of a tomb in my response to my saying "Let's come back as a large group." Recently I have generated a list of cards that contain a specific instruction. At some point in the class period, the student must play her card. The cards require students to ask a question, offer an example, rephrase what someone has said, make a comparison to another reading, etc. There is also the wild card that asks students to identify my favorite disco classic by humming the tune. No one has succeeded yet, though I can hope. While the cards are an artificial mechanism, they have worked well, especially for those students who require some sort of external push to contribute. Some of the most initially reluctant students have become active, regular discussion participants.

My strategy in most of the classes I teach is to adopt a chameleon persona. I tell my students that one of the important things that must happen in classes such as these is that multiple perspectives need to be part of the process of inquiry. But this is incredibly hard for students to do, especially when students fear being perceived as ignorant or biased or even in mild disagreement with other members of the class or with me. Thus, when some position is missing or being silenced, I gladly animate it. But I will never preface an argument with "I am just playing devil's advocate." To me, that qualifier functions as an apologetic, and does more to locate my beliefs and make a judgment about that particular perspective than anything else. Thus, in a recent discussion of homosexuality and the issue of whether sex education ought to have any information about gay sex, I found myself arguing against its inclusion for

a variety of religious and moral reasons. No student was willing to make those arguments, but they have tremendous power in shaping public policy decisions about sex education funding. Oftentimes in the last class period, students will ask me finally to tell them what I really think about these issues. I will not (since I still will be evaluating them) and instead make them guess if they want. Let's just say that often they get it really wrong, which in many ways I regard as a success.

No matter how great the success of a class, there are always challenges. These challenges can be great pedagogical opportunities as well. One of the most pressing pedagogical challenges I face is working with students for whom English is not their first language. In particular, students who are Hmong or Somali face challenges in our classrooms that are different in kind not only from native speakers of English, but also from speakers of Romance Languages. This means that we face complementary challenges as teachers, challenges for which we are significantly unprepared and lacking in knowledge. How do we work with students who come from a culture having an oral tradition but not a written one? This may affect the work we assign, our expectations for class participation as well as our expectations for how we ought to evaluate students.

One way the question has been framed in my presence several times concerns how we teachers are to be fair to our other students if/when we provide additional or alternative opportunities for these students to rewrite papers or evaluate their work in ways that differ from how we evaluate others' work. One very blunt way a colleague put the matter was "We are cutting them slack but not the other students." This "cutting slack" description struck me as very contentious and disagreeable. One assumption that we often labor under is that equality and fairness require exact sameness in treatment. However, this is not often the case, given that people begin at very different starting points and may also have knowledge and abilities that do not neatly translate into some preexisting rubric. I see this often when grading papers, especially when I am evaluating the ways that students can use and understand concepts and make arguments. I've worked with students whose written work clearly does not reflect their abilities. By no means is this problem unique to non-native speakers.

Different sorts of assignments present different challenges. With written assignments, I have had students read the assignment back to me, and then say in their own words what I am asking. In other cases where I give an assignment orally in class, I return to my office to send that assignment in writing to the student via email. With paper assignments, I often meet with the students at each stage from outline to final draft. The process may not end with the final draft; on some occasions I have had students talk me through their papers sentence by sentence. In other cases, especially those involving showing the relationship between concepts, I have had students make visual

representations, which enabled them to more clearly explain the concepts' relationships than they could in prose. This is a very labor intensive process, and it is one that I need to explore more fully.

These language-related challenges point toward the broader challenge, which is to create an environment in which students can learn. Meeting this challenge requires a willingness not only to try new pedagogical methods but also a willingness to make mistakes and learn from them. It also requires a willingness to become a student of pedagogy as well, and treat teaching as the art and skill it most surely is.

## What College is Supposed to Be | Carolyn O'Grady

I read and think about teaching a lot. I am constantly trying to learn new ways of getting better at this very challenging profession. I am grateful that I work in the Education Dept. because the art and science of teaching is ever present to us; every time I watch a student teacher I think about what effective teaching “looks like.”

When I wrote my tenure statement, I included this description of my goals as a teacher:

I have three primary goals for all my teaching: 1) to acquaint students with the current educational theories and practices that are at the center of the course content; 2) to push students' thinking in order to deepen their personal and professional expertise; at times this means pushing against students' “comfort zones”; and 3) to plant a seed in my students that will hopefully grow into a commitment to improve educational conditions – and by extension, the world – through their work as teachers.

These goals are still front and center for me, although my teaching responsibilities have evolved beyond the Education Department in recent years. In what follows, I will describe what I believe I do well as a teacher and what I continue to work on. I'll also talk about some ways I have tried to grow as a teacher.

***Gifts and Challenges.*** I know that I do some things really well as a teacher. I am a good discussion facilitator, for instance, and am able to manage both the air-time hogs, and the students who are usually quiet, so that students hear from as many of their peers as possible. I generally do a good job of thinking carefully about how to plan a course, how to make course texts relevant to students' experiences, and how to integrate assignments so that the work in the course feels connected.

I am also very good at managing conversations about “difficult” topics, especially those issues that students would prefer to avoid. These topics

include racism, homophobia and other forms of oppression. I am not afraid of conflict, and I try to encourage multiple perspectives. I lay a foundation for these contested conversations by establishing class ground rules (in collaboration with the students) and by modeling honesty and thoughtful analysis in describing my own perspectives or those of authors we are reading. Sometimes students feel I push them too hard and they feel intimidated by me or afraid to speak their mind. This is a criticism I have encountered since arriving at Gustavus. I have certainly modified my teaching style in response to student feedback over the years, but I am committed to prodding our many conflict-avoidant students to grapple with hard issues. It is especially important to me that this happen in my education classes; future teachers simply don't have the luxury of avoiding issues of diversity given Minnesota's changing demographics. But in all of my classes I ask students to consider hard topics and questions as part of my fundamental belief that only by looking closely at issues that polarize us can we learn to live in community with, and work in solidarity with, those who are different from ourselves.

Then there are the challenges I encounter each and every semester. Perhaps it is more accurate to say that these are the "worries" I have about my teaching. One is my struggle to understand what "rigor" means to me, and what it should look like in my classroom. For instance, I'm not a teacher who gives a lot of tests and quizzes. Frankly, for the kind of classes I teach, these are not effective forms of assessment. In comparison with some of my colleagues, I tend to assign fewer reading assignments rather than more. This is because I tend to prefer a more unhurried and intensive look at texts rather than an approach that flies through a large number of texts. I don't think there is any one "right" way to teach most courses, and each teacher must find his or her own style and philosophy. Nevertheless, I find myself constantly analyzing whether how I teach – and who I am as a teacher – appropriately challenges my students *and* fits with my beliefs about pedagogy and practice.

A related and ongoing consideration is whether I consistently hold high expectations for student performance. There have been some semesters when I probably expected too little, have in fact assumed my students weren't capable of more challenging work, and consequently did not require it. But conversely, there have been times when I have had unrealistic expectations of what students would accomplish, and this has led to frustration for everyone. I am constantly trying to pitch my expectations, and the rigor of the course, just beyond my students' comfort level. Not so far beyond that students cannot succeed, but far enough that they discover capabilities they didn't know they had.

Likewise, I am constantly trying to extend my *own* abilities as a teacher. I revise course syllabi frequently and try new activities or learning assignments in an effort to improve whatever I feel has not been successful the prior semester. I am definitely willing to take risks in teaching, and I always try to

keep the learning needs of students uppermost in my mind while also keeping myself fresh and motivated to teach the class again.

***New Teaching Adventures.*** One of the ways I have tried to grow as a teacher is to take on some new and demanding teaching responsibilities. Since 2004-05 I have been teaching the sophomore-level Curriculum II class, Individual and Society (CUR 210) in the fall, and the FTS-class-for-transfer students, a Spring course. During 2006-07 I am also teaching the Curriculum II senior seminar (CUR 399), teaming with Claude Brew. After teaching essentially the same Education courses for more than a decade, I was ready for some new challenges. Education faculty are fairly locked in to our teaching responsibilities because of the structured nature of our program and the need to meet state requirements. I was able to negotiate this change in teaching duties with the support of many individuals in and out of my department.

I have been inspired and challenged in teaching these new courses. I haven't been able to rely on previously designed syllabi or assignments, and I cannot walk in and "wing it" the way I can do with Education classes that I've taught for years. I've had to think carefully about how to design these courses so as to meet specific program expectations, and I've had to stretch to acquire more knowledge outside of my field. In the last two years I've read more social science texts (for Individual and Society) and more memoirs (for the FTS class) than I'd read in my entire previous life. This interdisciplinary work has been very rewarding.

Brief descriptions of my 2006-07 classes will provide a snapshot of my teaching work.

*CUR 210 – Individual and Society*

I taught one section of Individual and Society in Fall 2006 (MWF) while Lisa Heldke taught a second section (TR). It is unusual for there to be enough CII staffing to offer two sections of this course, and we took advantage of the synergy this offered us. We started meeting months before the semester began to share ideas for course themes and content, and ultimately we chose to use the same texts and assignments in both sections. This meant I couldn't rely on the readings or assignments I had used in the two previous iterations of this course, which meant preparing as though for a whole new course. Lisa and I decided to teach students how to do qualitative research by requiring them to complete a research project on the general course theme of "place" (see attached syllabus). We also assigned a variety of texts that introduced students to different qualitative research methodologies and different narrative styles. Among their assignments, students had to do a poster session on their research. To give them something of the experience of a "real" conference poster session at which presenters must speak to strangers about their work, each poster day we invited members of the other 210 section as well as CII faculty, CII senior seminar students, and other on-campus faculty and staff.

Teaching this course has been great fun because I've had a sort of "teaching buddy," someone who knows what is going on in my class and is great at thinking out – or rethinking – course assignments or weekly class agenda. But it's also been a little scary. I have observed Lisa teach several times and consider her to be one of the best teachers at Gustavus. It is intimidating to be potentially compared to one of our community's best instructors. On the other hand, I feel revitalized by the opportunity to "talk teaching" with such a good role model.

*CUR 399 – Senior Seminar*

This class has also been a tremendous chance to stretch my teaching skills and, even, build some new brain cells. I was very honored when Claude Brew asked me to team teach the CII Senior Seminar with him, and also very nervous. In fact, this has been the most challenging course I have taught at Gustavus. First, there is the issue of actually teaming with another instructor (as opposed to "turn teaching," the easy way out for co-teachers). Claude and I began meeting during Spring semester, and met regularly over the summer, to talk out our teaching styles and preferences, his experience teaching this class in the past, possible course texts and assignments, and our goals and expectations of each other and the students. This provided an essential foundation for the spirit of mutual respect and collaboration that has evolved between us. Second, one of our texts, *Moral Vision*[1], was particularly challenging for me. This philosophy text began our discussion about the course theme of values. My marginal notes include comments such as "I have no idea what he is saying here," and "does he ever answer this question?" Claude and I met before the semester began specifically to hash out the meaning of this text, and these meetings had the ancillary effect of reducing my anxiety about "not being smart enough" to teach Senior Seminar. Throughout the semester I had to read course texts more carefully than usual and re-read assigned sections before class discussion more thoroughly than usual. I have never gone into a classroom as well prepared for *each class* as I did for this one. Nevertheless, I felt out of my depth many times. I think it is very important to re-experience what it is like to be a beginner at something we think we know how to do well. I have certainly become reacquainted with some of my fears about teaching, but I have also been reminded that collaborative teaching is of great worth to me.

*EDU 350 – Reading in the Content Areas*

There are two special things to know about this class. First, this is a .25 course that is taught as part of the secondary education methods block. Up until this year I taught it in a two-hour block in selected weeks over the semester to correspond with what Deb Pitton was doing in general methods. In order to accommodate teaching CII Senior Seminar, this class is meeting this year for one hour per week. During Fall semester I planned too much for each hour and, consequently, was never able to accomplish my goals for each class.



I felt rushed and frustrated and so did students. I plan to streamline course readings and assignments for the Spring in response to student feedback.

Second, its content is largely mandated by the Board of Teaching, which requires that I include information on fluency, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, and higher order thinking. As a result, I am constantly struggling to balance what I *must* include for our program to meet BOT certification requirements, and what I choose to include because I believe it is pedagogically important. I do not feel I have yet learned how to strike this balance most effectively.

I enjoy teaching this class because I am committed to helping secondary education students think carefully about the role of reading and literacy in their content classrooms. When I am at my best I feel students have the opportunity to consider useful theories about literacy development, and learn practical strategies that they can implement as soon as they are in a classroom. I value the opportunity to work with pre-service teachers at this stage, just before they are about to spend a semester in student teaching.

*FTS 100 – Life Stories*

This class is taken by first-year transfer students, so I never know until the first day of class exactly how many students I will have. I designed this as a memoir class because I thought it would be an engaging way of introducing new students to college life. It gives us the opportunity to read and write a lot. Each semester I have kept some memoirs and changed others, partly in response to student feedback, and partly in response to recent publications in the genre of creative non-fiction. I have been able to invite writers to speak to the class (in Spring 2006 this was Michael Perry [*Population 485*]; in Spring 2007 it will be Matthew Sanford [*Waking*]). I like teaching this class, but I also feel a huge responsibility for preparing students well to succeed at Gustavus. My two primary goals with these students are to get them to understand the writing process upside and down, and to get them to practice critical thinking as we analyze course texts.

*EDU 362 – Social Studies Methods*

This .25 class meets by arrangement, usually five times over the course of the semester for two hours each time. It is always small – in fall semester only three students, and in spring probably only one. The class is part of the secondary methods block, and my aim is to acquaint students with best practices in the teaching of social studies. Because I ask students to take responsibility for facilitating our meetings, it becomes a little like a professional reading group in which colleagues have conversation about teaching methods and philosophies. One aspect of this course involves e-mail conversation with practicing social studies teachers, and this input provides some real world context for the theories we discuss.

***Continued Growth/Improvement as a Teacher.*** I have had the opportunity to participate in a number of professional development experiences that have enhanced my teaching. Some examples are:

- **Service Learning for Social Justice: Northern Ireland 2002**  
This SLSJ program focused on social justice and conflict, involved a year's worth of reading and discussion, and culminated in travel to Northern Ireland in August 2002. As a result of this experience, I adapted my education course, Human Relations (EDU 398) as a J-term travel course, and taught it during January 2004 in collaboration with two colleagues, Steve Griffith and Elizabeth Baer. Steve and Elizabeth had also participated in the SLSJ 2002 program, and each of them designed their own course. The result was a unique travel experience for Gustavus students involving three separate, but linked, courses that shared the interdisciplinary theme "Conflict and Social Justice in Northern Ireland." At times members of all courses met together; at times each course met separately or two courses met together while the third was engaged elsewhere. The themes of conflict, social justice, and ethnic relations united the courses, but each course took a different disciplinary approach to these themes. This was the first time I taught a Gustavus travel course.
- In June 2003 I participated in the faculty development workshop on vocation entitled *The Vocation of a Teacher: Cultivating Our Lives of Commitment*. This experience led to rich conversations among participants across disciplines and years of experience. This experience enabled me to consider whether teaching is truly a vocation for me. I also developed discussion questions on this topic to pose to students in an Education class I taught at the time (EDU 230, Social Foundations).
- In summer 2004 I was awarded a Bush Service Learning Grant to work with Noreen Buhmann on more deeply integrating service learning into my courses. The name of this grant was "Service Learning for Social Justice Implementation Grant" and it resulted in the inclusion of a significant service learning component on English as a Second Language in my Human Relations (EDU 398) class.
- During 2004-05 I was a member of the second campus SOTL group (Scholarship on Teaching and Learning). My project involved an analysis of the level of expectation I had for student performance in one of my Education classes. I wanted to take a look at what I assumed about the ability level of Education students, craft assignments and assign readings slightly more challenging than I expected students to be able to do, and then monitor their response as well as mine. To my surprise, almost all the students in my class *did* rise to the effort, and much of my analysis focused on why I was holding lowered expectations.

- From 2004-2006 I was a participant in the Minnesota Courage to Teach program. This regional initiative is modeled after the national Courage to Teach program (originated by Parker Palmer) and has as its goal to “strengthen individuals, professions, and communities through programs that renew our spirits and reconnect who we are with what we do.” [2] Participants met four times each year for two years. I used this opportunity to talk with other educators about what teaching means to me, and how to sustain my enthusiasm for it.
- In Fall 2004 I was involved, with several other faculty, in a short-lived pilot project using Blackboard as a teaching tool. Information Technology initiated, and provided some support for, this effort. This gave me a useful opportunity to consider the merits and demerits of teaching with this form of technology while I used two of my classes as guinea pigs for this experiment. I can say that I am glad Gustavus did not spend the money to purchase a Blackboard license, though I do continue to use Moodle (our on-site “Learning Management System”) for e-reserves.

In addition to these facilitated professional development opportunities, I also regularly solicit student feedback (both formal and informal) about what to change and what to retain about a course. I also continue to read a variety of texts about teaching[3].

I hope that students in my classes feel that they have learned something from me. I was delighted that the Gustie Greeters voted me the speaker for the President’s Banquet for first-year students this fall, and I know that two of the loudest voices in my support came from Education students I’ve had recently. When I was on Personnel Committee a few years ago, I observed the class of someone coming up for promotion. A senior, who knew the reason I was observing, turned to me at the end of the hour and said about the class, “this is what I always thought college was supposed to be.” I would feel a great sense of accomplishment if my students could say the same about my classes.

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[1] Cady, Duane L. (2005). *Moral vision: How everyday life shapes ethical thinking*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

[2] More information about this program can be found at the Center for Courage and Renewal, <http://www.teacherformation.org/> based in Washington State.

[3] I especially recommend: Brookfield, Stephen D. & Stephen Preskill (1999). *Discussion as a Way of Teaching*. Jossey Bass; Brookfield, Stephen D. (2000). *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*. Jossey Bass; Goodman, Diane J. (2001). *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice: Educating People from Privileged Groups*. Sage; Parks, Sharon Daloz. (2000). *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*:

*Mentoring Young Adults in their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith.* Jossey Bass.

## Love It. Do It Well. | Alisa Rosenthal

In Letter 4 of *Letters to a Young Poet*, Rainer Maria Rilke made the following request of his correspondent:

I would like to beg you, dear Sir, as well as I can, to have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.

As a college student reading Rilke for the first time, I copied those words into my journal, recorded all the bibliographic information, and failed to think of them again. Years later, at a moment of doubt and frustration, I thought of Rilke and excavated my copy of his letters. There, in his injunction to “love the questions themselves,” and in the tantalizing promise of ‘perhaps’ and ‘someday’ and ‘gradually’ living into the answers, I found the articulation of the liberal arts that spoke to me as an undergraduate and still speaks to me today.

During my years at Gustavus, I have taught a range of courses in political theory and public law and have expanded the department's curriculum in both of these subfields. I define my pedagogy with reference to three primary goals. First, I convey to my students that critical thinking and reflection should inform whatever they read, write, hear, or say. I encourage students to read and listen for incomplete or incoherent arguments, assertions without evidence, and opinions presented as facts. In my responses to them and in their responses to one another, they often identify their own use of unsupported assumptions, imprecise reasoning, and unsubstantiated claims. In so doing, students extend their understanding of political theory and public law from simple memorization and content mastery to genuine insight and analysis.

Second, I integrate the study of political theory and public law with the everyday experience of politics. I seek to disabuse students of the notion that political theory is divorced from political practice and lived reality of their lives. I encourage them to understand the world they live in as shaped by particular political ideas and values – ones that can be contested, discussed, debated, changed, and shared. Thus, students combine rigorous and close examination of classic texts in political theory with the development of their own political theories. For example, in *Introduction to Political and Legal Thinking*, students choose argument paper topics which bring the thinkers they are reading into dialogue with contemporary political events. This helps students see the ways in which political theory speaks to the ‘big questions’ that are asked, engaged, and answered and that they too have the beginnings of a political theory that can be articulated, questioned, and critiqued. While I emphasize the importance of historical contexts, I also stress that the enduring questions of political theory – what is the good life, how shall we live together in communities, who should rule, what is justice – continue to frame political and social discourse today.

Third, I encourage students to understand themselves as political and social actors, and to use that understanding as the basis for a serious engagement with the world. They are right to perceive social and political change as difficult to effect. But I argue that recognizing difficulty ought not to result in indifference or lethargy. My concern is not *what* they care about or devote their energy to, but *that* they care about, and work toward, something. I share my perspective, and seek to model engagement, critical thinking, listening, and active discussion of my, and others’ opinions. By showing that I care about our questions, I encourage them to see the classroom as more than a place to discuss course readings and assignments. It is also a place to develop and articulate one’s own views, and to engage with those who disagree. In so doing, I uphold the College’s mission of “foster[ing] the development of values as an integral part of intellectual growth.”

To build community in our classroom, I encourage an atmosphere at once informal and respectful. Students do, and are intended to, respond to one another, not just to me. My expectations for the students are high and my demands rigorous. The bedrock of my teaching is commitment to the profound importance of what we in the classroom do together.

Just prior to my arrival at Gustavus, the Political Science department created a new introductory course to political theory. During academic year 2004-2005, I taught the first several sections of that course, POL 160: *Introduction to Political and Legal Thinking*. The challenge of an introductory class in political theory is that students must simultaneously master the content of the course – presented through primary texts that are often dense and difficult – and an approach to reading and thinking which is often unfamiliar to them. Hence, I design the Political Science 160 syllabus to assist the students in

learning *how* to read political theory and to develop their capacity to frame an analytic and critical response to those theories.

I spend significant time during class analyzing the text with students and working through particularly vexing or difficult passages. I begin class each day by asking students what questions they have from the day's reading. This is far from a *pro forma* inquiry. Rather, their questions form the basis for the day's discussion. It is almost always the case that the areas of the text with which they have difficulty are precisely those with the most theoretical significance. When they see that they are fully capable of identifying the crucial questions in and about the text, they are encouraged to see themselves as insightful readers and critics of even the most difficult texts in political theory.

Students develop their critical faculties through class discussions and through a series of argument papers required over the course of the semester. I do not assign topics for these papers but rather require students to isolate some aspect of a reading that they find both interesting and problematic, to explain the problem they have identified, to offer an argument about it, and to give an account of what is at stake in their argument. While students are required to represent the views of the thinker(s) they engage, the emphasis in these argument papers is on their critical engagement of the text.

I respond to student writing at some length and in significant detail. My intention is to communicate to students that I take their work seriously and that my expectation is that they will do the same. Most students recognize the value of a careful and thorough engagement of their ideas and their writing. In addition, they report that the grading rubric at the conclusion of the written comments helps them to identify general strengths and weaknesses.

In addition to class discussions, exams, and argument papers, I require students to participate in a "Social Contract Exercise." This exercise requires students to work together in groups to write and defend a social contract for an imaginary community of shipwreck survivors. The assignment requires students to articulate their assumptions about human nature, justice, governance, and rights and to work with others whose assumptions and beliefs may differ. After each group completes their social contract, the contracts are posted online and a discussion about each contract begins. Finally, groups revise their contracts in light of the challenges raised and write an explanation for the changes they chose to make. This exercise links the actual institutions of government with the theoretical questions posed by the course thinkers and helps students to recognize the assumptions and presuppositions embedded within all constitutions.

Students also participate in two symposia, class meetings in which they are required to assume the persona and ideas of a given thinker and to debate the other thinkers from the course on a variety of topics. Students regularly remark on the usefulness of this exercise and I have long been

interested in finding ways to expand and develop it. As part of this effort, I attended a *Reacting to the Past* workshop through the Faculty Resource Network at New York University in June 2006. The *Reacting to the Past* method involves the use of extensive historical simulations in which students immerse themselves in the theoretical and intellectual arguments of pivotal moments in history. Each simulation begins from a few central texts which students assume responsibility for knowing, engaging, and critiquing. Last spring, in Political Science 160, I centered the course on two of these simulations: democratic Athens (grounded in Thucydides's *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Socrates's *Apology* and *Crito*, and Plato's *Republic*), and revolutionary-era France (grounded in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *First and Second Discourses* and *The Social Contract* and on Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*). Students assumed roles ranging from radical democrats and Socratics in Athens to Lafayette, King Louis XVI, and Georges Danton in revolutionary-era France. In these roles, students worked together in factions to achieve their political and philosophical objectives through speeches, newspapers, politicking, riots, parties, and debates. In so doing, they delved deep into canonical texts of political theory and identified the connections between the central ideas of those texts and the practical political dilemmas they faced.

I have also worked with the department to expand our offerings in the field of public law through the development of a senior research seminar focusing on law and identity and through a two-semester Constitutional Law sequence. The Constitutional Law sequence presents a unique challenge. Although a 300-level course, most of the students have never read a Supreme Court decision and this class is their first substantial exposure to the field of public law. In many ways the challenge of teaching Constitutional Law is similar to the challenge of teaching an introductory theory course – students must master course content while learning to read a kind of text with which they have little familiarity. Just as I believe it crucial for political theory students to read the primary texts of political theory rather than textbook summaries, I think it crucial for constitutional law students to read actual court decisions rather than synopses and outlines. Consequently, I devote the early meetings of Constitutional Law to learning how to read cases, how to understand what justices are doing when they render decisions, and how to understand the process of constitutional interpretation. Students are required to brief every case assigned for class, a requirement that seems extraordinarily arduous in the early weeks of the course but results in their careful reading and consistent preparation. Where feasible, I have incorporated an extensive moot court exercise into these courses. My investment in these demanding pedagogical strategies –social contract exercise, symposia, and moot court experience demonstrates my commitment to the College's mission to “balance educational tradition with innovation” and to “promote...the independent pursuit of learning”.



Because all Political Science majors are required to complete a major research paper, each tenure-track member of the department teaches a senior research seminar every other year (or more frequently). Students are often intimidated by the word “thesis” and concerned about their ability to complete such a long and sustained project. Following my first semester teaching the research seminar, I compiled a “red book” of the assignments that would lead the students through the research, organizing, drafting, and writing process. This step-by-step approach demystified the project for students and enabled them to see the final product as an opportunity to integrate the analytical, writing, and research skills they had been practicing for four years. Nathan Sellers’s (’06) senior thesis on the constitutionality of hate crimes statutes was published in the *Pi Sigma Alpha Undergraduate Journal of Politics*.

In addition to my regular courses, I have advised more than a dozen career exploration internships over January-terms and served as the faculty advisor for four of the students who spent January participating in Hurricane Katrina relief in Ocean Springs, Mississippi. I take my role as an advisor of internships seriously and require students to submit a reflective journal, a final reflective essay, and to meet with me to discuss their experiences. Several of the internships I supervised and, most notably, the Hurricane Katrina Relief independent study are examples of students pursuing “lives of service” and “work[ing] toward a just and peaceful world.” As I facilitate their journey, I foster these aspects of the College’s mission.

Political theory and constitutional law are difficult to read and require care and attention. Students accustomed to cursory preparation discover the inadequacy of such preparation for a text-based discussion. But, though they may initially struggle through the texts, by the end of the semester, they are able both to read and enjoy them. As one student in Constitutional Law II (Spring 2007) commented, “She leaves your learning to you from the start, but... begins to help you see what to think about and how to identify issues/patterns as we go through cases throughout the semester. It’s the best of both worlds; student-led learning with challenging, enhancing guidance from the instructor.”

Another common theme that emerges from my evaluations is my students’ appreciation of my availability to work with them through challenging material and difficult assignments. Students challenged by course material often meet with me outside of class and outside of office hours. Students often remark on my enthusiasm and excitement about the material. There is little I can say about this except to note that they are right. I love what I teach and I love teaching it. That students observe my passion for political theory and constitutional law seems to me entirely right: these are the realms I find most energizing, exciting, and relevant.

I require students to take stands, to defend their positions, and to engage seriously and respectfully with others who may disagree with them. That

is, students in my classes must defend their claims and learn to assess and critique the foundations and logic of the claims of others. I mentioned above that I do not hide my perspective from students. Given this, one concern is always that students with different political views will feel silenced or marginalized. In fact, however, many of my evaluations note that though the student disagreed with my positions, he or she learned to defend his/her own ideas more strongly through respectful disagreement than if questions or challenges had not been raised. Also, although my own positions are clear to students, I often make arguments that reflect other viewpoints or point out the shortcomings of the position with which they expect me to disagree. In so doing, students report that I make politics less polemical and more complex, forcing them to think through the left-right dichotomies they occasionally take for granted. This advances the College's mission to "promote the open exchange of idea and the independent pursuit of learning."

Much as I enjoy my work inside the classroom, I particularly value the opportunity to work closely with students outside of the classroom. I share the College's mission of "help[ing] its students attain their full potential as persons" and I believe that some of my most important and valuable work toward this goal occurs outside the confines of a course or classroom. In addition to serving as academic adviser to Political Science majors and minors, I informally advise many students contemplating law school, graduate school, jobs, Teach for America, or simply wondering about the possibilities the future holds and how best to advance toward that future. As I have these conversations in my office, over email, and on the telephone, I recall – and often quote – my undergraduate mentor's advice to me during such a conversation: "*I don't care what you do. I trust you. Love it. Do it well.*" While our students often seek surety and a well-marked road, I seek to show them – in and out of the classroom – that the fulfillment of their potential will be achieved by following their own hearts rather than a prescribed path.

## Partnerships are at the Core of My Teaching | Michelle Twait

Susan Barnes Whyte, in her role as the external reviewer for my third year review, wrote “Michelle is at heart a teacher.” It is true. There are a number of paths an academic librarian can take and I chose a path that emphasizes teaching. Since graduate school, I have chosen to work at small liberal arts institutions and I have sought positions that would allow me to focus on facilitating student learning.

I am especially grateful to be at a library that, since the 1950s, has identified itself as a teaching library, committed to an active role in the preparation of students for lifelong learning. Student learning serves as the compass that directs all of the library’s services and programs.

With my department and within the field, we use the term information literacy to describe the set of critical thinking skills needed to find, use, and evaluate information. Though I may not like the imprecision of the term, I embrace the idea and the spirit in which it was created. Information literacy has been defined in various ways. The definition that, in my opinion, best captures the essence of the concept comes from the American Library Association Presidential Committee on Information Literacy: “Ultimately, information literate people are those who have learned how to learn. They know how to learn because they know how knowledge is organized, how to find information and how to use information in such a way that others can learn from them. They are people prepared for lifelong learning, because they can always find the information needed for any task or decision at hand.”

Whether at the reference desk or in the classroom, my ultimate goal is to equip students to be lifelong learners. I hope to encourage their intellectual curiosity and help them discover the joys of self-education. I view my role as that of a guide and facilitator on their journey to becoming independent researchers. I want to demystify the research process and enable students to become responsible for their own learning. I am helping them hone the skills that will serve them far beyond their baccalaureate years and well into their future endeavors.

There are many ways that students might develop these skills. Recognizing this, my teaching occurs in several distinct, but interrelated, settings (the reference desk, library instruction sessions, my own courses, and through online guides and collection development work). The discussion below will touch upon all of these settings, including student and faculty feedback related to these characteristics.

We live in the Information Age and it seems natural to be interested in something that pervades so much of our lives. I have always been fascinated by the role of libraries as social and educational institutions. My interest in this subject is linked to the core values of librarianship, which resonate with my personal values – intellectual freedom, lifelong learning, privacy, social responsibility, and equitable access to information. Some of the most important economic, social, and political issues of our time revolve around information – ownership of information, information haves and have-nots, privacy and the social web. Beyond this, as someone who has always enjoyed research, I find it instinctive to share that interest with students.

I find reference desk consultations particularly enjoyable. In discussing a topic with a student, I often learn about new research in that area or see the topic from a different angle. Looking at students' search strategies or source choices, I have a window into their understanding of the research process. I enjoy the process of discovery just as much (if not more) than the students.

I also enjoy the synergy among the various types of teaching (one-on-one consultations at the reference desk or in my office, working with classes, creating user guides, and collection development). Each informs the other pieces and I take pleasure in seeing how these distinct elements contribute to students' overall growth as scholars.

In following the principles of instructional design, I try to create a welcoming classroom environment. In the classroom, this may be as simple as greeting students as they arrive, acknowledging and affirming their contributions to discussions, and encouraging respectful interactions among classmates. It can be a bit more complicated at the reference desk. During reference consultations, I recognize that many students approach librarians with a mixture of fear, hope and anxiety. They may be fearful that they might appear ignorant, hopeful that I may be able to help them, and anxious because they may feel overwhelmed by the assignment. Creating a welcoming climate means being approachable, putting them at ease, being sensitive to their emotional state, listening carefully (so I hear not only what is being said but also what is not being said), asking clarifying questions, and discussing possibilities.

When designing an instruction session, I try to determine the essential components or outcomes for it. I meet with the course instructor to discuss the learning objectives for the session and also to gather information about the course and the relevant assignments. I then go about preparing for the session

by examining our library's holdings (both print and electronic), anticipating the problems students may encounter, and making instructional design decisions. Throughout this process, I will often go back to the course instructor for further clarification or to brainstorm about the upcoming session. I am flexible and always willing to reframe the session if, upon further consultation with the instructor, we find that a different approach would better meet the goals of the course.

In my own courses, I try to provide clear expectations and feedback to students. I believe students should be clearly informed on how they will be evaluated. Therefore, I provide a great deal of detail in my syllabi and give students a grading rubric for each assignment. I also provide students with specific and detailed weekly feedback on their written work and participation in class. My goal is to offer constructive comments designed to help them build confidence, set higher goals for themselves, and also improve their understanding of the material.

In library instruction sessions, we acknowledge that the research process is not identical across disciplines and, therefore, our approach to the pedagogy of information literacy is discipline based. We deliver our library instruction sessions within the context of courses rather than as "general" introductions. When working with students on topic development or teaching research strategies, I link the information literacy concepts to their coursework and real-life experiences.

The tenets of information literacy are too important to be left to one group. We are all responsible for helping students develop critical thinking skills. Partnerships are at the core of my teaching – in fact, I rarely teach alone. Sessions are intended to be a fusion of information literacy instruction and course content. Therefore, the collaboration with course instructors is the key to the quality and success of the instruction. I view the course instructor as my co-pilot and both welcome and expect their participation in a session. Through this collaboration, I ensure that my goals for a session are consistent with the mission, goals, and objectives of the program or department. I also foster and maintain relationships with other offices on campus. In working with the Career Center, Center for Vocational Reflection, or the Advising Center, I am better able to understand the "whole" student and their learning needs.

To me, achieving quality in the use of student-centered, active learning, and collaborative methods includes supporting diverse approaches to teaching. This includes responding to multiple learning styles. I provide handouts and online guides for students who prefer to read and work at their own pace. There is always some element of discussion or interaction for those students who are auditory learners. Research is not a spectator sport and, therefore, discovery learning is the primary instructional method. In the classroom, students are actively engaged in the search process as we

experiment with various strategies and explore different tools. I often ask students to work in pairs, so that they might learn from one another's successes and challenges.

My instructional methods also accommodate student growth in skills and understanding throughout the college years. A session for a First Term Seminar course is quite different from a session for seniors working on honors theses.

While scalability may be more of an issue for colleagues at larger institutions, we are also concerned about it here at Gustavus. With a 416:1 student-librarian ratio, supply and demand is sometimes tricky to balance. In addition to working with courses, I might also meet with students who have been assigned our reference desk worksheet. In this way, I can not only reach a relatively large number of students, but also provide them with individualized instruction. Likewise, I am involved in efforts to develop modules that can be used or modified for many students (e.g. modules on evaluating web sites). I might also work with a class by evaluating the bibliographies of students' papers. In seeing what students have selected, I may notice that one student relied primarily on online resources, while perhaps another exclusively chose books, neglecting the more current research. I am able to suggest tools or resources that would strengthen their thesis.

During a library or class session, my concern for student learning is reflected in several ways. I believe it is important to understand the audience and their needs. In most of the classes I teach, students vary in terms of their academic year, degree of interest in the subject matter, socioeconomic background, language proficiency, and learning styles. My concern for student learning might involve a quick survey of students at the beginning of a session or course to determine their level of expertise. Taking into consideration the level of the student and their previous experience, I build appropriate scaffolding to take them to the next level. I try to provide optimal challenges for students by including content that will appeal to and challenge the advanced student, but will also engage and not overwhelm the novice.

In library instruction sessions, I explain the underlying reasons for the way things work in the belief that such an understanding leads to a firmer grasp of the essential skills necessary to navigate in a complex information environment. My goal is to clarify rather than simplify that which is intrinsically complex, to ground such explanations in concrete examples, and to foster skill acquisition through practical application. For example, I try to employ cognitive modeling by talking about why we are modifying a search or by asking them to suggest how we might change our approach. I ask students to suggest search terms and strategies while demonstrating tools. By using students' examples, they are connected more intimately to the material and are more engaged. This method also allows students to see how they have to

be prepared to consider different terms and try a variety of strategies in order to be successful.

My concern for student learning includes evaluating my teaching. After a library instruction session, evaluation forms are sent to the students and the course instructor. I also try to spend a few minutes on self-evaluation by jotting down notes about what went well, what I might do differently next time, and what external or internal factors may have affected my teaching that day. I save all of the evaluations and refer back to them when preparing to teach a session or a course for the second (or tenth) time.

Finally, my concern for student learning extends to my collection development work. Just as one might carefully select the textbooks and readings for a course, in my collection development work I am entrusted with providing students materials for their research projects. To accomplish this, I draw upon my knowledge of the curriculum, my experience working with students at the reference desk, awareness of specific assignments, and conversations with faculty members. Beyond the basic objective of creating a collection that reflects curricular goals, I try to ensure that the collection reflects diverse (and often conflicting) viewpoints. Students then must go beyond their individual understanding of the world and critically analyze the materials.

Although Gustavus does not offer a major in library science, I have worked with many students interested in the field. I have advised them on graduate school selection, supervised independent study projects, written letters of recommendation, and offered editorial assistance on application essays.

In January 2006, I offered a course (NDL124: Vocation and Information Professions) intended for students interested in librarianship, archival studies, or museum studies. A few of the students were specifically interested in these professions and I was able to advise them on graduate schools, internships, and specialties within these professions. The vocation aspect of the course allowed us to discuss the “big questions” and I found that to be very rewarding. I remember one student in particular who repeatedly argued that he did not care about his career fitting into his calling, as long as he was making a six-figure salary. A few weeks later, he reported that he was beginning to question to what extent the importance of wealth really outweighed the value of vocation.

Although I came to Gustavus in 2000 with much enthusiasm for teaching, I had relatively little teaching experience. In my time here, I feel I have proven myself to be an effective instructor, but realize that I can improve upon many aspects of my teaching and I strive to do so each term. As I gain experience, both my teaching philosophy and methods continue to evolve.





## Cultivating a Respect for Truth | Jennifer Ackil

Most of the students enrolled in my psychology classes will not become psychologists. Indeed, even for those who declare psychology majors, a career in psychology is the exception rather than the rule. Nonetheless, all of the students in my classes can and should learn to recognize, define and solve problems as psychologists do. Doing so promotes critical, rigorous, and creative thinking about questions and ideas that can be addressed with the scientific method of understanding. Knowing how science contributes to our understanding of the world helps to cultivate in students a respect for truth and prepares them to live responsible, productive, and meaningful lives in an ever-changing world. That I have the opportunity to foster these characteristics in students using a subject matter that is inherently interesting (it is the rare person who isn't curious about one's own behavior and mind) is both a tremendous responsibility and a privilege. As social psychologist David Myers put it, "What greater life mission could one hope for than to do one's part to restrain intuition with critical thinking, judgmentalism with compassion, and illusion with understanding?"

To become good psychological thinkers, students need to master some basic facts and concepts from the discipline. For example, it would be impossible to evaluate psychological research without an understanding of the basic tenants of experimental design. Moreover, meaningful discussions of brain function would be stalled without an understanding of brain structure and basic neuronal processes. Thus, part of my responsibility as a teacher, especially in the introductory psychology course (PSY100), is to provide the opportunities necessary for students to acquire this information. Whereas this may be accomplished most easily by telling students what they need to know (and in some instances this may be unavoidable), my goal whenever possible is to engage students in the material in such a way that the information is a byproduct of their own thoughts. Most of the time I do this in a very simple way, namely by posing questions that require students to think about the material themselves, rather than simply writing down the facts I recite. For

instance, in early discussions of brain physiology, I frequently begin my class by challenging students to consider a time when scientists knew nothing about the brain and encourage them to think about the methods researchers could employ to identify brain structures and their functions. Although the simple question, “what could you do to figure out what the hippocampus does?” is initially met with silence and avoidant looks, it only takes some encouragement (or the response of a more extroverted student) for them to begin to appreciate that the seemingly outrageous possibilities (e.g., remove it, stimulate it) are worth considering. And I am convinced both from my own experiences and from empirical evidence, that engaging students in this manner enhances their understanding as well as their memory for the material at hand. Moreover, it emphasizes that thinking is part of all learning rather than something that occurs only after one has acquired a set of concepts.

Once students have acquired foundational concepts, they can engage more deeply in the ideas of psychology. Given that psychology, like all science, is in a constant state of flux, it is important to portray psychological knowledge as dynamic rather than static. To this end, I typically begin each topic with an issue or question (e.g., what is the capacity of short term memory?), ask students to think about ways to address the question (e.g., how could we figure this out?) and then lead them through research that has been conducted to answer the question, sharing with them details about experimental design and data interpretation. I may ask students to evaluate research findings and present alternative explanations all in the service of telling a story about what we know at this point in time, and how we came to know it. Although I realize that many students would prefer simple, clear, and final answers (e.g., “the capacity of short term memory is 7 items”), I attempt to help them understand *the process* of psychological science as a continuous flow of questions, data collection, analysis, and critical thinking that inevitably raises new questions while addressing the issue at hand. That is, I want them to understand *how* psychologists engage in research to inform our understanding of behavior and mental processes rather than simply knowing what we believe to be true at this point in time. This provides them with a set of skills and a manner of thinking that they can carry with them for a lifetime.

In service of this goal, I provide students with opportunities to engage in the process of psychology by providing opportunities for data collection and analyses. I am most satisfied with the manner in which I have been able to integrate these opportunities in my 200- and 300-level courses. For instance, in the cognitive class (PSY230), students are given regular opportunities throughout the semester to complete computer simulations of classic psychological experiments in which they are first engaged as research participants and then evaluate the compilation of class data as researchers. My sense is that participating in these simulations leaves students more comfortable engaging in discussion of the research topic at hand and better prepared to do so. Moreover,

it provides an opportunity to practice thinking like a psychological scientist. In my seminar (PSY344), students go beyond simulations and conduct an original small-scale study of their own. Regardless of the different ways I've implemented this project (e.g., in small groups, as a class, in collaboration with another psychology seminar), the primary value comes from the issues that necessarily arise as students' research comes to life. Discussions of such issues as the ethics of human subject use, the evaluation of experimental design, data analyses and interpretation of results are unavoidable in this context and become more relevant to students when they consider them in light of their own research. Whereas the relatively large class size in General Psychology (PSY100) presents unique challenges, it doesn't prohibit them from being involved in the process of psychological science in very fundamental ways. To this end, I occasionally employ in-class demonstrations of phenomena, provide opportunities for very simple data collection, and have in the past required completion of various laboratory simulations (e.g., training a virtual rat to press a bar, examining short-and long-term memory). Whereas students report enjoying these experiences and are likely better equipped to engage in discussions of methodology as a result, I continue to explore opportunities to compile class data in the service of providing opportunities to analyze and interpret results. Indeed, my department colleagues and I have plans to explore this issue together this summer as we seek to create a set of standardized laboratory experiences for all General Psychology students.

Whereas engaging students in data collection and analysis is one way to encourage them to think like psychologists, it is certainly not the only way. With this in mind, I consistently require students in my upper-level courses (PSY230, PSY344) to read empirical journal articles that correspond to the course material. Indeed, my seminar relies solely on primary readings; there is no required textbook. Working through the research reported in these articles gives students a chance to evaluate real psychological science and encourages them to develop their own questions about behavior and cognitive processing. Moreover, evaluating the ideas presented in these articles encourages the rigorous habits of thought that benefit students regardless of their future endeavors. Although these articles are not written for a general audience and thus, are quite challenging for undergraduates, I find that most students (many of whom are not shy about indicating to me their initial frustrations) rise to meet the challenge and often find satisfaction in doing so – a valuable lesson in and of itself. I am committed to continuing to include these primary readings and am exploring ways to expand some assignments to include connections to real world applications. To this end, I piloted an assignment last fall that required students to examine instances where doctors may evidence biased thinking and decision making in a manner consistent with the findings we read about in Tversky and Kahneman's now classic *Science* article on biases in human judgment. While it is important to continue to

emphasize the value of basic research, highlighting applications when they exist may be another avenue for increasing interest and engagement in the course material.

It is important to note that my teaching is not limited to the classroom. As indicated by the student research presentations and honors theses included in my vitae, I have a strong record of involving students in research as a means of teaching outside the classroom. Under my supervision students have conducted a variety of experiments aimed at understanding various aspects of human cognitive processing. Whereas my own program of research has elicited student interest and collaboration at all levels (e.g., design, data collection, analyses, interpretation), students have also sought my supervision for projects that explore cognitive issues unrelated to my own research. Sharing with students my expertise as a psychological scientist as they experience firsthand the challenge and excitement of scientific discovery can be an especially rewarding aspect of my teaching. While these experiences are critical for students intending to pursue graduate work in psychology, they provide skills and habits that are also valuable for those who pursue other endeavors. As psychologist William James put it, "Laboratory work... engender[s] a habit of observation, a knowledge of the difference between accuracy and vagueness, and an insight into nature's complexity... , which once wrought into the mind, remain there as lifelong possessions."

Thinking about how to improve and expand upon these research experiences for our students is something I continue to explore. To this end, I participated in the 2007 Bush Foundation sponsored workshop, "The Student as Scholar: Enhancing Research and Creative Practices" and have implemented changes in the honors psychology major to enhance the students' experience. Furthermore, initiating the Annual Gustavus Psychology Symposium, and working with my colleagues from other departments to initiate the Annual Celebration of Creative Inquiry were motivated in part to provide the opportunity for our students to see themselves as serious scholars and to inspire younger students to seek out unique research opportunities of their own. I am simply convinced that as James notes, engaging students in research provides them with "lifelong possessions" that are among the most valuable I can offer them.

In addition to employing research as a teaching opportunity outside the classroom, my role as an advisor (both formal and informal) affords an additional opportunity for important conversations with students. Over the past ten years I have served as an "official" advisor for 25 – 35 psychology majors each semester. At minimum, I meet with each of these students individually once each semester to discuss their course selection for the upcoming semester. Perhaps more important however, is the fact that these very pragmatic conversations inevitably lead to additional meetings and conversations about a variety of larger issues including vocation, responsibility,

and the value of the liberal arts experience. That I serve as an unofficial advisor to scores of additional students is in part a consequence of teaching General Psychology (PSY100). Many of the students enrolled in this class seek my advice as they consider their future and weigh the value of pursuing psychology either as a major or as a way to augment another line of study. Moreover, I have served as the first advisor for many students as a relatively regular participant in summer registration and I find that a substantial number of advanced psychology majors stop by my office to request my supervision of internships, discuss summer opportunities, and talk over post graduation plans. Although I must admit that the sheer amount of time devoted to advising can sometimes feel overwhelming, it is clearly an important part of my responsibility as a teacher and I very much enjoy the opportunity to think with students about their role as Gustavus undergraduates and as citizens of the world.

While the facts and theories of Psychology will continue to evolve over time, an understanding of the scientific method and the processes involved in knowledge acquisition can help students build a foundation of thinking skills that will benefit them throughout their lives in whatever field they pursue. The strategies I employ in the classroom and my aim to involve students in research outside the classroom, provide students with the opportunities to acquire these skills.



## Rules and How to Break Them | Esther Wang

My goals for students have not changed since I formulated them for my third year review: I want my students to develop strong technique, acute listening skills, and a keen sense of musical style in all its conventions and exceptions. I want my students to be thoughtful and creative in their work, demonstrating persistence, commitment and character. I want them to absorb and master a wide repertoire of material and make it their own. Most importantly, I want my students to develop not only as musicians, but also as individuals, each with unique gifting and potential. Ultimately, I want my students to know more than I do and realize that the value of acquired learning increases only as much as it is shared.

Transmitting these educative ideals to college students can be a daunting task. Endowed with new freedoms and obligations, undergraduates must learn not only how to manage their time and resources, but also how to identify and improve upon personal strengths and weaknesses. Playing the piano provides one (academic) avenue by which a student may engage these challenges. In my applied music lessons, I engage students one-on-one, exploring ways to cultivate the discipline (many hours in the practice room) and mental stamina (constant self-evaluation) to become an accomplished pianist. The fruits of these efforts, I believe, extend into other areas of their lives.

I consider it a special privilege to hold a job grounded in my abiding love of music and the piano (first awakened at the age of four). I am grateful that my lifelong passion can be cultivated in so rich an environment, where I am able to teach in the classroom, in private lessons, and in performance settings. My strengths as a teacher, observed within these milieus, derive from personality traits as well as from professional experience.

I am an intuitive person. I tend to read students' thoughts and actions accurately and can assess their levels of accomplishment quickly. This allows me to assign appropriate repertoire that is at once accessible and challenging. On an interpersonal level, I am able to perceive unspoken worries or doubts.

I make every effort to put my pupils at ease and foster their trust in me, especially within the context of private lessons.

I am also a natural communicator. I find satisfaction in explaining concepts and techniques. In addition to more conventional terms, I have employed non-musical analogies, similes, metaphors, (or even fairy tales) to teach my craft. I try to present a difficult musical passage from every angle, speaking both as a technical coach and an art-lover (“This passage lacks a curve. It needs some inflection, a little curlicue, like you might see in a piece of Rococo architecture.”). In teaching, striving for the right language and imagery is as important as knowing when to simply urge a student to “just do it.” Likewise, in performance, one must constantly expand one’s aural vocabulary; sometimes saying “don’t rush” is not enough. I draw heavily upon my own technical background in order to show my students how to best approach the keyboard.

I still have much to learn about classroom teaching. My inclination is to treat each student as an individual and this is hard with 40 students in the room. But, I think it is important to use my instincts and try to engage them as much as I can instead of talking to them as a herd of cattle. After all, I am talking about a subject that deals with no one group, but individuals, and their music cannot be mistaken for anyone else’s.

My first new class at Gustavus was an interim class, *The Concert Experience* (2007). We discussed Classical music programming (that is, the music of the Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Contemporary periods). Concert programming in earlier times was very different than the standard programming we hear today. Working under the patronage system in the 17th and 18th centuries usually meant that performances were determined by the desires of that patron. This could include a performance featuring the patron’s favorite instrument, or ceremonial music to honor family members or guests. In Mozart’s and Beethoven’s time (when musicians ventured to free-lance), a mish-mash of works was often the norm. A composer wanting to show off his latest pieces might arrange a concert of his own works. A movement of a symphony could be played. If the audience liked it and clapped for a long time, the conductor would repeat the same movement! A new concert aria might be sung, followed by a movement of a new piano concerto, played and conducted by the composer at the keyboard. Improvising a theme from the latest opera arias was commonplace and eagerly anticipated by concert goers of the time.

We don’t seem to “mish-mash” much in today’s Classical concerts, although a rise of crossover performances seems to be welcomed, from Itzhak Perlman playing klezmer music to Andre Rieu’s glitzy renditions of light Classical works.

I wanted the students to get a feel for standard programming, and then have an opportunity to create their own concerts. I enjoyed hearing the kinds of music they played and listened to. I admit I knew very few of the pieces they



shared, and some were standard choral and band works! So, it was a learning experience for everyone. Together, we experimented with programming new and old works based on contrasts, similarities, traditions, exceptions, and just plain imagination. Every program the students formed was a success.

The best experience about this new class was the element of surprise. I had no idea what the final product might be. It taught me to allow more freedom and to avoid controlling the outcome. When I teach private lessons or Music Appreciation, I can usually anticipate a predictable range of results. This class was a refreshing change. It also kept me humble. Everything that was planned was done without my help. I was really proud of these students and admired their creativity.

The second new class I taught at Gustavus was a new requirement for the music major beginning in Spring 2007, *Listening to Music*. This course helps the student develop the analytical listening skills necessary for understanding the major categories and eras of European and American art music. Teaching this course requires examining the music in both historical and theoretical contexts. The students need to gain the ability to see what they hear and hear what need to recognize genre and form both visually and aurally. They need to know where these genres and forms came from and what might have evolved from them.

How do students learn to hear the building blocks of music and place them appropriately throughout history? I'm still trying to answer this question. When I first began preparing for this class, I didn't know where to begin. Music theory was just as important as music history. For instance, in order to understand a fugue, one has to understand:

Theoretical concepts:

- Have a knowledge of chords and their relationships to each other.
- Identify basic compositional techniques like augmentation or diminution (the increasing or decreasing of a theme's note values without changing its rhythmic integrity) and *stretto* (a pile-up of the same theme in several voices)
- Identify different kinds of polyphonic writing (simultaneous independent voices).

Historical knowledge:

- When did diatonic harmony become standardized?
- When did systematic polyphonic writing begin?
- When did vocal imitation begin influencing instrumental procedures like fugues?
- Who wrote fugues before J. S. Bach?

The challenges of this class were endless but rewarding. Music is about rules but it is more about how composers treat and break those rules. Tradition

needs to be understood so it can be put aside. Conversely, new music often can't be appreciated unless we can see from whence it evolved. I was forced to become a theory teacher as well as a history teacher. This ultimately sharpened my approach to listening to music and forced me to better articulate *how* to listen.

I am a fortunate person. I love teaching and have the opportunity to teach in different kinds of settings with students of all ages and abilities.

# Teaching is a Journey of Learning | Michele Koomen

*Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.*

*Nelson Mandela*

A couple of years ago, while in the moment of teaching with our pre-service teacher candidates, I found myself characterizing teaching as a journey of learning. This phrase became a way for me to convey to future teachers, my students, the complexity, the process, the iterations, the dedication, the passion, the surprises, the hard work, and the deep reflection that are all part of teaching and learning and ultimately contribute to the pleasure and the angst that are part of being a teacher. I think often and deeply about my teaching. Like many of my students, teaching has been my calling since my youth. Over the years, my commitment to teaching and learning has not diminished. Indeed my commitment to teaching and learning has only strengthened as my vision of what it takes to be an excellent teacher has expanded. My professional work as a teacher is shaped by several core beliefs, all of which will be found throughout this section. 1) learning is socially mediated and constructed; 2) you cannot teach well what you do not understand; 3) all students can learn; 4) ethics and equity are not always visible in our work as teachers, but they should be fundamental to all the work we do and 5) teaching and learning is praxis.

I began my work as an elementary classroom teacher many years ago with a vision that is shared with many of my teacher candidates: to make a difference in the lives of children and youth. This vision propelled me to move away as a young teacher from teaching methods that felt boring and dull to more active inquiry based methods of teaching and learning. I did not realize at the time that my teaching methodologies were in alignment with a theory of learning called constructivism. Constructivism focuses on the human mind's active attempts to make sense of the world and is influenced by the work of John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Jerome Bruner and Lev Vygotsky. Although I was not able to name the theory that was inherently part of my teaching, I continued active and inquiry based practices because I saw the results: my students were

engaged and interested (and happy) in what we were doing in the classroom. I prematurely congratulated myself on making a difference with my students. It would be many years before I realized that I only made a difference for some students, not all.

I always loved teaching science and math to my students. It was easy to teach about the patterns, the order, the beauty, and the delicacy that are part of our natural world, however, I did not understand why the natural world worked in the way it did. I was curious about the way things worked and wanted to know more (or at least more than you might find in an outdated teacher's manual). I began to strengthen my own background in science and mathematics by enrolling in undergraduate science and mathematics courses in chemistry, physics, geology and biology at Minnesota State University, Mankato. As I continued course work in the natural sciences, I started attending state and regional meetings of the national science and math teacher organization. It was at these meetings where I began to understand the enormity of the issue that a lack of content knowledge (in math and science) had on the confidence and of course the desire of teachers to teach math and science. I also realized how low confidence and phobic attitudes hindered the math and science education of the children I care so much about. My awareness and desire to change this downward spiral and provide hope and confidence to teachers (and their students) led to my action and subsequent enrollment in a master's program at Fresno Pacific University in science and math education. It was at FPU where I became a teacher of teachers, which led me ultimately to Gustavus Adolphus College in 2000.

As would be expected, the structure and substance of the courses that I have taught at Gustavus have changed in response to a number of factors including my experiences of teaching with preservice teachers, my growth in understanding of the research literature in science, math and teacher education, my own contributions to the research, conversations with other teacher educators, feedback from students, observations of my students' teaching in area classrooms, the increasing diversity and changing demographics of Southern Minnesota, and my own praxis and reflection using critical theory.

***Ruminations and Taking a Closer Look at My Teaching.*** My central tenet that teaching is a journey of learning permeates the work that I do with my methods students. For many, the real value of the math and science methods courses comes at the end of the semester when they look back on what they have learned in the context of studying their own teaching.

*Things that I do well in my teaching:* I believe that all students, all kids, all people can learn. I diligently guide my students to see the strengths that each child brings into their classrooms, and not the challenges or deficits that are so often the focus of working with kids with academic or behavioral challenges. In my methods courses, I equip my students with a problem solving model and specific strategies that they may use to support the learning

of all students. Together we read research, including my own, regarding inclusion and diversity, that allows the preservice candidates to enlarge their image of what it means to teach and to teach *all*.

I guide them to understand how research informs and improves our teaching first by reading research articles and second, and more importantly by applying the results of their own research in their teaching.

I continue to grow in my ability to facilitate difficult conversations with my students regarding issues related to classroom teaching and practice or invisible inequities in the classroom. In fact, I embrace difficult conversations, because if I do not show them in class how we navigate sensitive and difficult topics, how will they begin to do this with colleagues in their schools and/or become advocates for kids?

I enjoy my students. Probably the best and most unexpected outcome for me about traveling with students to Southern Africa was the relationships that you build as an instructor in the most unexpected places. The shared conversations that I had in the back of the bus or at the pool were some of the best parts of the trip for me.

I have high expectations for my students and I ask them to increase their own expectations for themselves. Let me explain with a major assignment called the *Study of Teaching* that students complete in the two methods courses for me as a culmination of our work together.

A cornerstone of the Department of Education at Gustavus is a *Conceptual Framework* that is communicated as a “three-part cycle of learning — knowledge > experience > reflection.” Over the past few semesters this conceptual framework has been closely tied with a research project that students in the math and science methods courses complete. Students develop the *knowledge* portion of the conceptual framework through readings, class discussion and classroom investigations; they apply their knowledge through *experiences* within the classroom by teaching math and science lessons using research based practices in local elementary schools; finally they *reflect* on their teaching by looking closely at their teaching using phenomenological inquiry. Phenomenological inquiry is a research method that is designed to “awaken teachers to see beyond their habituated perceptions, and in so doing become more mindful of individual children, classroom dynamics and their teaching practices” (Kesson, K., Traugh, C. & Perez, F. 2006) and thus work toward improving their own practice.

As part of their phenomenological inquiry, students are asked to video tape their science and math lessons. As they analyze their videotapes and after teaching notes, the pre-service teachers apply qualitative research methods, including a modified literature review, and analysis to uncover patterns or trends within their classroom teaching, all toward the goal of improving instruction and learning. Learning to apply qualitative research methods within the context of classroom teaching at the same time that they are

learning to teach is a formidable challenge for our students and is something that they resist. However tenuous the start, students over and over again, describe the merits of looking closely at their teaching and the value of this research project for them as teachers.

One student wrote:

*The study of teaching was valuable to me because it allowed me to really look at my own teaching, and interaction with the students. Throughout the course we look and study a lot about other teachers and theories of best practice, however by looking at my own teaching I am able to see the positives of my teaching and also the things I need to continue to work on in the classroom. By studying my teaching I was able to see that questioning was something I need to continue to work on in the future as I continue to teach. It has also taught me, that it is important to continue to study my own teaching, because unless I take the time to reflect and study what I do in the classroom, I won't know the things I need to improve on.*

Another wrote:

*I thought the study of my teaching was valuable because it allowed me a time to evaluate myself as a teacher. By looking at a topic like gender bias I am going to be more aware when teaching as to how I am treating different groups of students. This will hopefully make students feel that they are all treated fairly and allow them to achieve their highest academic potential.*

I know that this research assignment challenges my students and pushes them further than many expect they can go. Their completed projects and their achievements are clearly exceptional and really serve as a capstone of their own learning as teachers at Gustavus. I am exceptionally proud of what they learn about themselves as students and as future teachers. Last spring, I invited several students to present their work in the *Creative Inquiry Exposition*. I have already invited several more for the spring 2010.

As I wrote above, learning to apply qualitative research methods within the context of classroom teaching at the same time that they are learning to teach is a formidable challenge for our students and is something that they resist. However tenuous the start, students over and over again, describes the merits of looking closely at their teaching and the value of this research project for them as teachers. Comments on the SETS such as “much of our class is stressed and frustrated with the amount of work, so I feel these surveys will represent more negative aspects than usual” support the notion that students are indeed struggling with the overall Methods’ course workload and have yet to realize the value in all they are asked to do. They begin to see their own study as

part of their metacognition of teaching as a journey of learning. I will end this section with an excerpt from a letter by John Clementson (May 15, 2009) for my fifth year review that encapsulated *Teaching as a Journey of Learning*:

Each semester, as part of our elementary methods block, Michele engages her students in an in-depth research project (Reflective Inquiry) aimed at examination of their own teaching practices. Many students find the graduate level readings to be difficult and at first offer significant resistance to the project. Michele carefully explains the material and urges students to move forward with their projects. Once students are able to overcome their initial apprehensions and the cognitive dissonance created by the project, they find the work to be extremely interesting and informative. One of our senior seminar students recently reflected on the project as part of her senior portfolio. She wrote:

*I was given the Reflective Inquiry assignment during my Science and Math Methods course. We were told to choose an aspect of our teaching during practicum and to reflect on that aspect. I was instantly overwhelmed and confused. What was reflection? Why did it have to be so labor intensive? As I delved into the project more, I realized it was something I had been doing all along. All I needed to do was document it more formally. Through the completion of the project, I began to narrow my reflection to specific areas of teaching. I was also able to have more meaningful conversations with peers and colleagues about these areas because I took the time to think about them and process my own experiences. My previous views of reflection as a tedious and unimportant chore of teaching changed because I saw directly how my reflection benefitted the students I was working with. My feelings of responsibility to these students made the reflections worthwhile, and the research I found to back up my implications showed me that reflection is something that must be done often and with good intention. I have taken this experience with me into my student teaching semester. Notes are taken during each lesson and I am able to use them in my reflection post-lesson as well as in conversations with other parties about my teaching. Reflection is a tool that I needed to learn to use in order to fully appreciate its benefit.*





## Taking the Responsibility for Education Seriously | Colleen Jacks

I think of my work at Gustavus in the sense of evolution – the changing nature of my discipline and my teaching and scholarship. Since my initial training experiences in genetics and molecular genetics at the University of Minnesota and the University of Chicago, my discipline has been altered radically by the genomics revolution in which entire genomes are sequenced and partially analyzed in a matter of weeks. The changing nature of my discipline affects not only what scientific questions I ask and how I address them experimentally, but also the topics I include in my courses and how I approach them.

I came to Gustavus because of my desire to impart my enthusiasm and knowledge of biology, specifically in genetics, to undergraduates at a liberal arts college. Liberal arts students are encouraged to investigate different viewpoints and find cross-disciplinary connections in their studies, and I believe that this perspective is invaluable in the development of scientists and an educated citizenry. At Gustavus I have taught courses at all three levels; currently my major teaching responsibilities include Cell and Molecular Biology, Genetics, and Molecular Genetics. In the recent past I have also taught Developmental Biology. Although offered through the biology department, the subjects of these courses are interdisciplinary in nature as the line that separates the fields of biochemistry, molecular biology and cell biology become more and more blurred. All of these courses are either required or electives in both the biology and biochemistry and molecular biology (BMB) majors. The development of our BMB program and my ability to participate in its evolution has provided me a great deal of personal and professional satisfaction.

I take my responsibility for the education of my students very seriously. I strive to maintain both a high level of scientific integrity in the content of my courses and a relaxed and interactive classroom atmosphere, encouraging student questions and discussion. My presentations are designed to provide students with a logical framework to think about the often complicated topics

we cover in biology. I utilize outlines, slides in PowerPoint, overhead figures and occasional videos to guide students through the topics and illustrate the points I want to make. In my upper level courses I assign papers from the primary literature with accompanying discussions or assignments. I make available the outlines and PowerPoint presentations, along with other relevant material, most recently through the use of Moodle. I pose questions and problems to my classes as we move through material to help them see the connections between concepts and to provide an opportunity for self-testing and additional questions on the topics we have covered. In my lower level courses in particular I endeavor to be sensitive to the students' differing levels of interest and ability in the natural sciences. Because true learning does not only take place in the classroom, but also afterwards when students work to assimilate information independently, I try to be available for students throughout the day, having a mostly open-door policy for discussions. I also build problem-solving and review sessions into my courses prior to exams. Besides exams, I use a variety of assessment tools in my courses. These include short response papers, group projects, journals, and written assignments on primary research papers. Depending on the course, I have assessed lab work through weekly assignments, quizzes, report writing, lab notebooks, and poster presentations.

My classroom "formula" has been one of the aspects of my teaching that has evolved through the years, moving from a completely lecture format, the traditional "delivery system" used in my years as an undergraduate science student, to one that incorporates more active learning elements. I have participated in a number of workshops addressing issues in science education. Most recently I was part of a two-person team from Gustavus that participated in New York University's Faculty Resource Network workshop entitled "Bio 2010: How Genes Act in Populations." *Bio 2010* is a 2003 report from the National Research Council addressing the undergraduate science education needs of future research biologists; one of the conclusions of this report was that quantitative aspects of biology should be emphasized and that necessary mathematics concepts should be more integrated into the life science curriculum. Tom LoFaro of MCS and I represented Gustavus, and based on this workshop we designed two activities for my genetics course that reemphasized concepts in population genetics through the use of simple programming in the computer language Python.

I believe that effective learning in the sciences comes from connections between the theoretical and experimental bases of the discipline. In class I discuss the knowledge base of biology and the design and results of experiments that led to our acceptance of this knowledge. My laboratories are designed to allow students the opportunity to perform these experiments themselves – allowing them to discover the pitfalls of working with biological systems, the excitement of discovery when an experiment works, and the per-

sonal satisfaction of wrestling with a question or technique and overcoming the associated problems. Students work collaboratively within groups and between groups in lab and a remarkable “esprit de corps” generally develops in the class. The Cell and Molecular Biology and Molecular Genetics courses have large laboratory components, and I have developed significant laboratory materials for these courses that are found in my file. Development of the lab for Molecular Genetics in particular is part of my ongoing professional work allowing students to be involved with a functional genomics project funded at the University of Minnesota as I describe in the next section. The experimental techniques students use in lab are central to current investigations in cell and molecular biology and are valuable for employment or graduate school upon graduation.

As my course assignments within the department expand and my discipline evolves, I become a student myself, learning through attendance at meetings and workshops. As noted in my vitae, I have attended several workshops and courses focused in one way or another on bioinformatics, a field that includes the analysis of the large data sets generated in genomics projects. These experiences have helped me both in my teaching of genetics and in my research. Although not trained as a developmental biologist, I taught our course in this area over an eleven year period, drawing on my participation in a laboratory workshop at the Darling Marine Center as well as my frequent attendance at the annual Developmental Biology Symposium at the University of Minnesota.

Research plays a critical role in both my teaching and professional development. As a teacher-researcher I desire to encourage and assist biology students with preparations for graduate and professional school by offering them the opportunity to discover the sense of accomplishment that can come from extending the body of knowledge in science. Every year I work as a faculty mentor with a handful of students interested in pursuing research projects. My interactions with these students are personally very satisfying, and I believe, exciting and satisfying for the students. We struggle together with biological questions and experimental design, and with the technical problems inherent in doing an experiment. Many of these students have gone on to graduate programs in areas of genetics or molecular biology. Those students that complete significant pieces of work present their results at regional or national conferences and on campus in the annual Sigma Xi symposium. Three students (Kari Beth Krieger, Deanna Koepf and Brian North) used their projects to partially fulfill the department’s requirements for graduation with honors in biology and went on to obtain Ph.D.s in genetics-related areas. I have also taught a January term research course for first year students on five occasions in which students work on small projects that are offshoots of my ongoing studies, such as cloning genes in a certain manner. This course was very successful at encouraging students to participate in

research early in their academic careers as many went on to do research (for credit or not) with me or other members of the chemistry and biology faculty. I also had the opportunity to teach our Directed Research course one of the several years it was offered. This course gave me the opportunity to direct a small group of upper-level students on research projects and on the necessary writing and presentation skills associated with such projects.

Advising has been an important aspect of my teaching – students need to be encouraged to think about their education more broadly than simply the set of courses needed for application to graduate or professional school. They also need to be realistic about their abilities and understand the options that are open to them. A number of students sell themselves short and are reluctant to attempt courses or shoot for career goals that they often believe are too high. I have formally advised numerous students (first year students, pre-health professional students and biology majors), as well as students who seek advice on a one-time or informal basis. I have worked to provide external professional opportunities for students and, with my Biology department colleagues, improve the curriculum for our majors. I encourage students to participate in January and summer research programs at other institutions; my students have participated in programs at Case Western Reserve, University of Minnesota, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, University of Nebraska Eppley Institute and the Mayo Clinic. Gustavus is one of six select colleges chosen by the University of Arizona to participate in a January research experience in plant molecular biology led by Dr. Martha Hawes of the Department of Plant Pathology since 1991; one or more Gustavus students have participated in this program in each of the years it has been offered.

## Excellence, Not Perfection | Paschal Kyoore

*“ Be be danh de mimir bah ni nyaaru zier e “*

[You do not use your eye to find out whether or not there is salt in your soup]  
Dagara proverb–West Africa

The moral of the Dagara proverb quoted above is that real mastery of a skill or knowledge involves studying very hard and practicing at the skill. You will acquire more knowledge and skill by practicing rather than by merely watching.

For me, excellence in teaching does not just require doing an excellent job in teaching the material for a given course. In his book, *My Utmost for His Highest*, Oswald Chambers advises that “ it is a dangerous thing to refuse to continue learning and knowing more.” Among other things, excellence in teaching is about understanding better why for specific courses, certain teaching techniques work better than others.

Over the span of seventeen years, I have taught a gamut of courses within my own major as well as for the General Education program. I am not afraid to challenge students and to hold them to very high standards, even when I know they don't find it pleasant. There are students who think I am too demanding, yet write me later after they graduate to thank me for “opening [their] eyes to the world”. These are not necessarily students who major in French. I am conscious of the different dynamics that can dictate how I teach the same course to a different group of students, as well as the dynamics of teaching students who are taking a course for the language requirement. I am also conscious of what is different about an intermediate level French course because it is a sort of transitional period for a lot of students.

For me, what is most important is how much I think students are learning in my courses. Because of the nature of our programs, we all become generalists in the kinds of courses we teach. Nonetheless, I have no doubt that students benefit greatly from my expertise. I specialize in French literatures and cultures of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as well as francophone

African and Caribbean literatures and cultures. My research focus is on African and Caribbean writers.

I introduce culture in my lower level classes in various ways including the use of my own home videos that I have made during my research projects abroad. It is rewarding for me to see students of different disciplines come to ask for my help in a class presentation, a research project, or to invite me to do a presentation in their class. I have the same kind of satisfaction when colleagues of other departments invite me to do a presentation in their class—for example to talk about music in a music class, or to teach dance in a dance class — or to be the keynote speaker for their honor society.

I help students make concrete connections between what we learn in class and things that are happening around the world and in their own backyard. Here is a concrete example I will use to illustrate what I mean. On page 146 of our beginning level French text book (*Entre Amis*), there is a picture of the French national football (soccer) team with a short passage entitled “L’Immigration”. In this short passage, they explain some of the cultural, political, social, and economic issues surrounding immigration in France. When the discussion of this passage happens to coincide with presidential elections that are taking place in France, I seize the opportunity to encourage students to follow news on the election debate closely. After all, in their own backyard, immigration policies are being hotly debated in Congress. It is also an opportunity to discuss what is culturally different about the debate on immigration in France. The choice of the picture by the authors of the book is significant, because the racial diversity we see in the membership of the French football team says something about racial diversity in that country. This discussion on culture is nicely tied with the grammar on nationality, describing in French how to play games, and how to ask questions using “how” and “when”.

At the end of every semester, I take down notes for myself. I usually ask myself questions such as: why did the students in this intermediate level course seem to find it more difficult to understand particular material than students in the same class that I taught the last time? Why did students in this class seem to have difficulty in understanding simple instructions in French about homework assignment? How come one section of the beginning level course is much more enthusiastic and quicker at understanding material than the other section even though I use exactly the same methodology in both classes? What should I have done differently in the way I introduced culture in that beginning, intermediate or upper level French course? How much more material outside the book could I have introduced in that class and still be able to cover all the chapters in the book for that intermediate level class? Why on earth am I asking myself these questions? I write these kinds of notes for myself before I see any student evaluations of the course. It has been helpful to me to ask myself these disparate questions. I always remember a remark

that a colleague made about another colleague's teaching. He commented that there are no perfect teachers, but that there are only excellent teachers. There is nothing truer than what this colleague said. A perfect teacher would never have to assess his or her teaching, but the reality is that such a person does not exist in this our very imperfect world.

Apart from the regular courses that I have taught for French majors and minors and for the language requirement, I have also taught some General Education courses thanks to my interest in other disciplines apart from French and francophone literatures and cultures. Over the years, I have taught January Term courses that include courses on African folktales, African, African-American and Caribbean cultures, and Public Administration. My January Term course "Introduction to Public Administration" with a focus on human resource management has been a fairly popular course in the past few years. Every time that I have taught it, I have gotten students who have literally pleaded with me to allow them to register for the course after we had reached the maximum enrollment. Because of the interest I have seen in this January Term course, I decided to try it as a First Term Seminar. I have taught FTS many times and with different themes over the years. One time, when I taught the public administration course as an FTS, it had a service-learning component. We worked with an organization called Centro Campesino (Owotanna) on immigrant farmer issues, and I had people from their office come over to give a talk in my class. Even though we tried to make connections between the discussions on immigrant farmers and some of the material in the textbook, some students found it difficult to empathize with the stakeholders in the fight for immigrant rights. I found what I learned in some of my teaching workshops (especially the ones on critical thinking and teaching multiculturalism) very handy in this class. Many students told me that before the experience in the course, even though they come from rural communities, immigrant farmer issues had never crossed their minds. If I were not teaching a course in public administration, I would not have been able to do this kind of service learning project in my class. I am grateful to Dr. Elizabeth Baer (English Department) because it was after an invitation that she extended to me to participate in a service-learning discussion panel that I was encouraged to propose a service-learning project for one of my own class. The panel discussion was on the situation in the Dafur region of Sudan. Subsequently, I found myself the following summer volunteering in Mankato to help with the English language teaching program that is organized for immigrants by the Wilson Center of Mankato.

I have also been gratified to be asked by students to write letters of recommendation for them when they applied for graduate studies in public administration. I share all these experiences about the public administration course for a number of reasons. I started taking graduate courses in the Public Administration program at Minnesota State University-Mankato at a

time I was still an untenured professor with all the extra pressure that comes with that status. I believe that God created us with the intention that we should explore everywhere that our intellect can take us rather than limiting ourselves to only one interest.

I am very passionate about social justice, and that is one of the reasons why the late French philosopher and writer Jean-Paul Sartre is one of my favourite French authors. I am fascinated by his sense of social justice and by his concept of what a “committed writer” should be. There is a Haitian saying that “tout homme est homme” [every human being is a human being]. This apparently simple saying admonishes human beings to treat one another with respect and dignity, irrespective of people’s social class or other criteria by which we define and judge one another. When I get the opportunity in the future, I will teach a course for the Peace Studies program. I have had that in mind for many years now, but given the responsibilities that we have in the French section to teach the courses for our majors and also contribute to the General Education program, I cannot teach too many non-French courses at a time. I should also add that even though I do not have a terminal degree in Public Administration, the knowledge that I have acquired in the field has served me well beyond the occasional course in public administration that I teach at my institution. I bring the world into my teaching but also take my teaching into the world. A few years ago, I was a co-founder with other compatriots who live in different corners of the world, of a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) called FREED: Foundation for Rural Education, Empowerment, and Development ([www.freedlife.org](http://www.freedlife.org)). I am currently a member of the Executive Council of the organization. It has the headquarters in a small town in Northern Ghana. With funding from local and international donors (including the French Embassy in Ghana) we have so far been able to do a lot of things that are benefiting rural people who have been marginalized in terms of educational and economic opportunities since the days of colonialism in that country: medical equipments for hospital, education programs on an FM radio station that we set up ourselves, and so on and so forth.

A lot of Gustavus Adolphus College graduates work for non-profit organizations and that says a lot about how well we are accomplishing some of the goals of our mission. In my course on human resource management in the public sector, we often discuss the role of non-profit organizations. I have concrete examples to share with my students, and I would also like to believe that teachers can be good role models for what students themselves are seeking to do with their lives after graduation.

In summer of 2006, I was one of the twenty Gustavus professors who went to Namibia for a workshop on social justice. Social justice is a subject that is dear to me. One of the outcomes of that experience is that I am considering teaching a January Term course in Namibia with a focus on public administration. In the past, I have taught two January Term courses abroad.



The first one I taught alone in Ghana, and the second one I team-taught in the Caribbean with Dr. Hayden Duncan of my home department.

There are other areas (outside my major) of interest to me as far as teaching is concerned. I have developed a course for the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Program (“African Women Writers: Tradition and Modernity in Dialogue”) that I will be teaching for the first time in spring 2008 when I will be under review for promotion. I was trained as a comparatist in my French and Francophone studies, but we do not have comparative studies at this college. The type of courses I get to teach for General Education help to fill a void I feel in the use of my expertise. Of all the courses I took in my graduate studies, two stand out because in one way or the other there was some focus on diversity and an understanding of peoples and cultures from different corners of the world. Those two courses have greatly impacted what I have become as a scholar and as a teacher. The first one was a course I took on comparative literature at Université de Bordeaux III (France). Students in that class came from diverse countries such as France, Morocco, Venezuela, Argentina, Chile, and Ghana, among others. We were each asked to make presentations on the research we were doing for our thesis. I always remember the experience in that class because of the diverse cultural, social, and political experiences that we all shared with the other students and the professor. The second course that was memorable to me was a public administration course with a focus on personnel/human resource management that I took at Minnesota State University-Mankato. We were required to do group presentations on how to create and implement a diversity policy. Learning about the legal, cultural, and social challenges of creating and maintaining a diverse workforce in the public sector was humbling and gratifying. In the past, I have sought the advice of one of my former professors at Minnesota State University-Mankato on the choice of texts for the course that I occasionally teach here. It has been an enriching experience for me.

Over the years, I have taken advantage of workshops both on campus and elsewhere to enhance my skills as a teacher. I have participated in workshops on teaching critical thinking, teaching multiculturalism, teaching African literature, teaching Business French, and teaching First Term Seminar, among others. I list them in my curriculum vitae. All those workshops have been very beneficial to me. One additional way in which I have taken advantage of possibilities of teaching in new ways was to benefit from a co-operative teaching possibility made available through the Faculty Development Office — Bush Foundation Grant. Dr. Alexis Tengan is an anthropologist who teaches in one of the universities in Belgium. He specializes in cultural anthropology and has published a lot on certain African rites and rituals, and is also very knowledgeable about the interaction between traditional African religions and Christianity. He did with me collaborative teaching via electronic mail when I taught one of my First Term Seminars. Once a week, the class had discussions

with him on one of the literary texts that we were studying in class. It was an invaluable experience for the students as well as for myself.

Finally, in my approach to teaching, I want to be authentic in what I do in the classroom, and this can only happen if I accept the reality that it should be *my personality* that determines how I handle teaching.

Colleagues from other colleges and universities have sought my advice on teaching material, and I have also benefited from other people's expertise and advice. I would not be able to maintain these kinds of relations with colleagues in other institutions without my active scholarly presence in the field.

## Valuing Vocation | Kate Knutson

Sitting in a seminar on incorporating vocation into the classroom sponsored by the Center for Vocational Reflection this summer, I was faced with a number of questions: What is vocation? How do I discern my vocation? Am I living out my vocation? Does everyone have a vocation? Is it possible to integrate questions of vocation into the courses I teach? I have pondered these questions in the weeks since the conclusion of this seminar. I do have a sense that I am living out my vocation in my role as a professor at Gustavus Adolphus College. Much of this happens within the walls of the classroom, but what makes the job particularly satisfying to me is that the role extends well beyond those boundaries as I advise students on academic and personal matters, pursue my research interests, serve on faculty committees, and engage in intentional community in the residence halls. I believe that everyone has a vocation and I am grateful for the opportunity to live and work in a place where the community values space for reflection about vocation.

My primary goal in teaching is to create a learning environment in which students feel comfortable exploring unfamiliar ideas, engaging in controversial debates, and developing original arguments. These three components shape my pedagogical approach to all of my classes from the detailed selection of readings and construction of syllabi to the carefully crafted in-class exercises and evaluation methods.

The courses I teach are in the subfield of American politics, but cover a range of diverse subjects within this subfield. U.S. Government and Politics is the introduction to the subfield and is required for majors, minors, and some education majors. Another required course for majors, Analyzing Politics, was taught by Chris Gilbert for many years. I have recently begun to teach this course on a rotating basis. At the 200-level, I have one regularly scheduled course, Public Policy, which I offer each spring. I teach two 300-level political institutions courses: U.S. Congress and The American Presidency and also offer a senior seminar, Interest Groups in American Politics. In addition to these regularly offered courses, I have taught a First Term Seminar (Fast Food and Society), a special topics course on Politics and Media, and two January term courses (The Politics of Same-Sex Marriage and Inauguration Politics). In

all, this totals ten separate courses, nine of which were new for me upon my arrival at Gustavus. Additionally, I significantly revise almost all of my classes each semester based on feedback from the students, my experiences teaching the class, and new pedagogical research learned from academic journals or workshops (such as “First Term Seminar Training,” “Writing and Oral Communication for Today’s Student,” or “Educating for Civic Engagement: Making Democracy an American Reality”). Thus, my syllabi for most of my classes look substantially different each time I teach them.

My approach to preparing for a course begins by identifying specific learning objectives for the course. I want students to have mastery of the important dimensions of the topic and to be exposed to the important theorists and researchers writing on the topic. In addition, I also develop supplemental learning objectives. For example, in U.S. Government and Politics, one of my objectives is for students to learn how to have a deliberative and rational discussion of controversial political issues. Angry, exaggeration-prone pundits who thrive on conflict and rumor inundate mass media. I hope that my students will learn that there is an alternative to this type of public discourse. To accomplish this goal, I devote considerable attention to teaching discussion skills such as active listening, playing the role of Devil’s advocate, summarizing arguments, and providing supporting evidence. For some small group discussions, I assign each student a discussion role to play (facilitator, question asker, example giver, etc.), which allows them to discover new ways of participating in political discussions. In another exercise, which I call the feeling thermometer, I provide students with an opinion statement on a topic of civil liberties or civil rights and ask students to align themselves along an invisible spectrum running the length of the room. We then have a discussion on the issue and students are encouraged to physically move as their views change. I like this exercise because it reminds students that there is a range of opinions within our class and it reinforces the idea that it is acceptable to change your viewpoint in response to new information and logical arguments.

A supplemental learning objective I strive for in Analyzing Politics and in my senior seminar on interest groups is to develop skills in collecting and analyzing original data. To accomplish this goal, I devote a substantial portion of class time to discussing the research process and learning about various resources through visits to the library. In Analyzing Politics, I worked with librarian Julie Gilbert to create a “library laboratory” class specifically connected to my syllabus. Students learn research techniques by actually doing research such as conducting interviews, designing surveys, or engaging in participant observation. Julie has also helped to develop a series of five hour-long class sessions for my interest group seminar, which help expose students to academic research. Students in this class have drawn upon a variety of methodological approaches in producing their senior theses. One student, Amanda Cappelle, used her internships with two advocacy groups

as a basis for her thesis. This paper won our department writing award in 2009. Another student, Mikka McCracken, interviewed leaders at Bread for the World and the Washington Office of the ELCA. Her research helped her obtain a position working for the ELCA's Justice for Women advocacy program after graduation.

In Public Policy, one supplemental learning objective is to increase the students' sense of political efficacy. Our class helps to plan the annual Day at the Capitol advocacy event by conducting background research on the Minnesota State Grant Program and key legislators as well as by developing a continuing advocacy program to coincide with Day at the Capitol. As a key part of this service-learning project, the class attends Day at the Capitol and has the opportunity to interact directly with elected officials. Two years ago, students in my class submitted a petition in support of the State Grant program to every member of the Minnesota legislature. While a petition might not be the most effective means of influencing political decisions, this effort allowed them to get involved in the political process directly.

These three supplemental objectives—deliberative discussion skills, research skills, and political efficacy—are only a handful of the various goals I have in mind as I craft each syllabus. Often I will specify those goals in the syllabi, assignment guidelines, or in my comments on the first day of class.

Once I identify specific learning objectives, I focus on developing assignments and in-class exercises that will maximize those goals. The result is a wide array of class activities and types of assignments. Many students appreciate the ways in which my classes reach those with non-traditional learning styles. Because I use non-traditional teaching methods, I sometimes receive criticism about this on student evaluations. I do consider this feedback when I redesign each class, but I also realize (and evaluations confirm) these types of interactive learning opportunities are what make the course material come alive to many students. My impression is that much of the opposition to non-traditional activities and assignments comes from the fact that they often require more time and effort. For example, students are particularly disinclined to group work; however, I continue to assign group projects because I believe that it is imperative that students learn how to work effectively in groups. Thus, while some students express distaste for some of these activities and assignments, I design them with particular outcomes in mind. Students often tell me informally that, though they were frustrated by the assignment at the time, in retrospect, it was a powerful learning experience for them.

Three common denominators exist in each of my courses. All courses that I offer emphasize writing, discussion, and experiential learning. I emphasize writing skills in all of my classes, regardless of size, because it is a foundational skill. I believe that students who can clearly communicate ideas on paper will have a skill necessary to succeed in almost any workplace or graduate school

environment. Writing takes multiple forms in my courses, both formal and informal. I often ask students to write responses to discussion questions to prepare for class. Usually I read these questions but grade them based on whether they completed the assignment rather than on the content. Sometimes my writing assignments are very structured, such as in U.S. Government and Politics, where I provide a very specific framework for the paper. I do this to help students learn three important writing skills: summary, analysis, and argument justification. Another type of writing assignment I use is to provide students with exposure to more technical writing. Students in U.S. Congress write bills and committee reports. In Public Policy, I create firm limits on the length of some writing assignments. I explain to the students that learning to write succinctly is an important skill that they need to learn if they want to work in the field of politics. Students often complain about this constraint, but just this summer I received an email from a former student (and recent graduate) who thanked me for forcing her to learn how to summarize. Her new boss, she said, will not read anything over two pages. Finally, I also use longer writing assignments in several courses, such as Interest Groups, Politics and Media, and The American Presidency. These types of longer writing assignments (i.e. 15-30 pages) allow students to explore a topic in great depth. I usually assign these larger papers in sections and students complete multiple drafts of such assignments with feedback from me and/or peer evaluators.

In terms of discussion, I believe it is critical that students studying political science engage in discussions based on both the readings and current events as they apply to the readings. Many of my courses have an explicit emphasis on discussion and may even require students to lead discussions. Interest Groups, Public Policy, and Politics and Media feature several student-led discussions during the semester. I believe the responsibility for leading discussions drives students to a deeper reading of the texts and a fuller understanding of the questions and problems raised by those texts. In other courses, I use a variety of discussion methods, such as the discussion role exercise I mentioned previously, throughout the semester.

The final common feature in my courses is experiential learning. I strive to create opportunities in classes for students to have a more hands-on learning experience. In some classes (like Politics and Media, Public Policy, and the Politics of Same Sex Marriage), this means arranging for guest speakers or field trips to provide students with greater exposure to practitioners and experts. For example, for the past two years, I have coordinated a panel of Gustavus graduates who work in state government to speak to students attending Day at the Capitol. Evaluations of the day suggest that this panel is one of the highlights for a large number of the participants. In U.S. Congress, I was able to arrange for U.S. Representative Tim Walz to speak to the class. This was a phenomenal opportunity for my students to interact with a sitting

Member of Congress in an intimate setting. During my January Term trip to Washington, D.C., I arranged for the class to spend a morning at the State Department with the help of several Gustavus graduates. We got a behind-the-scenes tour, which was a very exciting experience for the students (and for me!). I also arranged for the class to have front row seats at the Supreme Court during oral arguments of a case. In other classes, experiential learning takes the form of role-playing or simulations. My U.S. Congress course features an extended simulation using the web-based program LEGSIM. Students assume an identity as a member of Congress and spend the semester writing, debating, and voting on bills. Other forms of experiential learning I have used include service learning projects (such as Day at the Capitol in Public Policy and campaign volunteering in U.S. Government), having students conduct interviews, having students conduct original research, and allowing students to develop their own proposals for a final project. I used this last method in Politics and Media in the spring and was pleased with the results. The assignment allowed the students a great deal of latitude in terms of selecting a final project. Students could write a traditional research paper, they could conduct original research and write a paper, they could participate in a service-learning project, or they could propose a topic of their choosing. While many of the students opted for the traditional research paper, several completed original research based on surveys of Gustavus students or interviews with media professionals, and one created an impressive original documentary on media coverage (and distortion) of the recent health care reform debate.

In order for these types of discussion-based and experiential in-class activities to be successful, it is imperative that I create a positive environment in each class. I devote considerable time each semester to developing rapport with the students and to helping students build community among themselves. In U.S. Government and Politics, this means taking extra time in the beginning of the semester for introductions so that I am able to identify each student by name within the first weeks of the semester. In upper-level courses, it is a bit easier to foster a sense of community because most of the students are majors or minors; however, I still play an important role in setting the tone for the interactions in the classroom. I have had my share of failures in my attempts to develop rapport within the classroom. In one class, U.S. Congress, a negative tone developed early in the semester from a single student who would verbally provoke and attack other students. Though I effectively dealt with that student, I could sense that the tone of the class was very negative. One day I stopped our discussion early and asked students to write about their feelings regarding the tone of the class and to make suggestions for improving the tone if they sensed something was not right. The students responded with thoughtful comments, which I discussed with them the following period. Simply being open and honest about our concerns for the tone was enough to turn the class around. In another class,

Analyzing Politics, the frustrations began after the first exam, when several students did not perform as well as they had hoped. These students were angry over what they perceived to be an unfair exam. Again, I approached this challenge with an open discussion of the problem. Though the students were still unhappy about the results, they appreciated my willingness to speak frankly about their concerns. One the second exam, they were much better prepared and performed significantly better even though the difficulty of the exam did not change. These, however, were isolated incidents and the student evaluations from these semesters reflect a general satisfaction with the course and my teaching of it.

I am fascinated by the questions and problems of concern to political scientists. Since taking my first U.S. Government course in my first semester of college, I have been interested in exploring the ways in which governmental power is exercised in this country. I love how the same old questions reemerge in new forms as new political problems and leaders emerge. While this is sometimes frustrating (are we still talking about health care?!?), it also provides me with an endless supply of examples and case studies for my classes. Friends and family often ask if it gets old teaching the same course semester after semester and my honest answer is, no. The framework might be the same, but the issues and the players are constantly changing such that there is always a fresh spin to put on the material. It keeps me on the search for new ways of integrating the changing political landscape into my courses, which means that the material never gets stale.

In addition to engaging students in the classroom, part of my role is helping to guide them through the academic program. I take my role as an adviser seriously and carve out significant amounts of time to meet with my advisees. My conversations with advisees focus not only on the courses they ought to register for in the next semester but also on their larger vocational and life goals. I encourage students to pursue opportunities such as off-campus study and internships. I also help them to think about how their extracurricular activities might fit into their larger professional goals.



PART II

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**Scholarship**

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## A Moral Commitment | Paschal Kyoore

The criterion for scholarship requires that a candidate for promotion be an established scholar. A few years, the Modern Language Association (MLA) — the biggest professional association of English and foreign language teachers of the USA—set up a special committee which came out with a document entitled “Rethinking Tenure—And Much More” (December 2006). The committee outlined the *makings of a revolution* in the way English and foreign language professors might be hired, evaluated, and promoted” (emphasis theirs). MLA urged institutions to consider non-published manuscripts as scholarship, and commented on the positive reaction by colleges and universities to the recommendations of the Association.

I have published one book, which is a study on the African and Caribbean historical novel, and I am currently completing a book, *Verbal Art of the Dagara: An African Tradition*. I have a great deal of satisfaction about what I was able to accomplish with the publication of my first book. There is a lot of interest for the book because (to the best of my knowledge) there was no book on the historical novel covering both the African continent and the Caribbean region. I am humbled when a colleague from another institution tells me at a conference: “Paschal, I see your book wherever I go”. She then goes on to suggest to me that I should write a book on Ahmadou Kourouma—a writer from Côte d’Ivoire. I am humbled because the colleague in question has been teaching in the field longer than I have, and has also published more than me. It is very gratifying to know that there is a great deal of interest for my book because of the subject matter that it addresses. It is also very gratifying to me when an English major at Gustavus tells me that he found some material in my book on Harlem Renaissance that was very helpful for a class he was taking. It tells me that my book is not gathering Minnesota dust (or should I say Minnesota snow) in our beautiful library. All I want to emphasize here is the contribution that I made to scholarship with the publication of that book.

I have several research projects that will keep me busy for many years to come, if it is the will of God. My work in progress includes an article on the

Guadeloupean writer Raphael Confiant. In fact, if I am able to publish my manuscript on *Dagara Verbal Art*, my next book project will be a book-length study of the novels of Raphael Confiant. Assuming that we will still have the Research and Scholarship grants, I hope I can have the chance to travel to the Caribbean to interview the author. Additionally, I have recently discovered the works of a writer from Gabon, and I cannot wait to start doing some research on her novels, especially after I met her personally during a meeting of a jury of the Pan-African Writers Association, and served as an interpreter/translator for her. She is called Sylvie Ntsame and is currently the president of the Gabon Writers Association. I also plan to continue my research on folklore of the *Dagara* and other ethnic groups of West Africa. In research, we all have our preferences in terms of the sort of things we work on and how we want to publish them. I am more inclined to work on book projects. Obviously, they have a longer gestation period than articles. Yet I focus more on working on book projects because among other reasons, I believe that books are more accessible to people in some countries because they are not privileged enough to have easy access to refereed journals.

One other research topic I plan on exploring is in the field of public administration. In graduate school, I wrote an Alternative Plan paper on public policy using what is called the Mazmanier-Sabatier theory of public policy. I want to try out that theory (which I find fascinating) on a decentralization policy that was put in place in Ghana some years ago. The research project would focus on how effectively District Assemblies involve rural people in the creation, implementation, and evaluation of public policies. I would be asking a lot of questions about public policy at the grassroots level in a so-called developing country. The research project would require traveling to Ghana to collect material and to interview stakeholders, and as has been the case with projects I have carried out in the past, I will be relying on our summer Research and Creativity Grant for the financial support.

Because of my passion for social justice, I plan to continue research on Ahmadou Kourouma and other African or Caribbean writers who have written novels dealing with issues of dictatorship and social and economic justice. My article on Kourouma was republished in an on-line journal on request of the editor of that journal. He was particularly interested in the article because it talks about the civil wars that occurred in Sierra Leone and Liberia respectively and how among other things it impacted child-soldiers. For the editor of the journal, it was important that my article was not just academic but dealt with social justice and governance. He was proud to tell me how many thousand hits there were on my article a few days after he published it in their journal. The year I was hired at Gustavus Adolphus College, my former Spanish teacher and mentor Dr. Joseph Kubayanda died. It was a big loss for me not just personally but also professionally because I am sure that we would have done some work together given our common interest for issues of social

justice. His book on the novel of dictatorship in Latin America and Africa came out posthumously. I have a moral commitment to continue to pursue research in our area of common interest.



## Illustrating the Value of Research | Jennifer Ackil

Currently I am directing my attention toward two lines of research that aim to examine different aspects of human memory processes. The first stems from my broad interest in source monitoring (the processes by which people identify the origin of their memories) and the specific application of theories regarding this process to the suggestibility of eyewitness memory in adults and children. The second comes from my interest in autobiographical memory and the way negative and traumatic events may impact the recollections of children and adults as they work together and separately to recall the past. I will discuss each of these programs of research in turn.

***Eyewitness Memory and Suggestibility.*** Much of the scientific literature on eyewitness suggestibility has focused on a particular type of suggestive interview, namely, those where the interviewer provides or “implants” a false memory by suggesting some piece of misinformation. For example, the interviewer might suggest to participants who witnessed a house theft that the thief had a gun, when in fact he had no weapon. Yet forensic interviews are not restricted to situations where an interviewer suggests false or misleading information to the witness. In many real-world investigative interviews, the interviewer attempts to elicit from the witness information that will support the interviewer’s hypothesis about what happened in order to complete an investigation or convict a suspect. This may lead to a coercive interview style where the interviewer presses the witness to provide information about events or people the witness does not remember or that never existed. In such cases, the witness may be forced to speculate and fabricate information in order to satisfy the interviewer’s demands. Of particular concern is the possibility that witnesses who are pressed to knowingly fabricate details under these circumstances might later forget that they were the source of this information and thus, develop false memories for their own fabrications. Within the context of my early research, I developed a new paradigm for assessing this possibility and established for the first time that witnesses who are forced to deliberately fabricate information are likely to develop false memories for the

events they had earlier knowingly fabricated – a finding now referred to as the “forced fabrication effect.” That this original finding has been cited over 50 times in the journal articles tracked by Social Science Citation Index was featured in a *Trends in Cognitive Science* article and *The Oxford Handbook of Memory*, and has made its way into the popular press, are indications that it makes an important contribution to the field. For this reason, it is an effect that I continue to investigate with the long-term goal of uncovering the cognitive mechanisms that contribute to this unique type of false memory error.

It is worth noting that the paradigm employed in this line of research is extremely labor-intensive. It requires that research volunteers be tested individually in a minimum of two 20-to 25-minute sessions. In the first session volunteers view a film (that serves as the witnessed event) and subsequently complete a one-on-one interview (during which the forced fabrication occurs). In the second session, which occurs either one-or two-weeks later, participants’ are tested individually on their memory for the original witnessed event. Each experiment typically includes between 75 and 100 participants and as is the case in all of Psychology, it is rare to publish a study reporting the results of fewer than two experiments and most include three. Whereas the downside of this work is that it can take multiple years to complete data collection and analysis alone, the upside is that there are lots of opportunities for undergraduates to collaborate at whatever level they choose. I am fortunate to have had a continuous stream of student interest ranging from those who volunteer only to assist with data collection to those who are involved in analyses, interpretation and presentation of results. Moreover, my research has served as a springboard for a number of honors students (see vitae for student honors research) who ultimately explored various memory questions of their own that emerged from their work in my lab. It is also important to note that in contrast to the enthusiastic claims of my high school science teacher, not every experiment is equally interesting. Those that do not produce statistically significant results are simply not publishable. Thus, there are many experiments in psychology that produce results that never make it out of the lab. Despite my own collection of such “failed” experiments, I have a record of having successfully completed a number of studies that have since my tenure award been published in peer-reviewed journals of psychological science. For instance, in collaboration with colleagues at Kent State University, I designed and conducted a study aimed at examining the influence of interviewer feedback on the development of false memories. The results of this study (involving over 192 college-age participants) demonstrated that confirmatory feedback from an interviewer increased false memory for forcibly fabricated events, increased confidence in those false memories, and increased the likelihood that participants would freely report their fabrications 1-to 2-months later. The results of this work, presented at the 1999 meeting of the Psychonomic Society and published in *Psychological Science*, a flagship journal



of experimental psychology, have been very well received and are beginning to make their way into Introductory and Cognitive Psychology textbooks. Furthermore, it is worth noting that much of the early work to develop the materials and pre-test procedures employed in the study proper was done in collaboration with Gustavus psychology majors. This work alone involved well over 80 research participants each of whom was individually tested in two separate experimental sessions. The findings of this pilot work served as the basis for a Gustavus psychology honors thesis and were publicly presented by one of our students at the Minnesota Undergraduate Psychology Conference.

Having reliably demonstrated in several experiments across various conditions that forced fabrication can be a potent suggestive interview technique naturally led to a question of both practical and theoretical import: Is forced fabrication more or less likely than memory implantation to produce false memory? To this end I designed and conducted with the assistance of Gustavus student collaborators, a set of three experiments to address this question. This work included individually testing each of over 340 volunteers in two separate experimental sessions that occurred either one-or two-weeks apart and has provided a rich set of data with a host of interesting findings. The collective findings of this work demonstrate that the relative incidence of false memory for forcibly fabricated events depends on the way memory is assessed. When participants (all of whom are warned that they were previously asked misleading questions) are queried explicitly about the source of their memories, false memories are greater following implantation relative to forced fabrication. When participants are simply asked to provide an account of the witnessed event this pattern is reversed: Participants are more likely to include in their narrative accounts the events they previously resisted fabricating relative to the suggestions implanted by the interviewer.

This leaves open the logical next question: What are the mechanisms responsible for this memory error? My current work in the lab aims to address this question by assessing the extent to which self-generation contributes to the effect. To this end I have collaborated with Gustavus research assistants to conduct a set of experiments that compares the incidence of false memory when witnesses are forced to generate their own misinformation (e.g., “what kind of hat was Delaney wearing?”) relative to when they are forced to choose misinformation from incorrect alternatives (“what kind of hat was Delaney wearing, a baseball hat or a fishing hat?”). We are also examining whether the feedback participants receive (either confirmatory: “that’s right, baseball hat is the correct answer” or neutral: “ok, baseball hat”) might interact with this manipulation. Data collection for the first experiment is complete and includes over 80 volunteer participants who were each tested individually in two experimental sessions one week apart. The results which were presented at the 2003 meeting of the Psychonomic Society indicate that the act of self-generating misinformation leads to greater false memory only when par-

ticipants' self-generated responses were reinforced by interviewer feedback. A second experiment employing a different type of memory test (narrative recall) was initiated last spring (2009) and is ongoing. Preliminary results from 72 participants were presented at the 2009 meeting of the Psychonomic Society, and indicate that in the absence of confirmatory feedback, forced choice responses were more likely to emerge in participants' subsequent event narratives than forced fabrications, a pattern that was reversed in the face of previous interviewer feedback. It is worth noting that data analysis in this latter experiment requires the verbatim transcription and coding of every individual participant's interview and thus, is very time intensive. Nonetheless, my intention is to complete data collection and transcription by the end of the spring 2010 semester leaving the summer months ripe for further analyses and writing.

That most studies in psychology raise as many questions as they answer certainly holds true for my program of research. Thus, I have plans in mind to address a new set of questions. While this research is still in the early stages of development (materials and procedures will need to be created and piloted before the work can begin in earnest), it will ultimately examine aspects of participants' resistance to fabricate misinformation and the subsequent impact of this resistance on false memory development. Whereas one might assume that resisting an interviewer's demands to fabricate (which is not unusual) might enhance participants' memory for having generated the false information and thus, protect them from subsequent false memory development, the results from my lab in this regard are mixed. Indeed, recent evidence suggests that in some instances resistance can actually increase the incidence of false memory. Addressing this potential paradox is thus, a logical next step.

***Autobiographical Memory.*** A second ongoing line of research in my lab focuses on children's autobiographical memory. This research began shortly after the March 1998 St. Peter tornadoes and emerged from an interest in understanding how children come to comprehend and remember traumatic life events. Although there is a large body of research that has examined young children's memory for positive events (e.g., trips to the zoo, birthday parties), there are surprisingly few studies that have examined memory for negative events and at the time of my initial work, none that had directly compared memory for traumatic events and non-traumatic events in the same individuals. Yet understanding how children make sense of and remember traumatic events is of great theoretical and practical value. Because my graduate training was in cognitive psychology (not child development), I sought the expert advice of developmental memory researcher Dr. Patricia Bauer (then a faculty member at the University of Minnesota's renowned Institute of Child Development, now Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Psychology and Senior Associate Dean of Research at Emory University) whose enthusiasm for the initial project has fueled a productive collaboration that continues to this day.

Initially, we designed and carried out a study that involved 33 mother-child pairs from the St. Peter community who generously volunteered to cooperate with us on this topic of mutual concern. Among other things, the mothers and children who participated allowed us to visit them in their homes (or elsewhere if they had been displaced by the storm) to record their conversations about the March '98 tornado and several other unique nontraumatic events. These conversations were elicited and recorded both 6-months and 10-months following the tornado and have provided an extremely rich set of data that has been used to address a number of different questions. In our first analysis we examined the very simple question of whether and how mother-child memory conversations about the tornado might be different from those of nontraumatic events. Overall, the results revealed that mother-child reminiscing about the traumatic experience was longer, more narratively coherent, and more complete than their recollection of nontraumatic events, differences that largely endured nearly one year after the events occurred. Various aspects of these results were presented at the 1999 and 2001 biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development and at the International Conference on Memory in Barcelona, Spain and were published collectively in the *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*. They have also become recognized for the contribution to the literature on memory for traumatic events and have just recently begun to be included in General Psychology textbooks in this regard.

Subsequent analyses examined the mother-child recollections with a focus on the language used to describe internal states (e.g., emotions, cognition, physiological states) and the extent to which mothers' use of this language influenced subsequent use by their children. Interestingly, the use of internal states language in conversations about the tornado was largely comparable to that employed in conversations about non-tornado events. The data also revealed that children's mention of emotion nearly one-year post tornado, came to approximate that used by their mothers 6-months previously suggesting that children learn from their mothers how to remember and talk about the emotions they experienced. The results of this work were published in a special issue of *Journal of Cognition and Development* that focused on children's memory for traumatic experiences.

In a third project we further examined the ways that mothers' manner of reminiscing impacted children's memory contributions both immediately and over time. Whereas developmental research has established that children are socialized both in the manner of creating and sharing autobiographical narratives for positive and affectively neutral experiences, it was unknown whether this finding would generalize to negative and traumatic events. Our project filled this gap in the literature and demonstrated among other things, that relations between maternal narrative style and children's subsequent memory contributions were apparent when remembering the tornado. Thus,

the socialization of autobiographical remembering is not restricted to positive experiences but rather occurs across a variety of event types.

Just prior to the ten-year anniversary of the tornado, I revisited 20 of the original mother-child pairs who graciously agreed to again share their memories with us. Among other things, mothers and children at this stage of the project independently reported their recollections of the events they had shared with us nearly ten years prior. With the assistance of graduate students in the Bauer lab, these interviews have to date been transcribed and coded for the presence of various details and I am in very early stages of data analysis.

**Summary.** To remain “alive” and active as a research and scholar is critical. In addition to satisfying my own personal curiosities and commitment to the scientific study of human memory and cognition, doing so provides the energy and enthusiasm I find necessary for teaching. Moreover, it provides a model for students that illustrates among other things, the value of research and continued commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding in one’s chosen field.

## Opening Up Worlds of Possibility | Priscilla Briggs

My work, over the span of my career, has evolved from portraiture and an interest in individual identity to a consideration of cultural identity as it relates to consumerism. I've worked on projects that: looked at consumer rituals that are linked to holidays and scripted by advertising; the consumption of human narrative within the framework of the television talk show genre; and, after moving to Minnesota five years ago, I focused my camera lens on the Mall of America as an icon of excessive American consumption. This work questions the nature of human desire and identity as they are shaped and reflected within the context of a capitalist society, believing that the systems in which we live shape us in ways we are often unaware. In photographing consumerism, I am interested in the reciprocal relationship between cultural identities, the nature of merchandise for sale, and advertising images. Within any market, advertising influences the fluctuating balance between supply and demand in that it helps to create desire for merchandise. Within the global market, this dynamic is further complicated by sometimes surreal intersections of culture, as well as imbalances of national wealth and cultural influence. And within tourist markets, the objects for sale are often more a reflection of tourist expectations than an authentic representation of the toured. The methodology behind my work has been to deconstruct a topic of interest so that I can then reconstruct the subject matter, framing it in a way that calls attention to the underlying issues we may overlook or take for granted. My work is often critical, but also approached with irony or humor. And while I work primarily with photographic images, the form those images take relates directly to the conceptual foundation of the work.

The artist's professional life revolves around the studio practice and exhibitions. The studio practice requires consistent effort toward creative projects as well as the active pursuit of exhibitions and grants. Solo exhibitions (excluding retrospectives) generally present a body of work that can take years to develop. Group exhibitions are usually curated or juried to include various artists whose work fits a unifying theme or concept.

My photographs of the Mall of America culminated in a solo exhibition in 2006 at the Art Center of St. Peter titled *Market*. This installation contrasted two types of images. Large prints (30" x 40") of photographs of the mall environment were mounted to the wall. These photographs show the mall patrons in silhouette while highlighting the stores' name-brands to make a statement about individual identity overshadowed by corporate identity. In between the large prints, plexiglass shelves held postcards with images of mall merchandise, displays, and advertising on one side and text describing American consumer habits on the other. The form of the postcard was used both to reference the Mall of America as a tourist destination and to create images as mass-manufactured objects that can be picked up by the viewer and carried away. Text printed on the back of the postcards includes statistics and quotes that comment on issues concerning consumer habits. The text also acts as an ironic counterpart to the image on the other side and is important in that it emphasizes the true meaning of the images and of our consumer habits as Americans. This installation is one example of how the presentation of my work usually works within or helps create a conceptual framework for the images. One photograph from this body of work was published in *Light and Lens: Photography in the Digital Age*, a book by artist, educator and writer Robert Hirsch. And I was delighted to take my students on a little field trip to the gallery to view and critique my work.

*Global Market*, a solo exhibition at the Minnesota Center for Photography's Project Room in 2008, expanded on the concepts and forms introduced in *Market* by combining photographs of the Mall of America with images of various markets in Thailand and Cuba, focusing on their status as tourist destinations, and incorporating postcards into the exhibit. This exhibit was concerned with the idea of marketing identity whether it be the western ideal of beauty, the celebrity of Cuban revolutionaries Che and Fidel, or the ethnic stereotype of a Longneck Karen hill tribe villager. The presentation of the individual photographs worked to reference various marketing strategies. The prints face-mounted to plexiglass and the acrylic shelves on which the glossy postcards are displayed, created a slick, commercial aesthetic. The central image, a mural print on vinyl, mimicked a billboard or mural advertisement. The postcards reference objects as souvenirs (two cards portray Thai hill tribe boys posing for photographs; their cultural representations are the product for sale) or fetish objects. Due to the positive public response to my exhibit, the Minnesota Center for Photography invited me to give an artist lecture as part of their First Tuesday Lecture Series in April this past spring. They also invited me to participate in their Portfolio Review program as a reviewer of other photographers' portfolios.

I have also contributed to group exhibitions around the country, both invitational and juried. Juried group exhibits are competitive, must be applied for and are often thematic. Upcoming exhibits include: *Fortune* at

the Hillstrom Museum in February 2009; *ReGenerate, ReImage, ReFocus: New Directions in Photography* at the Priscilla Payne Gallery in Bethlehem, PA; and an exhibition in conjunction with the McKnight Fellowship in the Spring of 2010. *Fortune* will include images taken in China this past summer during an artist residency at Art Channel in Beijing. I am interested in China as a country balancing communism and capitalism, poised to participate in vast, uninhibited consumerism. I photographed at various malls and markets in Beijing and Shanghai, including the second largest mall in the world, the Golden Resources Mall (seven times the size of the Mall of America). I also traveled to Wenzhou, a port city south of Shanghai, to research the many cottage industries in that area for a photo/video project that will focus on manufacturing and export from China to the U.S. I will return to China in January and June of 2009 to work more on this project that will be included in the McKnight Fellows Exhibition in 2010.

Receiving grants is especially important for me because I usually make work that is installation-based and not very marketable. Applying for grants and exhibitions requires research into what grants and exhibitions are available, writing project proposals (including an artist statement and sometimes a budget), documenting work and submitting images. I have applied for numerous competitive artist grants in Minnesota on an annual basis since establishing residency in 2004. I was a finalist for the McKnight Fellowship in Photography in 2004 and received a fellowship this year. I have also twice received Research, Scholarship and Creativity grants from Gustavus. The first was used to pay for exhibition materials for my solo exhibition *Market* in 2006, and the second will be used to pay for exhibition materials for my upcoming exhibition *Fortune*.

Artists often engage in collaborative projects for the purpose of community and/or to explore new directions. In 2007, Nick Hansen, a Gustavus student, and I received a Gustavus Presidential Faculty/Student Collaboration Grant to work on a video project. Nick is my advisee and has a self-defined major in Filmmaking. For our project we created a series of five videos based on the performance/poetry of five different spoken word artists who are a part of the Minnesota Spoken Word Association (MNSWA). We started the project by meeting with the group and presenting our idea for the project in order to generate interest with the poets, who are all young adults (high school or early college age). We then met with each poet individually to identify a poem that would work for the project, conceptualize the video, create a production plan, shoot the video, and then finally to screen the video for their approval. We presented four of the five videos at the Celebration for Creative Inquiry at Gustavus this past spring. The videos will premiere in Minneapolis this fall (time and place TBA) and DVDs will be sold as part of a fundraising benefit for the Minnesota Spoken Word Association.

Curating exhibitions is also a professional activity in which many artists engage at some point. In November of 2004, with the help of Nancy Hanway, I curated an exhibit of faculty photographs, including my own, from the Service Learning for Social Justice (SLSJ) trip to Cuba. As an artist, I felt this visual representation of our trip would be of great benefit to the community. The exhibition looked at the people of Cuba and their way of life in general, but we had one wall in the gallery dedicated to the propaganda that colors the Cuban landscape in the same way advertising colors our own American landscape. In my own photographs, I focused on elements of tourism in Cuba. We exhibited the photographs off-campus, at the Art Center of St. Peter, in an attempt to engage the larger community of St. Peter. There was a great turnout for the opening reception, and the gallery director told me it was the most highly attended show to date. The success of this exhibit prompted led me to curate a second exhibit of faculty photographs resulting from an SLSJ trip to Namibia. This exhibit was organized to address various aspects of Namibia that we explored on our trip, as evidenced in the photographs: the environment, politics, the economy, and the people.

Artists, especially artist educators, need to keep current with what is happening in the art world by reading periodicals and critical texts and by attending exhibitions. I try to see as many exhibitions as possible in Minneapolis, and every other January I travel to New York City to attend major museum exhibitions and visit galleries. When I attend exhibitions, I photograph the work when permissible or collect whatever available documentation is on hand so I can show it to my students.

My professional work informs my teaching and vice versa. As I grow as an artist, I also grow as a teacher and have more to offer my students. My initial interest in photography was fueled by a fascination for getting at the essence of individual identity as it is visually represented in portraiture. Working with students, helping them develop their individual ideas and vision, taps into this fascination and stimulates my thinking about my own work. Discussing their ideas with them opens up worlds of possibility in my own mind.



## A Wonderful Platform for Engaging Students in Research | Tom LoFaro

The record of my research reflects my dual interests in mathematical research in applications of dynamical systems and in the development of projects and software to be used in undergraduate instruction of dynamical systems and differential equations. I view both of these facets of my professional agenda as equally important and there is a clear synergy between them.

A quick reading of my research publications might suggest that my research agenda is not very focused. Applications described in these papers include population genetics, neuroscience, and computer science. However, each of these projects uses the mathematical tools of dynamical systems to model and understand the underlying phenomenon. Each model is a system that varies over time (a dynamical system) and the objective in each of these papers was to determine the long-term behavior (or convergence) of the system. For example, the paper “Authority rankings from HITS, PageRank, and SALSA: existence, uniqueness, and effect of initialization” considers various methods for ordering the web pages found when doing a web search. We determine conditions under which each of the given algorithms will converge to a ranking that is independent of an initial seeding and is meaningful in the context of a web search. A second common question that is addressed in these papers is “how does the convergence change if parameters in the model are changed.” This is known as bifurcation theory. In the paper “Population Models of Genomic Imprinting II. Maternal and Fertility Selection” we use these techniques to show that in one particular model of genomic imprinting, a bifurcation occurs that causes the behavior of the system to bifurcate from a stable equilibrium solution (in this case a fixed allele frequency vector) to an oscillatory solution (where the allele frequencies will vary over time.)

The “Genomic Imprinting” paper illustrates another important facet of my research as well. It was done in collaboration with a former undergraduate student as part of his Senior Honors Thesis. Mathematical modeling provides a wonderful platform to engage students in research. The applied nature of a modeling problem is naturally appealing to many students. Moreover,

it is often the case that developing a mathematical model and conducting a fairly thorough analysis of it is possible with the tools that a well-prepared mathematics major possesses. The publication of this work in a high quality research journal (*Genetics*) demonstrates the benefits of engaging undergraduate students in mathematical modeling research.

Two of my presentations focus on the evolution of cooperation. This work differs somewhat from my earlier research in that the system being modeled is a dynamical system with some intrinsic randomness (or stochasticity). The system models the interactions of two populations: the first will never cooperate while the second will cooperate with another individual until that individual takes advantage of them. The model equations combine game theory (in the form of the Prisoner's Dilemma), population genetics (game payoffs are interpreted as fitnesses), and probability theory. I have proven that in the absence of randomness, the dynamics of a population that consists of mostly non-cooperators will, over time, tend to a solution that contains no cooperators. In other words, without randomness, cooperation cannot evolve. Simulations and basic analysis of the stochastic model suggest that there are certain conditions on the game payoffs that make the evolution of cooperation more likely.

Throughout my career I have been extremely active in developing, implementing, and assessing projects and software for use in differential equations and dynamical systems courses. This began at Washington State University with the award of two National Science Foundation grants for the project "IDEA: Internet Differential Equations Activities" (<http://www.sci.wsu.edu/idea/>). Although the NSF funding for this project expired years ago, my collaborator Kevin Cooper and I continue to monitor and update the site as technology advances and new ideas and projects arise. More recently, Kevin and I were asked to author nine projects that are included in the differential equations text book *Differential Equations with Boundary-Value Problems 6th ed.* by D.G. Zill and M.R. Cullin and published by Brooks/Cole.

I am currently involved in the NSF funded CODEE project. CODEE is a consortium of colleges and universities that are collaborating on making projects and tools such as the ones I have developed easily available to a wide audience of teachers. The primary investigator of this project is Darryl Yong of Harvey Mudd College. I have been asked to write a brief paper describing strategies for assigning, motivating, and grading modeling projects in differential equations courses. I will also be involved in training others in using the CODEE resources at upcoming national and regional math conferences.

My work in the pedagogy of differential equations education has been extensive and continues to be an integral facet of my career. I helped develop one of the first web sites that provided instructors with both differential

equations projects and the software to help understand the dynamics of these models. I participated in the development of an award-winning piece of software (*ODE Architect*) that was one of the first to bring multimedia tools to an educational audience.



## A Commitment to Collaborate | Margaret Bloch-Qazi

**Laboratory Research.** My scholarship focuses on understanding mechanisms of female sperm storage. Female sperm storage is a process consisting of sperm accumulation, retention and regulated release from specific regions of the female reproductive tract. This process is nearly ubiquitous among animals with internal fertilization, yet its mechanism(s) remains poorly understood. Developmental biologists are interested in female sperm storage because: 1) it is a critical step between gametogenesis and fertilization, two much better understood developmental processes, and 2) it involves cell (sperm) movement and fate – central foci of study in development. Those studying sexual selection are interested in female sperm storage because it is one arena for sperm competition (competition among the ejaculates of multiple males for access to eggs) and a ‘gauntlet’ for cryptic female choice (preferential use of a given male’s sperm for fertilizations). Sperm competition and cryptic female choice are processes shaping the evolution of animal behavior, morphology and physiology.

I use the well-established animal model *Drosophila melanogaster* (a.k.a. the fruit fly) to study mechanisms of female sperm storage because it provides a tractable system to understand the genetic basis of physiological mechanisms, but still to relate that understanding to the whole animal.

At Gustavus Adolphus, my research has consisted of a long-term project; a deficiency screen of the *Drosophila* genome for genes involved in female sperm storage and smaller-scale projects related to mechanisms of female sperm storage. To explore the second chromosome, my students and I screened 90 different *Drosophila* lines (i.e. distinct genetic strains), mated and transferred ~5400 individual female flies, and counted >1,080,000 offspring. After analyzing the results and identifying genes associated with a failure to normally store sperm, I am now using a bioinformatics approach to filter through the 1721 candidate genes by cross-referencing them with six related genetic/proteomic screens. Fortunately, eight genes identified as having potential effects on female sperm storage in my screen correlate with

more general female reproductive function in four of the other data sets – which is tantalizingly suggestive that these genes are involved in female sperm storage. My future plans include examining sperm storage in mutant females of these eight genes to test the hypothesis that they do, indeed, affect female sperm storage. I am optimistic that these results can be published in a peer-review publication such as *Genetics* or *Development*. My smaller-scale research projects include an examination of the role of muscles on moving sperm into storage and female control over sperm use for fertilizations. These frequently involve dissecting and staining female reproductive tracts and using microscopy to count the number of sperm therein. A single sample can take as much as two hours to prepare and measure. It is not unusual to have 40 or more counts included in a single experiment and several experiments are included in a publication. Each paper that ends up being published reflects ~18 months of work from conceptualization to writing.

In my field, publications correlate with, but do not directly reflect investment in research activities. For every research paper I have published, I have conducted at least twice as many experiments that are not included in the manuscript. This is because of a documented bias<sup>[1]</sup> towards the publication of positive results (experimental results demonstrating a relationship between variables or a difference among treatment groups) over negative results (no relationship or no difference) – despite the fact that negative results can be biologically informative. I plan to incorporate experiments with negative results into manuscripts, but they will need to be included with positive results in order to be appealing to editors and reviewers.

**Presentations.** I continue to present my results in scholarly fora. I have presented my work at regional and national meetings on an alternating year basis (3 presentations in 5 years) since arriving at Gustavus Adolphus and am continuing to work on publishing my work in reputable peer-reviewed journals. For example, my 2006 manuscript “Emergence of sperm from female storage sites has egg-influenced and egg-independent phases in *Drosophila melanogaster*” was published in *Biological Letters*, a publication of Britain’s Royal Society. My research is contributing to a larger body of understanding about reproduction in general and female sperm storage in particular. A second paper, with a student co-author (“Sick of Mating”) has been recently accepted for publication in *FLY*. I have drafts of two additional manuscripts whose experimental work is largely completed and only require some additional analysis and writing. Thus, I am committed to a continuing pattern of professional activities that includes making my scholarship accessible to scientific colleagues for review and for their own research.

**Funding.** I have applied for and received funding to support my research. At this time, the funds have been internal, a Presidential Faculty/Student Collaborative Grant (2005) and a Research, Scholarship and Creativity Grant (2007). Now that the second chromosome deficiency screen is completed and

largely analyzed, I feel that I am in a good position to work on a grant for external funding.

**Collaborations.** My professional activities include collaborations with other biologists. I continue to enjoy a productive scientific relationship with *Dr. Mariana Wolfner* at Cornell University. We are currently collaborating on experiments examining the role(s) of female muscular contractions on sperm storage in *Drosophila* through the use of mutants with abnormal muscle function. I am also collaborating with *Dr. Larry Harshman* at the University of Nebraska to examine the sperm storage function of females with mutant forms of genes identified in genetic screens in both his laboratory as well as my own. At Gustavus Adolphus Dr. Sanjive Qazi, who specializes in bioinformatics, and I are collaborating to identify biological pathways among the candidate genes identified from my deficiency screen. Identifying these brings us one step closer to understanding mechanisms of female sperm storage. I also collaborate with undergraduates to better understand female reproduction. My receipt of a Presidential Faculty/Student Collaborative Grant (with Tanner Miest '07 in 2005) as well as posters and publications with undergraduates (listed in my *curriculum vitae*) is further evidence of my commitment to collaborate.

**Reviews.** I participate in a larger community of scholars and have been solicited to review for several reputable, peer review journals (Journal of Insect Physiology, Genetics and BMC Developmental Biology). I have reviewed roughly one paper a year since coming to Gustavus. In addition, I was asked to review seven chapters of the third edition of Scott Freeman's *Biological Sciences*, an introductory textbook for biology majors.

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[1] Csada, R. D., P. C. James, et al. (1996). "The "file drawer problem" of non-significant results: does it apply to biological research?" *Oikos* 76(3): 591-593.

Sterling, T. D., W. L. Rosenbaum, et al. (1995). "Publication decisions revisited: the effect of the outcome of statistical tests on the decision to publish and vice versa." *The American Statistician* 49(1): 108-112.





## My Research Was Born from What I Did Not Know | Michele Koomen

My professional activities have evolved over my years at Gustavus, shifting from a focus on practitioner-related activities to research-related activities, along the way developing greater collaboration with two specific organizations: Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center and Sci/Math<sup>MN</sup> Teacher Research Network (TRN).

As part of my contribution to mathematics and science education, I presented over the early years of my appointment at Gustavus a number of workshop sessions at national meetings that were aligned with the national reform documents in science (*Science for all Americans*, AAAS, 1989, 1999 and the *National Science Education Standards*, National Research Council, 1996, NSTA, 1992) and mathematics (*National Council of Teachers of Math Standards*, 1989, 2000). In these presentations sought to provide practicing teachers with multiple strategies for teaching mathematics strands with understanding and intelligent practices. Science presentations focused on the thinking, process and analysis that are part of inquiry based teaching and learning. As in all scholarly work, each presentation or session is subject to peer review. Workshops at the national meetings are highly prized because of the competitive scrutiny and review of each proposal.

- In 2004, I presented a workshop titled *Helping Children to Master Basic Facts* at the National Meeting in Philadelphia of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). The purpose of this workshop was to bring aspects of mathematics research in learning basic facts to practicing teachers at the elementary level.
- At the Minnesota Science Teachers meeting (2001), the regional meeting of Science Teachers in Minneapolis (2003) and the national meeting of Science Teachers in San Diego, California (2002), teacher participants left the workshops with specific ideas about how to plan and teach simple chemistry concepts using inquiry methods in their classroom.

As my scholarly focus changed to research in inclusion, diversity and social justice/equity in science and mathematics, my presentations and workshops have also changed. The Minnesota Science Teachers Association meeting in October 2005 was my first presentation of research findings and literature that support learning in science and mathematics for students who are mainstreamed in said classrooms with a workshop entitled: *Meeting the Needs of the Diverse Life Science Student in Middle Schools*. Attendees left this workshop with a number of methods to support learning in science including various mechanisms that promote science vocabulary, a common challenge for students with diverse learning needs.

The Teacher Research Network (TRN), with funding provided by the Minnesota Department of Education has been a significant part of my collaborative research and scholarship since I joined the faculty at Gustavus in 2000. The Teacher Research Network (TRN) was formed in 1998 by a group of five higher education institutions (Minnesota State University, Moorhead, St. Cloud State University, and the University of Minnesota at Duluth, Gustavus Adolphus College and St. Mary's University of Minnesota) that collectively prepared over half of all K-12 teachers in TRN the state. Currently institutions of higher education include: Minnesota State Universities at Moorhead, Winona and State Cloud, the University of St. Thomas, Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Olaf College, the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities and the College of St. Scholastica.

Beginning in 1999 (before I joined Gustavus), and culminating in 2004, we conducted a longitudinal study of beginning science and mathematics teachers in Minnesota during the first three years of their teaching. Sixty-four new teachers participated in this study involving, ultimately, eleven institutions of teacher education in Minnesota. The study focused on five aspects of new teachers: knowing mathematics and science, knowing pedagogy, knowing students as learners, establishing a learning environment and developing as a teacher. Analysis of the data revealed several prominent themes: new teachers need a strong content background to teach math and science; new teachers perceive that there are constraints in the learning environment; new teachers perceive that there are few mentoring opportunities available to them and new teachers perceive that there are limited professional development opportunities available to them. .

I led the effort to develop a partnership with Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center (WRELC, Ely, MN) and Gustavus Adolphus College where we act as partners in preparing student teachers in 2003. Teacher candidates have the option of completing one of their student teaching sessions at Wolf Ridge Environmental Center. Eligible teacher candidates apply for a year long naturalist/student teaching in training program at WRELC in the fall of the year before they student teach. Students complete their first session of student teaching at WRELC from August to October of their student

teacher semester. Supervision of their teaching involves a cooperating teacher at WRELC working in partnership with a supervisor from GAC, me. The opportunity to student teach at WRELC creates a platform to hone outdoor and environmental education teaching in a pristine natural environment with highly supportive faculty (GAC and WRELC). In addition, this program positions our teacher candidates to develop background in an area that is increasingly valued in local schools: environmental and sustainability teaching and learning. In the world of environmental and outdoor education, Gustavus is the first institution to couple student teaching experiences with naturalist training. As a matter of fact, Wolf Ridge and Gustavus were invited to share their collaborative efforts in student teaching publicly in October 2006 at the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAEEE) meeting in St Paul.

My research interests do not stand alone or apart from the work that I do at Gustavus Adolphus College in preparing teachers, indeed they are integral to everything that I do. I began my doctoral studies at the University of Minnesota with no clear idea for a research direction. My path for research became clear to me as a result of a supervision incident.

In the fall of 2001, I was supervising a number of student teachers across the metro area of Minneapolis, including one student who was placed in fifth grade at a private school in Minneapolis. Sarah, (a pseudonym), had been a methods student (EDU 371, 373 & 385) of mine in the spring of 2001. Part of Sarah's lesson involved partnered activities at stations, where students would read a set of instructions and perform a simple investigation together, nothing real unusual for fifth grade. The teaching and delivery of the lesson was fine until I noticed Chad. Chad was not engaged in the lesson or with his partner at all. As a matter of fact, he was basically distracted by some of the other materials that were in the classroom and was busy using the class time to explore these items. After Sarah completed her teaching, I turned our debriefing conversation to discussing certain students and their engagement in the lesson, including Chad. Sarah's response was, well "that's Chad." Her dismissive attitude about Chad revealed to me that she had no real expectations for his learning. It also pointed out to me that I really knew nothing about how she might go about supporting his learning. My research was born from what I did not know.

My dissertation reported on a phenomenological study of nine regular and special education students as they studied insect biology and ecology in their inclusive seventh grade life science class. Three fundamental data collection methods of interpretive research (student observations, interviews and artifact analysis) framed the data collection of this study. The essence of the lived experience of the study participants reveal a variety of ways working with others in groups supported their learning. Students reported that it was easier to share ideas, ask questions and complete their work when they worked

together with other classmates. A second finding of this study, *It's kind of hard in learning science*, exposes some of the anxiety and the challenges that are part of the experiences of both regular and special education students in learning science. A third finding reveals that for the students in this study *the practice of inquiry learning in science is fragile*. Despite daily opportunities in inquiry activities, many students are fixated in finding the “right” answers and just getting their “work done.” The perception of practicing science for the special education students was moderated and limited by their viewpoint that science is coupled with language arts. This research has implications for science and special teacher educators.

***Broadening my research into other areas of inclusion and special learners.***

Over touring break in 2007, I took part in the Latino Academy with seven other faculty from the Department of Education at GAC. As a department we sought to understand the implications of U.S.-Mexico border policy, economics, and social structures for immigrants and their families in order to better serve our education students. Minnesota increasingly is home to many Latino immigrant families. Part of our experience was to travel to El Paso, Texas and Juarez, Mexico where we spent several days visiting with new immigrants and residents from the area as well as personnel from numerous social service agencies who worked to provide the services for the immigrants, including Cristo Rey Church, our host organization. During the Latino Academy, I had many conversations with the Pastor of Cristo Rey Church, Pastor Rose Mary Sánchez-Guzmán, regarding the importance of building an understanding of the immigrant story with teacher educators and with their (our) students: future teachers. I conducted research in El Paso, Texas in the summer of 2007.

The purpose of the research was twofold: uncover the lived experiences and context for learning of ten linguistically diverse student participants and understand how these experiences and contexts positioned said students to learn in their schools. Analysis of the data set revealed three main findings: the first two speak to *constructs for learning* in the classrooms that serve to (a) mitigate and regulate independent learning of the students and (b) invoke survival or anxious responses from the students. The third finding represents a coupling of a growing self-determination that hinges on a protected place to rest, to settle and to flourish. A paper describing this research was presented at AERA (American Educational Research Association) in New York City in April 2008.

In April of 2009, I presented a paper and a poster at the annual meeting of NARST (National Association for the Research on Science Teaching). The paper, titled, *Understanding the process of applying inquiry teaching methods in elementary classrooms* was initiated by the work that I do at the University of Minnesota with Karen Oberhauser. We co-teach a course on insect ecology (see section on service to the community). I am the evaluator/researcher for

this initiative as well as a lead instructor. Over the past two years, I followed closely the work of five exemplary teachers as they apply the content of the course into their classrooms. The paper presented at this conference represents the preliminary data analysis and results of this qualitative research. Briefly, this paper discusses what it means to do inquiry, including the finding that implementing inquiry-based teaching across all grade levels is more guided by the teacher than initiated by the student learner. I intend to continue to follow this group of five teachers for one more year before I begin to write for publication. I also presented a poster, *The Practice of Inquiry Within a Small Group of Hmong Youth*, which reported on several findings resulting from the analysis of the collective narratives including the fact that the practice of science was different for each of the three Hmong youth. For William, the practice of science was tied with the language of science and teeters tentatively on the expertise and interactions he has within his small group. For Mai, the practice of science was dutiful and pragmatic and absent in passion or curiosity. And finally, for David a practice of science that most closely matches a vision of science practice defined by national reform documents. This study sheds some light on learning in science and illustrate how for each of these students, inquiry is experienced very differently. These findings help us to design instructional programs that better meet the needs of our complex and diverse classroom populations as we move toward more culturally responsive teaching pedagogies.

My latest research efforts revolve around building an understanding of how we as science teacher educators implement reflective practice with our students. To that end, I am currently analyzing interview texts, field notes and course artifacts to understand the process of becoming a more contemplative novice educator.

Over the past academic year, 2008-2009, Dan Moos, Deb Pitton and I initiated a study of cognitive load and pre-service teachers titled (preliminarily): *Using theory to explain challenges of novice teachers*. Novice teachers are often overwhelmed in the classroom due to the mental efforts needed to address behaviors of individual students and the need to remember and implement lesson plans. Together we are using mixed quantitative and qualitative research methods as we follow participating student teachers in their student teaching placements.

I have also published *Exploring Math*, a series of books published by Capstone Press. The titles are:

- *Patterns: What Comes Next?*
- *Size: Many Ways to Measure*
- *Sets: Sorting Into Groups*
- *Numbers: Counting it Up*
- *Shapes: Discovering Flats and Solids*

- *Fractions: Making Fair Shares*

Each book featured an illustrated math concept within an emerging reader text. I was honored to have one of my books *Size: Many Ways to Measure* selected as one of the best mathematics books for children published in 2001 by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

## Engaging Moral and Political Commitments | Peg O'Connor

I regard my scholarly activity as a means to the end of being a lifelong learner. Scholarship is one way that I continue to grow as a teacher, thinker, and community member. I mostly write about topics that spring from and return to my moral and political commitments. In 2002 I published *Oppression and Responsibility: A Wittgensteinian Approach to Social Practices and Moral Theory*. In that work, I explore what I call the logic or grammar of oppression, which highlights its systemic nature. Given this systemic analysis, I offer a model of responsibility that moves the focus away from particular actions or inactions toward the broader practices in which these acts have their lives and are meaningful. This account of responsibility allows us to assess the responsibility that those of us who are privileged have for maintaining systems of oppression.

Since the publication of *Oppression and Responsibility*, I have completed a new monograph entitled *Morality and Our Complicated Form of Life: Feminist Wittgensteinian Metaethics*. This book has just been accepted for publication by the Pennsylvania State University Press and will be on the Spring 2008 list. Metaethics is the branch of philosophy that looks at questions about the objectivity of morality and moral properties, moral knowledge, and moral truth. My new book is one of the very few book-length feminist treatments of metaethical topics. Feminists, as active as we have been in other branches of ethical theory, are remarkably under-represented in metaethics. It was on the basis of a proposal to complete this manuscript that I was awarded a highly competitive fellowship at the University of Connecticut Humanities Institute in academic year 2004-05. At the University of Connecticut, I made two formal presentations to UCONN faculty that were part of the fellowship program in addition to the two invited presentations I gave to the Department of Philosophy and the Women's Studies Program.

I have published two co-edited books. The first, also published in 2002, is *Feminist Interpretations of Ludwig Wittgenstein*. This work is part of the Re-reading the Canon series published by The Pennsylvania State University

Press. The second edited collection is *Oppression, Privilege, and Resistance*, co-edited with Lisa Heldke, and published by McGraw Hill in 2004. This anthology represents the most direct connection to my teaching. Lisa Heldke and I developed an interlocking set of readings with a particular theoretical framework over the course of more than eight years of teaching Philosophy 102: Racism and Sexism.

At present, I am working on a co-edited anthology of new essays on feminist metaethics with the tentative title *Not Your Fathers' Metaethics: Feminist Approaches*. As I indicated above, there are few works in feminist metaethics, and this would be the first collection of its kind.

While *Morality and Our Complicated Form of Life* has occupied most of my thinking and writing these last three years, I have always needed to have some satellite projects on seemingly unrelated topics, the themes and approaches of which reveal a pattern. Much of my work is philosophical commentary in response to contemporary events. I write about church burnings, hate speech, gay bashing, and most recently the rise of the Christian Reconstructionists, who argue that the Christian Right has become far too interested in secular and religious power rather than eternal salvation. These are the kinds of essays that engage my moral and political commitments all the while being intensely philosophically interesting. The challenge I am setting for myself as I move into the next phase of my career is to write shorter essays that might have an appeal that is broader than an academic philosophical audience. This is one way that I can be a more engaged community member.

I was also honored to have been a visiting scholar at Binghamton University (SUNY) under the auspices of Philosophy, Politics, and Law Program for several days in October 2005. I gave a formal lecture, visited classes, and spent time with graduate students of the philosophy department. It was here that I gave the paper, "The Rule Made Me Do It," that enabled me to see a way to argue for an account of the origin and nature of rules that allows for objectivity and just as importantly, does not come with a built-in mechanism for an abdication of responsibility for those rules.



## To Contribute to the Alleviation of Suffering | Carolyn O'Grady

My scholarship over the last several years has focused on social justice as understood through the lenses of multicultural education, service learning, spirituality, or an integration of these. These are the topics which most engage me intellectually, but which also have relevance in my personal life. I also focus on these themes because I wish to contribute in some positive way to the alleviation of suffering in the world. I hope to be an academic whose work offers scholarly insight combined with practical application.

My most recent publication is a text co-edited with Brian Johnson, *The spirit of service: Exploring faith, service, and social justice in higher education*, Anker Press (2006). This project was six years in the making and developed from an episode in one of my Education classes that occurred in Spring 1999. This is an unusual text in that it focuses on the Gustavus context and includes contributions only from Gustavus faculty and staff. It is one of only two books that I know of which explores these important themes in an integrated way. We feel this text meets a need and fills a niche.

I value collaborative scholarship. This isn't because working collaboratively is easier; in fact, it can be considerably more difficult. It is simply that I find the most fruitful discussions occur across disciplines and among participants. One of the advantages of working at a liberal arts institution is this appreciation for interdisciplinarity, and I seek out these opportunities as well as initiate them. I find it challenging to write with another person, but doing so forces me to think more clearly, communicate more articulately, and have my assumptions both challenged and confirmed.

I also prefer to work with collaborators in conference presentations whenever possible. This Fall I co-presented at the Upper Midwest Campus Compact Conference with Elizabeth Baer on the Service Learning for Social Justice course collaboration in Northern Ireland in January 2004. I am also an invited panelist for the upcoming National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in Higher Education (NCORE) in June 2006 for a session titled "Teaching in the Multicultural Classroom: Renegotiating Faculty Identities, Roles, Structures."

The panel organizer is Mark Chesler at University of Michigan. This will be the third year I've been part of an NCORE major session. For two years I was a co-facilitator for a pre-conference institute on multiracial issues.

During 2005-06 I was a member of the Diversity Colloquium of the Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching and Learning, nominated by the Dean's Office. Participants meet several times over the course of the academic year to discuss successes and address challenges around diversity on their campuses. The value of this experience comes from the opportunity to discuss shared readings and talk with peers from a four-state region about diversity issues.

In 2005 I received a Bush faculty development mini-grant for research on ELL pedagogy and practice. My goal was to establish a research base in second language learning so as to be a department and campus resource for these issues. As a result of the grant, I was able to purchase texts and attend conferences that broadened my understanding of language issues. This effort contributes to department initiatives regarding outreach to the Latino community and improved pre-service training on working with second language learners.

In 2004 I was an invited participant for the Oxford Round Table meeting on "Addressing the Education Needs of At Risk Children" (March 21-27), and was able to attend because of generous support from the office of the Associate Dean. The purpose of the Oxford Round Table is "to promote human advancement and understanding through the improvement of education." Forty-nine participants from various disciplines came to Oxford, England, from around the United States. Each of us presented a short paper; each of us was also a respondent on two other papers. I don't want to make too much of the fact that I was an invited participant. Hundreds of scholars from around the world are invited to each session. Nevertheless, it was a wonderful opportunity to share scholarly discussion with colleagues in a superb location.

In October 2002 I was an invited participant in the Off-Campus Studies Conference at the Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College. The focus of this conference was strengthening connections between the liberal arts college as a residential learning community and off-campus study. All participants presented papers describing the way their specific college attempted to establish connections between on- and off-campus learning opportunities, engaged in discussion about best practices, and identified future directions for these initiatives. (My paper is included in this dossier in the "Miscellaneous" section.)

Upcoming scholarly work continues my interest in spirituality and diversity. There are several projects I will be working on during the coming year and beyond. One involves an assessment of multicultural education texts for their inclusion (or, more likely, lack) of religion or spirituality as an aspect of diversity. A second initiative integrates my interest in contemplative practice

into one of my courses. I have applied for a Contemplative Practice Fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies. I also plan to do some research into best practices for mentoring programs for students of color at predominantly white colleges.



## Appreciating the Beauty of All Disciplines | Michelle Twait

Library science is a field that blends the disciplines of communication studies, social epistemology, education, public policy and management. I was drawn to this profession, in part, because it asks one to be a generalist, to appreciate the beauty in all disciplines. As someone who teaches students about the process of research and information evaluation across academic disciplines, it not surprising that my own research crosses disciplinary boundaries.

The terminal degree for an academic librarian is a Master's degree in Library Science (M.L.S.). Students leave graduate school with varying degrees of research experience and most, myself included, discover their research calling after they begin their careers. For me, the coursework in educational psychology created the spark that ignited my research agenda. I recognized a gap in library and information science research and have, since then, explored the ways that educational psychology can inform the work of teaching librarians.

My focus at the University of Minnesota was learning and cognition. A course called "Problem Solving and Decision Making" changed the way I look at students' information-seeking behavior. I wanted to learn more about how students make decisions while seeking information. How does prior knowledge affect those decisions? What role do motivation and volition play? How does a student's sense of self-efficacy influence his or her approach to research? My ideas for future research include:

- An exploration of libraries' roles as centers of constructivist learning
- A study of cooperative learning and information literacy instruction
- An investigation of students' relevance judgments through the lenses of information seeking behavior and consumer behavior (this is the focus of my sabbatical proposal – see Appendix C)
- An analysis of information seeking behavior and social networking sites (e.g. MySpace and Facebook), including what information is sought and who or what is consulted

- A comparison of students' level of attention and selectiveness based on the various settings and the different contexts in which students seek information

In short, I enjoy exploring the relationship between cognitive processes and student research behaviors.

My research reflects an ongoing theory-practice dialogue within the scholarship of teaching and learning. I believe that improving my teaching requires a better understanding of student learning. I hope to be an academic whose work offers scholarly insight combined with practical applications. At the same time, I have not forgotten my first love: history. I continue, as time permits, to research the role that libraries played in the lives of working women during the Progressive Period. I am also exploring the links between the reform politics of the day and the simultaneous expansion of public libraries. This research attempts to clarify how women's trade unions, settlement houses, and female laborers used libraries and information.

Since arriving at Gustavus, I have presented posters or oral presentations at several conferences, including the Association of College and Research Libraries Conference, LOEX (Clearinghouse for Library Instruction) Conference, and Minnesota Library Association Conference. I have had three articles published and one presented paper published in the conference's proceedings. Other papers are in various stages of preparation. In March, I submitted an article about my 2008 Interim Experience course, "Library as Place." It has been accepted for publication in a future issue of *College & Research Libraries News*. This May, I submitted a proposal for a chapter of a book that will focus on one aspect of library-related qualitative research. My most recent project is with Minnesota State University-Mankato cataloging librarian Jessica Schomberg. She and I are in the process of examining the relationship between students' mindfulness and library anxiety and how this might influence the relevance judgments they make during online catalog/database research.

Librarianship is a profession that values and embraces collaboration. This is often embodied in the work done at regional and national levels in professional associations. A few of these activities are highlighted below.

In fall 2003, I was invited to join the MINITEX Electronic Information Resources (MEIR) Task Force. MINITEX is a consortium of public, academic, state government, and special libraries in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Members of the task force were asked to review, revise, and reissue a request for proposal (RFP) for general and scholarly information databases that would be made available to all citizens of those three states. Once we had completed the RFP, we reviewed vendor proposals, tested products through trial access to the resources, and attended vendor presentations. Balancing the needs of these different constituencies proved to be quite challenging and

I learned a great deal through the process. Today, Gustavus benefits from this work through the Electronic Library for Minnesota (ELM) program. We have access to a suite of EBSCOhost databases that provide thousands of full-text journal articles, all subsidized by MINITEX.

The external reviewer for my third year review, Susan Barnes Whyte, suggested that I become more involved at the national level. Shortly after the review was completed, I was invited to serve as an intern on two American Library Association committees, both of which are part of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL, a division of the American Library Association).

One of these committees, the Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship Committee, is charged with annually selecting a doctoral student in the field of academic librarianship whose research demonstrates originality, creativity and interest in scholarship. After reviewing the applications, the committee members evaluated them based on several criteria. The committee then met in person to debate the merits of each candidate's work. The conversations were often spirited and I enjoyed actively participating in these discussions. After serving for one year as an intern, I was invited to be a full member of the committee.

The second committee, the Professional Education Committee, is part of the Instruction Section of ACRL. The committee "encourages the development of professional education for library school students and librarians with instruction-related responsibilities." I have participated in the two major projects of the committee: updating a list of instruction courses offered by graduate schools of library and information science and maintaining a list of continuing education programs for instruction librarians. After serving as an intern and then as a full member, this spring I was invited to chair the committee. My term as chair began in July 2008 and I look forward to providing leadership that will help the committee achieve its goals and advance its mission.

*Other scholarly activities.* As part of our assessment plan, the library has conducted focus group research for several years. We have typically recruited students, though sometimes faculty, for these user studies. Barbara Fister and I designed and implemented a longitudinal study where we followed students over their four years at Gustavus. Each year (2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003), we asked them about course assignments, library instruction sessions, and general research habits. This research improved our understanding of students' needs, perceptions, satisfaction, and expectations. We added and adapted services and resources based on our findings.

This past year, I helped design and administer a survey on continuing education needs and practices on behalf of the Professional Education Committee of the Instruction Section of ACRL. After compiling the results and assessing

the data, I summarized the results in an article for the Instruction Section newsletter.

I continue to have an emerging research agenda, which has evolved in conjunction with my growth in other areas. While working to establish this pattern, I have tried to find balance among a heavy teaching load, scholarship, and service. In doing so, I have made a broad range of contributions to the College, Library, and professional communities, and my efforts in this area have been sustained, significant, and gratifying. I feel confident that my commitment to writing, presenting, and participating in professional organizations will continue to produce positive results.



## Politics and the Life of the Mind | Alisa Rosenthal

As a political theorist, my primary interest is less in the development of a new interpretation of a historical text than in evaluating and developing political philosophies in terms of addressing contemporary social problems and political practices. Thus one of my current projects emphasizes the futility of looking to conceptions of liberalism developed by such theorists as Locke, Mill, and Kant for protecting individuals today from state interference with bodily autonomy. Similarly, my research into democracy and suffering offers an alternative possibility to the oft-asserted dichotomy between feminist ethics and moral philosophy and to the bind such a dichotomy poses for those who attend both to questions of abstract justice *and* to issues of respect for particularity. I am drawn to political theory precisely because it offers the opportunity to reject the false dichotomy between politics and the “life of the mind” that is both descriptively inaccurate and politically unproductive.

The first of these projects is a co-authored book with Julie White (Ohio University) in which we explore the connections and relationships between democratic theory, suffering, and injustice. In *The Faces of Injustice*, Judith Shklar enjoins her readers to begin by “giving injustice its due” and this injunction is our starting point. An adequate democratic theory and the practices it justifies must, we argue, provide openings for the political recognition of both a victim’s sense of injustice and provide remedies for the structural conditions that produce injustice. Assessing both liberal and deliberative democratic approaches with this in mind, we find them inadequately attentive to the obstacles of recognition and remedy. Liberal democratic theories, both because of their narrow vision of the political and their strong commitment to individual autonomy, present substantial obstacles to the political recognition of injustice. Deliberative theories might be assumed to offer better assurance that public dialogue will create openings for a broader political recognition of vulnerability and suffering – a necessary, if not sufficient condition for remedy. Unfortunately, such theories rarely consider the constitutive effect of suffering

on individual subjectivity and the ways in which the “inexpressibility of pain” makes deliberation about such experiences impossible

Adequate attention to these obstacles must begin with an understanding that the sense of injustice is not reducible to responses to that which is not legal. To truly give injustice its due, injustice must be recognized as more than just prelude to, or a momentary breakdown of, justice. As Shklar suggests, we cannot see injustice as though it were a “surprising abnormality” but must recognize the continuous operation of injustice within the law and established polity. Thus, senses of injustice –victims’ accounts of their own suffering– must be accorded respect, while official accounts of justice are carefully interrogated. Attention to injustice, the recognition that the sense of injustice is much more than simply the occasional absence of justice, makes visible not only the limits of contemporary theories of justice, but also the limits of much democratic theory as well. Put another way, victims of injustice face obstacles to participating in both liberal justice systems and more formally inclusive democratic processes. Where these obstacles are understood as resource-based, some legal and many democratic theorists have tried to address them with redistributive approaches. Yet, particularly in the most extreme cases of suffering, the obstacles to such participation may have less to do with resources and more to do with the ways in which the experience of suffering constitutes the subjectivity of victims. If democratic practices are to advance the recognition of suffering and remedy the institutional practices that perpetuate injustice, they will need to recognize the ways in which domination as a set of experiences constitutes subjectivity. We have presented drafts of three chapters at national conferences and are now working on the close examinations of political apologies, *testimonio* literature, and Truth and Reconciliation Commission testimony which will provide the basis for a theory of democracy that begins from the historicized subject and emphasizes both recognition of suffering and remedies for the structural conditions which produce it.

My second project concerns the problem of state invasion of the bodies of its citizens and residents. Whereas my dissertation looked only at the ways in which such invasions illustrate a failure of liberal political theory, my current work offers analysis of the ways in which contestations about bodily integrity illuminate broader tensions within liberalism. For example, by examining such practices as mandatory drug testing, genetic screening, and compulsory DNA samples, I evaluate the concept of “self” assumed and produced by historical and contemporary interpretations of the Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination. The distinction between protecting suspects from being forced to testify *verbally* against themselves, but failing to protect suspects from being forced to “testify” bodily against themselves, relies upon a false mind/body separation, assumed and instantiated by such theorists as Descartes and Aristotle. Many scholars have addressed the pitfalls,

both constitutional and ethical, of compelling self-incrimination (and even more have addressed the problem of the mind/body dichotomy) but few have investigated the theoretical dimensions of this problem in relation to actual instances of its occurrence and its perpetuation by the state. New technologies of punishment and renewed acceptance of old technologies of punishment raise important questions about the constitution of the self who is the subject of that punishment. Much of this work was developed while I was a Visiting Scholar at the Institute of Legal Studies in Madison, Wisconsin during the summer of 2003. This summer, as a participant at the Institute for Constitutional Studies Research Seminar on Constitutionalism, I presented an article from this project (“A Dangerous Slippage: From Jacobson to Buck and Beyond”).

In addition to my own research projects, I serve often as a discussant on panels at national conferences. Although considered a chore by some, I truly enjoy the opportunity to bring disparate projects together, to identify commonalities across them, to explore points of convergence and disjuncture, and to meaningfully engage works in progress. Like co-authoring, serving as a discussant is a welcome opportunity for the often isolated work of scholarship to become collaborative and interdisciplinary.



## Performance and Teaching in the Life of a Musician | Esther Wang

I have truly savored each experience of performing in Minnesota. I have formed relationships with members of the Cleveland, St. Paul Chamber and the Minnesota Orchestras and continue to perform with them whenever possible. I will be the featured Guest Artist at the 25th Annual Truman Piano Festival at Truman State University in Kirksville, MO this spring. Performing significantly informs my teaching. Both disciplines contribute substantially to my life as a musician.

Keeping these opportunities in mind, I fully intend to develop a friendly performing environment with the various learning institutions in this area. I will continue to investigate new literature, as well as pursue new singers and instrumentalists with whom I may perform. Finally, I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to supportive friends and colleagues who have helped open doors of employment and performance over the years. I hope to generate similar opportunities for my students and co-workers wherever possible.

In addition to performing at venues ranging from Interlochen, Michigan to Vancouver, Canada, I have served as adjudicator for elementary and high school piano contests under the auspices of Minnesota Music Teachers Association in St. Peter, Rochester, and the Twin Cities area. I will continue my service as adjudicator this spring under the same auspices and expect to do a fair amount of judging for auditions and competitions in forthcoming years. I delight in this work, as it allows me to give positive and constructive feedback to non-university students. On the college level, I judged the Senior Concerto Competition at Carleton College in Spring 2007. I also served as the judge for Distinction in Collaborative Keyboard Performance Scholarship Competition at Luther College in Spring 2007. This spring I will judge the high school competition at the 25th Annual Truman Piano Festival in Kirksville, MO.

In the Spring of 2000, I formed a group called the *Bach Four*, a group four pianists, all of whom are college teachers and are devoted to teaching and performing the works of J. S. Bach. This group strives for innovative ways to explore the life and works of this great master through demonstration,

lecture, Power Point presentations, audience interaction and performance. We have toured the United States presenting different versions of our lecture/performances. We continue to search for creative programming of this kind. Our most recent programs were presented Spring 2007 for the Rochester Keyboard Area Music Teachers and the Suzuki Piano Teachers Guild. Similar presentations took place in 2005 for the MMTA Minnetonka and Minnesota Valley monthly meetings and the MMTA State Convention.

I continue to give masterclasses by invitation. I taught a master class at Eastern Oregon University in May 2007. I also conducted master classes at UMN Duluth in February 2006 and at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in October 2004. I will teach a master class at Truman State University this spring.

I have become significantly involved with the activities of the Minnesota Music Teachers Association. In Fall 2005 I was chair and coordinator of the Performance Auditions which took place on this campus. I presented a program with Carleton piano colleague Nicola Melville on *Brahms Op. 76 Piano Pieces* at the 2006 MMTA State Convention. The presentation featured our performing pieces selected from the set and talking about how each of us approached these works as teachers and performers.

I serve in other musical capacities as I am able. I served as monitor for the Junior Competition Finals for the Music Teachers National Association National Convention in Spring 2007 in Austin, TX. As a resident of Northfield, I often serve as accompanist for high school and St. Olaf students when the occasion arises.

I served as a reader for the MN State Arts Board in Fall 2005 and Fall 2006, reviewing diversity grants. I am dedicated to ongoing issues of diversity on campus and in the state.

Regarding creative work, I would like to perform new music by composers Forrest Pierce (University of Kansas), John Halle (Yale University), William Hawley (NY-based composer), among others. While these projects are in its beginning stages, I hope they will develop into recordings or a series of recitals featuring these composers' works.

## A Strong Mentoring Relationship | Colleen Jacks

My area of interest and expertise in genetics is eukaryotic gene expression. My graduate research at the University of Minnesota was on the molecular genetics of a mouse ribosomal protein gene. As a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Chicago, I expanded my knowledge base in the fields of molecular biology and genetics to include plant systems. I utilize the small flowering plant *Arabidopsis thaliana* and more recently, the legume *Medicago truncatula* as model systems and have studied a number of different genes in these organisms. At the University of Chicago, I isolated and studied the expression of two acyl carrier protein (ACP) genes. My contribution to this work is reported in a publication enclosed with my file and a poster presentation at the Third International Congress of Plant Molecular Biology. I have conducted further work utilizing *Arabidopsis*, and subsequently *Medicago*, in the laboratory of Dr. Steve Gantt at the University of Minnesota. This long-time collaborative relationship has spanned a number of summers and both of my sabbatical leaves from Gustavus. It originally grew from our common interest in ribosomal protein genes, but also came to include other genes as described in my annotated bibliography. This collaboration has been a boon for me in both my teaching and research, as the types of questions, approaches and methods in molecular genetics continue to expand with the advent of genomic analysis. My relationship with the Gantt lab has allowed me to keep up with these changes professionally, and what I learn from my experiences in that lab ultimately make their way into my courses. They also serve to provide the basis of many student projects. Most recently, our collaboration involves a plan to integrate research and education proposed in a NSF grant awarded to Steve. His lab is using a functional genomics approach called RNAi to identify the function of 1500 different genes in the plant *Medicago truncatula*. Unlike other plants, *Medicago* is a legume and is able to form root nodules and fix nitrogen from the environment; the grant funds work to identify as many genes responsible for these functions as possible. The lab sequence I am developing has a genomics basis that allows students to develop technical and

analytical skills in many molecular biological techniques, and also provides an investigative experience as their work is with a set of untested genes. This year I joined the campus Scholarship of Teaching and Learning group with the goal of designing an assessment of the gain in student understanding of these techniques, their application to genomic studies and the analysis of the generated data. This laboratory manual is based on my work at the University of Minnesota during my 2004-2005 sabbatical leave and is a “work in progress” that I am using this spring for my BIO 388 course. Our goal is to make a complete and tested version of this manual publicly available to educators on-line.

At Gustavus, I have pursued my interests in eukaryotic gene expression mainly by studying the group of genes I was first introduced to in my doctoral research, ribosomal protein genes. These genes encode small proteins that help form the structure of the ribosome, the cellular organelle responsible for producing proteins. Ribosomal protein genes in plants such as *Arabidopsis* are encoded differently than in animals; multiple genes exist for each of the approximately 80 different proteins. My students and I have investigated the evolutionary relationships of the *Arabidopsis* genes to those of yeast (Deanna Koepp and others). We continue to study where and when during plant growth the five genes for the protein S15 are expressed and attempt to quantify the level of this expression (Brian North, Ellen Anderson, Matt Lieser and others). As I described earlier, student participation in my research is ongoing and an important aspect of my work at Gustavus. Of course, the degree of student involvement depends in large part on the students; in the ideal situation, the mentoring relationship is a strong one, with students doggedly pursuing a project or question over multiple semesters and presenting their results at Gustavus and beyond.

My work on campus (both research and lab curriculum development) has been aided by the acquisition of equipment made possible by an instrumentation grant (ILI) that I received from the National Science Foundation and the DNA sequencer we obtained from LI-COR (proposal included in file). In the past several years the time I have had available for professional pursuits has been taken up more frequently by my participation in college-wide science education initiatives, for example the proposal we submitted to the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in 2003 (included in my file); Jonathan Smith and I have agreed to be the point faculty in development of the next proposal if we are extended an invitation to submit a proposal due fall 2007. I have also participated in discussions regarding NSF’s Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (S-STEM) program which provides scholarship funds to traditionally underserved students in the sciences that we hoped to recruit to Gustavus, as well as establishing an academic and vocational support system to help ensure their success.



My continuing interest in improving biology education led to an invitation to participate as an external reviewer of the biology program at Otterbein College in Ohio last February. My other professional involvements include memberships in the Council on Undergraduate Research, the Association for Women in Science and several discipline-specific organizations listed in my C.V. I have been an active member of the Gustavus Sigma Xi, serving for two years as secretary, once as president-elect and once as president. As a member of the Minnesota Academy of Sciences I serve as a judge for the Winchell Undergraduate Research Competition.



## Who Wrote Grafitti in Pompeii? And Other Questions | Matt Panciera

One of my strengths as a scholar, especially one who teaches in a liberal arts college, is that I have many interests and have worked on a wide range of ancient writers: the Roman historian Livy, the comic playwright Plautus, the Republican lyric poet Horace, two imperial poets including the epigrammatist Martial and satirist Juvenal, and the anonymous writers of graffiti in Pompeii. In addition, the problems I have explored have been quite varied and they tend to involve the sort of analysis that requires the consideration of multiple types of evidence.

My interest in historiography, especially the way in which an historian weaves together information to create a compelling narrative, led me to examine closely how Livy made sense of the important political office of tribune of the plebs in the wider context of early Roman history. My interest in linguistics, which flows out of the emphasis on philology in my discipline, led me to investigate the ways in which Plautus uses a very feminine formula for the word 'please' to mark some male characters as excessively effeminate and open to ridicule. I also looked closely at the evidence for meaning of the word *alicaria* and discovered that the prevailing scholarly opinion that the word did not mean 'prostitute' was incorrect, in part because the full context of a graffiti from Pompeii had not been fully or adequately explored.

My greatest scholarly joy and expertise lies in the study of Pompeian graffiti and society. My article that starts with a question about the character Hamillus from poems of Martial and Juvenal is most significant when it moves to the consideration of the same name, spelled backwards, in several graffiti. My finding that the backwards spelling of a name in Pompeii is not sexual, but rather a virtuoso display of literacy, suggests that much more needs to be done on the question of who wrote graffiti in Pompeii and for what purposes. This will be the focus of my future work.

And although I tend towards the historical in my research, I also have literary interests. I have completed a long article length study which proposes a new interpretation of Horace's famous 'Cleopatra Ode.' In this work I show that there are many philosophical elements in the poem, especially the phrase *combiberet venenum* (she drinks down the poison) to describe Cleopatra's suicide by snake-bite, which allude to Socrates' death as depicted in Plato's Apology and Phaedo. Horace does this not in praise of Cleopatra so much as to remind his audience of Cato, the celebrated defender of the Republic, who styled himself after Socrates in many ways and committed suicide rather than be defeated and pardoned by his enemy Caesar. This interpretation is further bolstered by my discovery of the acrostic CATO in the opening lines of the poem.

## Explaining Patterns in the Natural World | Pam Kittelson

My scholarly interests broadly encompass applied and theoretical questions related to diversity and change in plant communities. In research foci, I try to link my research to management. My work also often explores plant-insect interactions, especially insect herbivores and pollinators. My approaches combine field work with common garden and greenhouse experiments, and the tools of molecular biology because integrating observational and manipulative research has more power than pursuing one approach alone. I have built a research program that includes undergraduates and researchers at other institutions. Over time, I have investigated these four areas of interest:

1) How do abiotic and biotic factors shape diversity within and among plant populations?

My Ph.D. research demonstrated that plant life-history traits varied dramatically in a grassland community where populations were less than 1 km apart. Over time, some populations fluctuated wildly while others were resilient to change; initially our lab thought these demographic trends were explained solely by patterns in presence or absence of herbivorous insects and their predators. However, I demonstrated that genetic differentiation existed among the populations and interacted with abiotic trends as well as patterns of pollination and herbivory. We found that plant alkaloid composition and quality affected insects in unique ways, influencing feeding patterns and subsequent insect community composition. My work contributed to a better understanding of the evolution of local adaptation, and how demographic and physiological variation is both influenced by and influences community processes.

I continue to be intrigued with how multiple interactions affect plant populations. Recently I have started greenhouse experiments aimed at quantifying the degree of differentiation in morphological and reproductive traits among populations of *Lomatium macrocarpum* and the rare *Arabis fecunda*. The questions I plan to address are two-fold: 1) are life history traits genetically determined and/or environmentally influenced? 2) If environment influences

the life history, what environmental factors can 'switch on' the different strategies (e.g. nutrient and water resources)?

### 2) Invasive Species Ecology

With John Maron and Marilyn Marler, I investigated how community diversity and resource availability influenced invader impact and ecophysiology of natives in western Montana. Experimental assemblages that varied in native plant species and functional richness were constructed. Assemblages were 'invaded' with spotted knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*), dalmatian toadflax (*Linaria dalmatica*) and sulfer cinquefoil (*Potentilla recta*), three widespread invasive plants in the intermountain west. Plots received ambient or supplemental water. We compared how plant physiological traits (water use efficiency, N:C content and leaf construction) were impacted by diversity, resource availability and invader identity. Rarely have underlying physiological traits been examined in broader ecological contexts; these traits are important since they may be the mechanisms that underpin resiliency or adaptation of communities. I will continue to investigate the physiological mechanisms underlying variability in plant interactions.

My research students and I have investigated how exotic species such as sweet clover invades (primarily via disturbance) and how it can be partly controlled by shifting soil nutrient levels. My Master's research focused on how community attributes influenced the spread of an introduced cordgrass in Pacific salt marshes. Our research helped land managers better assess the impact of this invader in west coast salt marsh mitigation and restoration projects, and provided important information to the US Fish and Wildlife Service as well as researchers in Spain. I will continue to investigate questions related to invasive plants and ways they affect native competitors as well as the determining best management practices.

### 3) Effects of Habitat Fragmentation

Students in my lab are keenly interested in plant diversity of fragmented ecosystems such as prairies and oak woodlands. Less than 1% of tallgrass prairie and oak woodland exist and most are isolated islands in a sea of agriculture and development. We have characterized demography and genetic diversity of species important to these communities and how fragmentation may affect the gene pool of species such as *Quercus macrocarpa* (bur oak) and *Lithospermum canescens* (hoary puccoon). Fragmentation over time has increased homogeneity within areas, which has the potential to limit responses to change over time. In another project, students assessed the efficacy of two prairie restoration projects by measuring ant diversity and abundance; they found that the most diverse ant communities were associated with high vegetative diversity, less disturbance and more stable ecosystem processes. My lab also has established monitoring plots at several restoration prairies with different environmental characteristics, but similar species compositions, as a way to examine how abiotic factors may influence community composition

long term. By comparing diversity among populations, our work contributes to a more thorough understanding of how plants respond ecologically and evolutionarily to isolated, fragmented landscapes. On a practical level our research has allowed land planners (TNC, DNR) to better understand the level of diversity (genetic and morphological) and to evaluate methods of restoring or enhancing these habitats. As habitats become more disturbed interest in restoration and adaptive management has grown, however, few researchers empirically document best practices for community restoration and management.

#### 4) Climate and Communities.

Peter Lesica and I analyzed long-term vegetative transects to examine how the phenology of Montana's intermontane grassland species have changed with climate, especially with changes in temperature and precipitation. Our study showed that changes in precipitation are as important as temperature for advancing flowering phenologies in Montana. Phenological changes have the potential to disrupt plant-animal interactions and may cascade affecting other community members. Moreover, alterations in precipitation patterns are likely to have large ramifications for other plant community processes in south and western Montana. I continue to be intrigued by questions related to climate and its potential effect on communities. I also think that use of recent paleoecological records may help us better understand how climate and community processes interact.

#### *My scholarly process*

"The more you look, the more you see."

I enjoy exploring the theories that ecological and evolutionary research produce. I generally have a couple of projects that are simmering in various stages of completion. Sometimes new ideas are percolating while I consider experimental design or the analysis of another. Extended blocks of time to think through ideas, write or analyze seem to be the primary limiting factor in completing more projects. I will continue deepening my experiences as a researcher and explaining patterns in the natural world.

I enjoy doing research with collaborators at research institutions because I can more quickly accomplish the outcomes of my scholarly goals. However, my research program at Gustavus gives students the opportunity to conduct their own research and to think critically about issues. Since I allow students to develop their own unique projects rather than dictating a path that is only congruent with my research agenda, it means their research requires close and frequent interaction with me.

My research lab is another form of mentoring and teaching. I encourage students to explore options, pursue external research opportunities, write grants, read widely and deeply, build connections among ideas and find their niche. I expect students in my lab to work hard, take calculated risks, keep excellent records, teach one another and be creative. In addition to providing

a valuable service for The Nature Conservancy and Minnesota State Parks, my students have made important multi-agency connections that have led to career opportunities. I enjoy celebrating their accomplishments even if it does not include research in their future. I highly respect the work that these students have produced over the years as well as how they grown intellectually and personally as a result of our collaborative research experiences.

I believe that it is not enough to simply be engaged in professional activities, but one must show evidence of completion. Completion is a full circle of scholarship that includes publications in peer reviewed journals and presentations at scholarly meetings, where experimental questions, results and conclusions can be scrutinized, critiqued and shared in an open forum. Only when research goes public can it be included into the scientific canon.

One of my graduate school mentors suggested that success at many universities in the 1980s was defined by publishing one peer reviewed paper per year. While the bar has increased substantially at research institutions, there are many at liberal arts colleges that say that this remains a respectable goal. I have managed to publish, on average, one time per year, despite heavy teaching, advising and committee expectations. Moreover, I have published a peer reviewed paper with every student that has collaborated with me for longer than 3 months ( $n=12$  students). This has not been easy. For every publication we have in print, it took at least one year of data collection, and at least another year of analysis and writing, but generally it means more than two years of work. There are loads of other experimental data that were generated, but were never discussed in the publication; for every successful approach there is at least another one that was worked on as long, but did not work out (negative results, recalcitrant organisms or natural disasters in lab, greenhouse or field). Delays also are inevitable because of the peer review and revision cycle can extend 3-9 months for each submission or resubmission. Despite these impediments we have produced final products of quality. For articles that I publish with university collaborators the research is accepted top peer-reviewed journals (*Ecology*, *Evolution*, *AJB*, *Oecologia*). The undergraduate research also has been judged by peers and editors to be worthy of publication in other good journals. We have worked hard, produced good research and found appropriate ways to disseminate results. We have been persistent through the whole process despite the roadbumps and the protracted time between when the work is done and when article actually reaches press.

I have given presentations or displayed posters at many scholarly meetings or conferences on own or with students. I try to take my research students to a national meeting such as Ecological Society of America (ESA) because it broadens their understanding of science and how they can contribute to the academy. It also gives them an opportunity to talk about and promote their



good work. I also have been invited to give seminars at other institutions such as the University of Nebraska Lincoln, Colorado State University Pueblo and Doñana Biological Station in Spain.

I also try to make ecology research understandable to the general public. On my sabbatical I gave informal talks about plant-mycorrhizae interactions and invasive species ecology for the City of Missoula Public Lecture Program. The program drew in about 30 individuals interested in hearing more about the ecology and control of invaders such as knapweed, leafy spurge and toadflax. At Gustavus, I gave a talk at the City of St. Peter's continuing education program discussing invasive species. I also try to give Shoptalks about my research so I can share results with my Gustavus colleagues and I will continue to disseminate my research findings in these different contexts.

A critical part of my work as a scientist is to find funding. I apply for grants for myself as well as for collaborative work with students or other faculty. I regularly apply to in-house sources of funding (Research Scholarship and Creativity Grants, Faculty-student Collaboration grants, Lily, Rockefeller, etc) and external grants or fellowships (NSF or Kenan Fellowship). All the research grants that I have received have resulted in a publication and/or presentations. Writing grants takes an enormous amount of time and federal grants are extremely competitive for colleagues at research institutions let alone liberal arts colleges (<19% success rate in *all* of life sciences and <2% of NSF's budget goes toward non-medical life science). As such I have chosen to spend time developing research programs that require less funding; people power is the limiting factor in most of the experiments I conduct. I believe in paying my research assistants a fair wage and try to shift any funding I get for research to student stipends. I will continue to find ways to support students.



## Complementary Roles | Kate Knutson

My research focuses on the role of religious advocacy groups in the political process. Individual projects have examined the rhetorical and media strategies of these groups, the impact of religious groups on the formation of public policy, and the impact of religious groups on presidential elections. My interest in this topic stems from my own religious beliefs, which affect my view of politics and my approach to the political process. As a political spectator, watching the rise of several powerful and prominent religious advocacy groups in the 1980s and 1990s, I became increasingly interested in the ways in which religious beliefs are represented in the public sphere through organized advocacy groups. This led to my dissertation project, which focused on the ways in which mediated debates over public policies are shaped by religious groups and come to be framed as “moral” issues. Arriving at Gustavus, I continued to pursue questions that emerged during my dissertation research. I first focused on the ways in which religious groups may experience a sense of constraint in terms of the types of arguments they are “allowed” to make given their religious nature. I presented a draft of this research at the Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) annual meeting during my first year at Gustavus and the manuscript was accepted for publication in the journal *Politics and Religion*. Working with Katie Johnson ('07), we expanded this analysis to examine the differences in constraint experienced by religious groups on the left and right. We presented the results of this research at a MPSA conference and at Explorations (sponsored by the Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies program).

In the summer of 2007 I received a Research, Scholarship, and Creativity Grant to conduct interviews with leaders of national religious advocacy groups in Washington, D.C. During my time in Washington, I met with leaders of seven different religious advocacy groups. This data was used in another MPSA conference paper, coauthored with Mikka McCracken ('08). A revised version of that paper was accepted for publication in *The Journal of Communication and Religion*.

My newest project focuses on a local religious advocacy group, the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition (JRLC). The JRLC was formed in Minnesota in 1970 and is comprised of representatives from the Minnesota Council of Churches, the Minnesota Catholic Conference, The Jewish Community Relations Council, and the Islamic Center. The group advocates on behalf of issues on which all four of these sponsors agree. I decided to study this organization because of its uniqueness and because I thought it would make an interesting case study for a planned book manuscript. I approached Jackie Schwerm ('11) to see if she would be interested in working with me on the project and together we applied for a Presidential Faculty-Student Collaboration Grant to fund our research this summer. This summer we have interviewed JRLC founders, staff, board members, and citizen participants and have also spent time exploring the groups' archives. My plan is to complete two separate documents with Jackie's assistance. First, we will write a comprehensive group history for the JRLC for their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. No such document exists and the JRLC staff is excited about our work in this area. Second, I will write a book designed to be used as a supplemental case study in interest group, religion and politics, and state and local politics courses.

In addition to these larger projects, I have also undertaken several related projects. I wrote a chapter on the impact of religion on debates over same-sex marriage for an edited series on religion and public policy. This chapter drew upon some of the data from my dissertation and I took advantage of a January Term course, *The Politics of Same-Sex Marriage*, to help flesh out my ideas for the chapter. Several of the students offered to read and comment on my draft. I enjoyed being able to tie together my teaching and research interests in that way.

I have written two related chapters on the role of religion and gender in the presidential elections. The first chapter was published in *Race, Religion, and the American President* (2008) and focuses on the role of religious women in presidential elections from 1976-2004. The second chapter, which was written at the request of the editor of the first volume and has already been submitted to him, focuses on religious women in the 2008 presidential election.

At the request of colleagues in the field of religion and politics (Amy Black and Larycia Hawkins of Wheaton College and Douglas Koopman of Calvin College), I wrote an essay on religion and public policy for a book that will combine original essays and primary source documents. Finally, I collaborated with Chris Gilbert (Political Science) and Julie Gilbert (Library) on an article manuscript assessing the impact of an enhanced library component in *Analyzing Politics*.

As may be evident by my record, I view my role in the profession as being integrally connected to my role as a teacher. I constantly look for ways to involve students in my research so that they will have the opportunity

to develop their own research skills and explore the possibility of academic life. I have worked intensively with four students (Katie Johnson '07, Mikka McCracken '09, Amy Erickson '09, and Jackie Schwerm '11) and have also included other students in various aspects of the research process (Jon Grau '07 and Sarah Bernardson '07). I try to share my own research challenges and successes with students as they engage in the research process. For example, I will often bring in copies of my multiple conference paper drafts to my senior seminar. Seeing my pages and pages of markups helps to put the writing process in perspective for the students and to draw them away from their perceived need for a "perfect" first draft. The exercise allows me to discuss the importance of having other people read your work and being self-critical.

The research that I do also helps to inform my teaching through content. Research-related reading on interest groups this spring gave me new ideas for readings for my next Interest Group class. My research on same-sex marriage helped me to draft my Politics of Same-Sex Marriage syllabus. Case studies from my research often turn up in courses such as Public Policy and The American Presidency. In short, it is impossible for me to fully separate my roles as scholar and teacher because they are so complimentary.

In addition to research, writing, and conference presentations I maintain an active role in the profession. I currently serve on the Executive Committee of the Religion and Politics section of the American Political Science Association. This three-member committee serves as a consultant to the president of the section and any changes proposed by the president require the approval of the Executive Committee. I am a member of the American Political Science Association, the Midwest Political Science Association, and Christians in Political Science. I have served as an anonymous reviewer for several journals, including *Politics and Religion* and *Political Research Quarterly* and several American Politics textbooks.



PART III

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**Service**

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## **It is in the Tiny Bottles That One Finds the Most Potent Medicines | Paschal Kyoore**

I have always sought to promote knowledge, understanding of and appreciation for a region of the world that obviously does not receive enough attention in our curriculum: Africa. It is one of the regions of my expertise and I am particularly gratified that I feel an appreciation on the part of those who know me in this community for the leadership I have quietly yet constantly brought to bear upon the attention that should be drawn on this vacuum in our process of learning in this community. I am not just talking about teaching courses on Africa, or the Caribbean. I am talking about things such as using my contacts and expertise to bring musicians and speakers to campus. I have brought writers from Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, and a speaker and a musician from Ghana. During the 1999/2000 academic year, I applied for and got a Fulbright Grant to bring Dr. Benedict Der of the University of Cape Coast (Ghana) to teach history here for a year. Faculty benefited from the semester-long seminar that he held on the history and culture of Africa. Of course, this would not have been possible without the strong support of the Dean of the college at the time as well as the office of the Corporate and Foundation Relations.

Africa is the most marginalized continent in the curricula of colleges and universities in the United States of America, and this in spite of the reality that about twelve percent of the population of the country is of African descent. Some institutions are certainly doing better than others in addressing this anomaly. As an Africanist (and not just as an African), I am gratified to see the amount of interest that faculty in various disciplines at this college have developed for the continent and its people. An example is the enthusiasm that a number of colleagues manifested by attending all the seminars that were organized by the Fulbright Scholar (Dr. Benedict Der) who taught at our college during the 1999/2000 academic year. Naturally, this interest has a very positive influence in what they do in their own courses and how they influence

students to be more interested in the African continent and African peoples. But for a change in administration that occurred in the office of the Dean at Gustavus soon after Dr. Der taught here, we would have had an exchange program with the University of Cape-Coast (Ghana) which would have been very beneficial to both institutions.

I prefer to do things quietly. That is my style, and that is the approach with which I am comfortable. A Dagara proverb admonishes us in the following terms: “A koli kyâpulé puÉ na a tîkpeh mi be” [ it is in the tiny bottles that one usually finds the most potent medicines]. The moral of the proverb is that fewer words often convey more sense; the person often regarded as insignificant is the one who achieves great things, and behind the scenes.

## So Our Students Can Do Their Best Work | Jennifer Ackil

Whereas some set a very intentional path toward leadership, that has not been the case for me. Rather as my career has evolved, various opportunities have arisen that have afforded me the chance step forward to serve as a leader. To this end, my most visible leadership positions on campus have included chairing the Psychology Department, serving as Co-director of the John S. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning, chairing the Faculty Development Committee, and serving as the faculty representative on the Core Planning Committee for the new academic building. In each of these roles, I have done my best to positively impact those I have served with the goal in all cases, to enhance and create opportunities for my colleagues and our students to do their best work. I will discuss in turn some of my endeavors in this regard for each of the leadership positions I have held.

*Chair, Department of Psychology.* Serving as interim chair of the Department of Psychology (January-June, 2006) gave me a window into the varied expectations we have for chairpersons on our campus. In addition to the everyday responsibilities that come with this position, I took very seriously the mentoring and evaluation of untenured and adjunct members of our department, conducting careful reviews and summarizing my evaluations for each. Moreover, I initiated the Department's ten-year evaluation, calling preliminary meetings with my department colleagues to discuss this process and inviting two off-campus reviewers to participate in our review.

As the current chair of the Department, I have had the opportunity to engage in a variety of tasks that directly impact our department and as a consequence, the greater college community. For example, I helped my department capitalize on the Provost's call for a departmental strategic plan by organizing numerous meetings aimed at discussing various aspects of the department's mission, responsibility, and long-term vision. With respect for heavy student demands on my faculty colleagues' time, I worked hard to balance efficiency and productivity with an atmosphere that afforded the opportunity for everyone's voice to be heard. The result is a strategic plan

that has and will continue to serve us well and in which all members of the department can take proud ownership.

That the new academic building has been in the planning stages for over six years created a unique leadership challenge for me. While planning for new department space can be exciting and energizing, maintaining optimism in the face of setbacks and lack of forward movement for such a long time can be difficult. Thus, striking a balance between optimism and reality was paramount. To this end, I have since beginning my role on the new building committee (fall 2004), kept my colleagues informed of all communication and involved in all aspects of planning. Most recently this has included steering our collective vision for creating research laboratory space that will allow us to each continue our own program of research, while simultaneously enhancing collaboration with each other and with students. The result of many hours of discussion is a space that when realized has the potential to transform psychology at Gustavus.

While curricular discussions are ongoing in our department, I have attempted to bring several issues to the fore during my leadership in the department. First, I have attempted to facilitate the creation of a new framework for our honors psychology students. To this end, we have solidified our collective understanding of the expectations we have for our honors program and have put in place a structure that both communicates these expectations to students and enhances our ability to supervise their research. Second, recognizing our collective concern for a growing number of students who appear to be struggling in our introductory and 200-level classes, I have suggested that we engage in discussions about how best to address this potential problem. Whereas we have only touched on this issue to date, my intention is to create opportunities for us to address this more fully in the spring semester. Early discussion has included several avenues to explore including recruiting student assistance (as tutors, and mentors), remedial work in the introductory course, and creating “study skill” workshops for struggling students based on psychological research findings. Third, as a result of our careful strategic planning and in response to a recent vacancy in our department, I am in the process of directing a search for a new tenure track cognitive psychologist. Moreover, I have been intentional in thinking about our involvement in the interdisciplinary neuroscience program having held discussions about possibilities with the chairs of Biology, the Associate Dean, and Neuroscience faculty in response to disciplinary trends and growing student interest at Gustavus.

With all of these tasks in mind, I strive to lead in a manner that continues to nurture the foundation of collegiality so skillfully created by department chairs that came before me. Although we are a department that includes a variety of backgrounds and often very divergent views, there is a level of respect for one another that supports productive conversations that can

be simultaneously frank and collegial. In addition to advocating for my faculty colleagues and students and providing the things they need to do their best work, maintaining this atmosphere is among one of the greatest responsibilities I have as department chair.

***Co-Director, John S. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning.*** Working as Co-Director of the John S. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning (2007-2008) was an opportunity that allowed me to lead beyond the confines of my department. In addition to the day-to-day tasks required of this role, there were several initiatives of which I am proud to have been a part. For example, showcasing faculty accomplishments was a goal I brought to this role. To this end, Co-Director Laura Behling and I created from the ground up, the first ever faculty achievement publication, *Gustavus, Research, Scholarship, and Creativity 2006 & 2007*. Having the opportunity to learn of our colleagues' work through their travel applications and various small grant initiatives, Laura and I hoped that this publication would serve as a first step toward raising awareness of the great scholarly and creative work of our faculty. That the publication appears to be a regular addition to our community is a source of pride. In an attempt to foster collaboration and conversation across disciplines, we created a variety of new opportunities for faculty to talk to one another about a variety of issues of mutual concern. For instance, in response to faculty need for support in instructional technology, the Teachers' Talking Technology series was created to provide a forum for our colleagues to share with one another their expertise in classroom technology. In addition, we provided the opportunity for faculty to gather in January to discuss books of common interest, and created new workshops that among other things, focused on writing letters of recommendation, discipline specific publication processes, and Fulbright scholarship opportunities. We also took on sole responsibility for the new faculty mentoring program (previously shared with the Dean's office and the Center for Vocational Reflection), creating and leading biweekly discussions on a host of topics (e.g., college service, teaching evaluations) and connecting new faculty with experienced faculty mentors across the College. While many of these opportunities were aimed at addressing specific professional needs of the faculty, we were also sympathetic to our faculty's need to connect with one another in less formal ways. To this end we initiated the First and Final Faculty Socials with an eye toward simply providing occasions to nurture existing connections with one another and provide an opportunity to establish new ones.

Whereas learning about the ongoing scholarly and pedagogical efforts of colleagues was immensely inspiring, it also in many instances highlighted the need for financial support. To this end, we advocated for several initiatives aimed at securing or increasing funds to enhance faculty scholarly and teaching endeavors. It is worth noting that an increase in faculty travel awards for those traveling to conferences to present their work was one area where

we were successful in this regard. In addition, we initiated the first course development grants in recent history with the intent of tying faculty initiatives in the classroom to two strategic initiatives (leadership, international and cultural competence). That the Kendall Center remains busy in its efforts to support faculty scholarship and teaching is clear. That I was able to contribute to these efforts during my time as Co-Director was a privilege.

***Chair, Faculty Development Committee.*** Having served for five years as an elected member of the Faculty Development Committee I had the opportunity to engage in a variety of activities aimed at creating opportunities for faculty across the campus to do their best work. Early on, this work included discussion of the need for a permanent coordinator of faculty development, a need for flexibility in meeting faculty development needs, and included an external review of the faculty development program. During the three semesters' I chaired this committee there was a new faculty development center in place (now the Kendall Center) with a faculty coordinator.

***Other Leadership.*** That I have on occasion served as a leader in less visible roles is also important to note. To this end I served as a founding member of the self-organized group of faculty who worked to initiate the first annual Gustavus Celebration of Creative Inquiry. This group emerged from a Kendall Center summer workshop and worked from the ground up to create what has become a regular venue for students and faculty to come together to celebrated students' accomplishments across the College. Prior to this, I worked on behalf of my department to organize the first Gustavus Psychology Symposium. This forum has since become a celebrated annual event in our department that allows students to share their research with one another in service of giving them presentation experience and inspiring younger students to engage in research projects of their own.

***Summary.*** In short, I have been privileged to serve in several leadership positions across the College. Whereas several of these positions are clearly defined by our college governance structure (department chair, co-director of Kendall Center, chair of the Faculty Development Committee, faculty representative on core planning committee for the academic building) others are less visible but arguably no less important. I look forward to continuing to serve as a vigilant leader in our community both in formal roles and behind the scenes.

## Mentoring Students in Their Creative Endeavors | Priscilla Briggs

This section can be divided into three categories: activities I am requested or invited to do, activities I pursue, and activities I initiate. Being that there is no short supply of things to do on campus, assessing and prioritizing are important.

During the 2005-2006 academic year, the art department conducted a ten-year Departmental Review. The following year, we also contributed to the Education Department's five-year accreditation review for Art Education. In response to our ten-year review, we followed the advice of our external reviewer in attending the Foundations in Art: Theory and Education (FATE) Conference in Milwaukee in 2007. The theme of the conference, "Shift, Connect, Evolve," was relevant to our department as a whole in that it addressed major changes occurring in the art world due to technology and to the development of new art forums such as installation, interactive, and interdisciplinary art. I took on the responsibility of applying for grants from the Faculty Development Program to allow our entire department to attend the conference, and I wrote the final report.

This past year, I was invited to act as an external reviewer for the tenth-year review of the Art Department at Moravian College in Bethlehem, PA. Because Moravian is so similar to Gustavus in that it is a small, values-based liberal arts college, performing the review informed my perspective on my own department, and I found myself brainstorming ideas for possibilities within my own department as well. I will suggest these ideas to my department this year, including: an online gallery of student work, a standardized grading system for the studio art classes, and a more rigorous portfolio review.

The spring is a particularly busy time of year in the art department. Each year we interview art scholarship applicants during the Scholarship Day weekends. This past year was particularly exciting in that the quality of portfolios we saw during the reviews was very high. The spring is also the

season for student exhibitions in the Schaeffer Art Gallery. The sophomore and junior art majors are required to participate in a portfolio review and exhibition. This gives them both practice exhibiting their work and an understanding of how important presentation is. Each student meets with at least one studio art faculty member individually to discuss their work and their goals as an artist. We try to pair students with professors they have not had before in order to provide them with objective feedback and fresh insight. There is also an art minor exhibition in the spring, which gives the art minors their opportunity to shine. The studio art faculty members each supervise one of the three exhibitions on a rotating schedule. The Senior Seminar also has an exhibit at the end of the Fall semester, and the professor for that class is responsible for this exhibition. There is much to manage for each exhibit: notifying students of exhibition requirements and schedule, advising students on what work to exhibit, two days of painting the gallery and hanging the exhibit, organizing the opening reception, and making sure the students retrieve their work at the end of the exhibit.

During my second year at Gustavus, I was invited to join a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) group and have found this to be a practical and interesting endeavor (as described in Part 1 of this document). As part of a SOTL panel during Faculty Development Day in the Fall of 2005 I shared my research and ideas. After completing my SOTL project, I participated in a writing group that met throughout this past semester to share and receive feedback on our writing.

Another activity I have twice enjoyed is as guest lecturer in Max Hailperin's FTS class *Copyright Issues in the Digital Age*. For my lecture, "Art, Video and Appropriation", I screen video art pieces that use appropriated material and then discuss how the appropriated material is recontextualized to create new meaning and, usually, to reveal something about the original material. A student from this class registered for my *Video Art* because he was inspired by the lecture.

Three years ago, students asked me to be the advisor for both the radio station and the Gustavus Film Society. Since then, the Film Society has been absorbed by GAC TV, but I have been trying to get some students interested in reviving the Film Society and organizing a regional student film festival. Contrastingly, I have watched the radio station programming and facilities grow under the direction of Greg Boone. At his request, I arranged a meeting between representatives from Gustavus' KGSM and the Carleton College radio station, because Greg saw Carleton's radio station as a successful model. The students at Carleton gave us a tour of their facilities as well some very useful advice. After this visit, Greg wrote up an impressively thorough plan for KGSM's programming and budget and received funding from the Student Senate to purchase new equipment that would allow for a more professional practice.



Being involved in student-initiated activities and witnessing the energy they put into such things, caused me to think about how I could make my classes feel more student run. I believe this encourages them to take more responsibility for their own learning. My approach is to mentor the students in their creative endeavors rather than exert an aesthetic authority, giving them a wide enough berth to find their own vision.

The second category of service as I have defined it, activities I have pursued, reflects my personal interests. I was very interested in the SLSJ program because I am dedicated to the idea of introducing social justice issues into my classes. I feel very strongly that one of the major roles of artists in society is to address issues of social justice. I want my students to recognize this responsibility, and I design some assignments that require them to do so. Often, these projects have some of the most compelling outcomes of the semester because students are required to look outside themselves to move beyond the typical college clichés.

My personal understanding of social justice as an ethical issue compelled me to participate in the Summer Workshop on Teaching Ethics in 2005. This was an opportunity to work on a project design for my Interactive Media class, which involves the making of net.art about issues of social justice. I also appreciated the opportunity to listen and hear what others are doing in this respect.

The focus of the J-term class I co-taught in 2005 and 2007, Tourism in Thailand, is the social justice issue of tourism in a developing nation and its social, economic, and environmental repercussions. I think this is a very successful and eye-opening class for our students. One subject addressed in the course is ethnic tourism and authenticity. To explore this phenomenon, we spend a few days in home-stays in Hill Tribe villages as part of a community-based tourism project. When asked to give written feedback about the home-stay, the students from the first trip each wrote, without consulting one another, how surprised they were that people with so few possessions could be so happy. I thought this realization was the most valuable part of our trip for them. And I believe that providing experiences like this for our students is a valuable service to the college.

A few items from the third category, activities I have initiated, have been previously touched on, but I will elaborate here. Again, the goal of the Visiting Artist Series for the Senior Seminar was to give the senior art majors input on their work from fresh perspectives and to introduce them to the working methods of various artists. I invited six local artists to speak and critique student work during the Senior Seminar. In addition, with the help of the CVR, the Diversity Center and the Campus Activities Board, I invited photographer Lonnie Graham to give a campus-wide lecture in the Spring of 2005. Mr. Graham spoke about his work with inner-city youth in Pittsburgh, his photographs of workers in Africa, and his current project "A Conversation

With the World.” He also gave a homily in chapel on the topic of tolerance, attended a dinner with students and faculty, and graciously agreed to critique student work. Mr. Graham donated two of his artworks to the college.

To supplement the visiting artist series, I applied for a grant from the Johnson Fund to invite two artists, Sue Wrabic and Mary Carothers, to do a semester-long collaborative interdisciplinary project with a group of students from various majors. Twenty-five students signed on from the Art, Theater, History, Communications Studies and English departments. The project required students to do historical research and take photographs on location. The artists initially worked with the students from a distance, one living in Kentucky and the other in New York. They launched an informational website and posted all research and photographs there as a hub of communication. The theme of the project was the impact of big business on the local landscape and community. I was the project manager. I recruited students from outside my classes and department for the project, kept tabs on their involvement, and set up email aliases for each group. I organized the campus visit of the artists which included a lecture to my Darkroom Photography class, a visit to Patricia English’s Communications Studies class, a photo shoot on location with each of the participating student groups, a brunch with students and faculty, and a campus-wide lecture. My last task was to put the culminating exhibition together. This involved having the photographs and signs printed and working with the students to hang the show in the Schaeffer Gallery. The project encouraged the students to explore the local St. Peter area and discover issues of concern close to home. The students who were not art majors were especially fascinated by the process of taking information and turning it into a visual representation.

It is this kind of activity, which gives the visual arts a presence on campus and in the larger community, that interests me most and through which I feel my talents are most effectively utilized.

## **Instilling a Sense of Confidence | Tom LoFaro**

In terms of service, the most significant of my responsibilities is the Directorship of the Rydell Professor program. I believe that I have made a very significant contribution to this program by first providing the continuity and leadership that was lost in a previous presidential transition, and then increasing the visibility of this program both on-campus and to the wider Gustavus community. Since taking the directorship of this program I have scheduled Rydell Professorships for Robert Gallo, Sylvester James Gates, Frans de Waal, and Curtis Marean. Last year we began what I hope is a new tradition to this program, a Twin Cities lecture that is co-sponsored by a local institution. Last year we partnered with the Minnesota Zoo and this year we will be partnering with the Science Museum of Minnesota. These lectures are intended to highlight one of the annual events that is unique to the Gustavus community. I believe that I have also increased the visibility of this program on our campus. Classroom visits are much more frequent than when I was a faculty host for Steve Smale and I have been arranging less formal activities with student groups who might benefit from interacting with the Rydell Professor in a less formal setting.

One of the most challenging aspects of this program is the recruitment of individuals to serve as Rydell Professor. The program is described as a “scholar-in-residence program designed to bring Nobel laureates and similarly distinguished scholars to the campus.” Although the honorarium is significant, I have found it difficult to recruit active research scholars to participate in the program due primarily to the extended nature of the visit. I have tried to be creative in dealing with this requirement, (for example, Sylvester James Gates made almost weekly visits during his spring semester) but I am still frustrated by the challenges in convincing a renowned research scientist to visit for an extended period. I have had more success with individuals who have already participated in a Nobel Conference, as they are already familiar with Gustavus and the intangible things that make this place special. Thus I regularly attend the Nobel Conference luncheons to try and spread the word

to potential Rydell Professors. In addition, I try to be tangentially involved in the planning of upcoming Nobel Conferences to better inform my invitation process.

Because I direct the Rydell Professor program, Provost Mary Morton asked me to serve on the Provost's Council, which includes the directors of similar programs on campus. This group meets approximately once per month to share ideas and confer on issues that impact upon our programs that do not necessarily fit into the academic structure of the college.

I have served on a number of faculty committees including chairing the Instructional Infrastructure Advisory Committee (IIAC) for two years. I believe that participating in faculty governance is an important aspect of academic life at this college and I take these responsibilities seriously.

My service to the department is equally important. I have annually managed the math placement examination and, with the help of Max Hailperin, oversaw the conversion of this exam from a test taken on-campus during summer registration to an online examination that is taken before students arrive for registration. Last year I was one of three department members who oversaw the hiring of our most recent tenure-track hire.

The list above also illustrates that I have been active in less formal service roles on campus. Of these activities, I most enjoy facilitating the Freshman Wilderness Experience trips to the Boundary Waters. This is a trip of approximately one week that has taken place the week prior to students arriving on campus. Two of the objectives of the trip is to help develop leadership skills and to instill a sense of confidence in the students who participate. I have done this trip three times and each time I have seen the students blossom and continue to succeed once they arrive on campus.

## Supporting Our Learning Community | Margaret Bloch-Qazi

I support Gustavus Adolphus' learning community through my involvement in college activities. I am particularly interested in issues directly related to teaching and learning. I am convinced that there are many ways of being an excellent teacher and I learn a much about teaching from my colleagues here. I am also interested in exploring student experiences and perceptions of college life. My involvement in college activities has consisted of: faculty development, the sciences, and student issues.

**Faculty Development.** I am very interested in supporting faculty development for myself and my colleagues. Consistent with these interests I am in my third year serving on the Faculty Development Committee and am the campus liaison/Faculty Associate for the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) initiative. In this capacity, I continue to develop Mariangela Maguire and Rebecca Fremo's work supporting a SoTL community at Gustavus Adolphus. I organize and meet with three faculty cohorts (reading, implementation & writing) multiple times each semester. I have attended conferences<sup>[1]</sup> to network and better support this community. I organized a workshop titled "Fit for Public Consumption: Strategies for Sharing Your Studies on Learning" lead by Carnegie Scholars Drs. Michael Smith (Ithaca College) and Trish Ferrett (Carleton College) that was attended by 20 faculty. Finally, I encouraged two faculty engaged in SoTL projects (Brenda Kelly and Leila Brammer) to present their work at a Faculty Shop Talk. In the future, I hope to continue working with the Faculty Development Program/Kendall Center for Engaged Learning in some capacity. I also look forward to some day serving on the Third Year Review and/or Personnel Committee.

**Science Division.** I served the science division by being a part of the NASP course proposal review committee and as the elected secretary of the campus chapter of Sigma Xi for two years. As secretary, I was responsible for submitting paperwork to initiate new associate (student) and full members to the society and submitting a year-end progress report to keep the chapter in good standing. I serve the Biology Department by coordinating the seminar

program. For two years I did this with Cindy Johnson-Groh and Jon Grinnell. The last three years I have done this on my own. I invite and host speakers who are leaders in their biological sub-disciplines such as Peter Vitousek (Ecology, Stanford University) and Daniel Simberloff (Environmental Studies, University of Tennessee at Knoxville). I have participated in department discussions on our curriculum and writing in the core classes as well as a number of searches for positions (two tenure, three instructor, one administrative assistant, and six term replacements). At some point in the future, I will be willing to serve as a Department co-chair/chair.

*Student Life.* I have enjoyed working with students who are new to the liberal arts college experience. I have helped with summer registration for new students (2004), been a faculty facilitator for the Common Reading Project (2005-present), and served as an interviewer for the Presidential Scholarships (2005-present). I have enjoyed seeing these cross-sections of the student population. My ongoing participation in the FTS program (2004, 2007 & future odd years) also indicates my support and interest in the activities of the college. For two years I have had the privilege of participating in the mentoring program for students of color. This program, run through the Diversity Center and initiated by Virgil Jones, Sujay Rao and Carolyn O'Grady, provides support for first-year students of color by pairing them with faculty members who maintain regular contact over the course of the year. This experience has helped me grow by developing more effective communication skills and better understanding other perspectives on the Midwestern liberal arts college experience.

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[1] Innovations in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the Liberal Arts College, Northfield, 2006; Promoting Deep Learning, Minneapolis, 2007; and Uncovering the Heart of Higher Education, San Francisco, 2007.

## A Commitment to Collaboration | Michele Koomen

With the appointment of John Clementson to the Office of the Provost and Dean of the Faculty, Dan Moos and I stepped forward together and were elected as Co-Chairs of the Education Department.

In September 2008 at the request of Provost Mary Morton, I accepted the role as Co-Chair of the Gustavus Technology Services strategic planning. In this role, I, along with Bruce Aarsvold, led the Core Committee through an iterative process that led to the strategic plan. This process included a review by the committee of reports, a review of relevant literature regarding higher educational institutional technology, and implementation and analysis of an online survey. The committee held 24 meetings with all the various constituents of technology at Gustavus including faculty, staff, students, and administrators. The data gathering efforts detailed above and the resulting synthesis and interpretation of the documents, surveys, and meetings resulted in a *Strategic Plan for Gustavus Technology Services* that embrace five core ideas/themes. These five *Core Ideas* are:

- Communication
- Support
- Equipment and Hardware
- Access and Infrastructure
- Ethics of technology/access, use philosophy and culture

Co-Chairing the Core Committee is additional evidence of my commitment to collaboration across the community of Gustavus. This opportunity allowed me to learn significantly about the tremendous effort, ethics and commitment that are a foundational aspect of our Gustavus Technology Services. As would be expected, this opportunity helped me to develop greater skills in compromise and effective communication as well.

I just completed my first term as Curriculum Committee Chair and was reelected to serve in this same capacity for the academic year 2009-2010. I respect the members of the committee and the insight that they offer as

we deliberate over curricular matters at our meetings. This committee has allowed me to understand the nature of our curriculum at Gustavus in greater depth. As the Curriculum Committee Chair, I took challenging and contentious issues regarding our academic programs to the faculty on more than one occasion.

I have been a member of the 2009 Nobel Conference (*Water: Uncertain Resource*) planning committee since the beginning. I am thrilled to be selected to co-host Peter Gleick with Mary Strey.

In November 2008, I hosted a visit by Karen Oberhauser to our campus using Lecture Series funds. Oberhauser's research interests include: invertebrate conservation and ecology, with particular interest in monarch butterflies; Citizen Science and ecological monitoring; promoting a citizenry with a high degree of scientific and environmental literacy. During the afternoon of her visit she was a guest instructor in my EDU 246 lab. She gave a public lecture titled: *The Monarch Butterfly as a Flagship Conservation Species: Forests, Prairies and People*. Finally, this visit by Oberhauser is another indication of how collaboration and community are part of my work at Gustavus. I planned a faculty and student dinner with Karen featured as the guest of honor. In an effort to afford more interactive conversations between all dinner guests, I planned the dinner and the set up of the tables so that Karen moved to a different table with each course. Thus, all guests had the opportunity for conversation with this remarkable scientist.

#### ***Other leadership and service activities***

- Sustainability Working Group with James Dontje (2008)
- Course Approval Sub Committee (CAPSUB), Chair (2007-2008).
- Selection Committee for Guild of St. Angsar, spring 2007.
- Academic Petitions Committee for one student petition in Spring 2006 at the request of Mark Braun.

#### ***Service to the Department of Education***

- Part of my work in the department is as a faculty representative for our selective admissions. Over the years, I have served in this capacity many times.
- Departmental searches are part of the ongoing work of our department. Over the years I have served on many search committees. Recent successful searches included Sidonia Alumina (2006) and our new hire in 2008, Katrina Imison-Mázy.
- Advising elementary education majors has been part of my work in the department since 2001. Each year I advise between 25 and 30 advisees.
- I was the elementary faculty representative of our department for the academic year 2007-2009 to TEAC, Teacher Education Advisory Council at the request of John Clementon.



- NCATE (North Central Accreditation of Teacher Education) and BOT (Board of Teaching): Our department completed an accreditation with both of these entities in 2006. Documentation for this accreditation was extensive. I worked, along with many members of our department, on Standard 1 of the NCATE report and completed several Professional Education Program Evaluation reports (PEPER) for teaching of elementary education, elementary with 5-8 math and science middle school specialty.
- Tech support: Joyce Aarsvold is our education department's official IT person, however, I provide informal support to faculty and students frequently.
- El Paso research: I wrote above about this research, however, it deserves mention here because it links with our department's mission to educate students for cultural competence and understandings of second languages acquisition.



## Advocating For Those With Less Power | Peg O'Connor

My service to the College takes myriad forms. In the most traditional form of service, I have directed the Women's Studies Program for seven years. During that time, we have maintained a very vibrant program and instituted a major. At the next regular meeting of the Women's Studies Program, we will be voting on a proposal to change the name of the program to "Gender and Women's Studies" in order to better reflect the changing field of the inter-discipline.

Directing an interdisciplinary program is in many ways similar to chairing a department, though in some ways more complicated by the fact that I must work and partner with multiple programs and departments. Our program reaches across the College; we have at least thirty faculty members who are affiliated with the program, a curriculum with courses from at least eight departments, and sponsored events throughout the academic year. I regard the sprawling nature of the program as a virtue; it reveals the ways that many offices and departments across campus are stakeholders in this program. It provides us with both an enormous stability and potential to evolve, as I believe we have done.

I have been a faculty leader on behalf of the interests and concerns of interdisciplinary programs and their faculty. One significant change I helped to effect was clarifying the role of interdisciplinary programs in the formal review processes of faculty. I worked with the dean's office and past chairs of the personnel committee to institute changes in the ways that programs can participate in the reviews of faculty associated with their programs. This has become more important as the number of joint appointments increases at the College and as more faculty participate in interdisciplinary programs.

This fall semester, I have served on the search committee for a Director of Multicultural Programs. This is a very important position within the College. Even though this office is formally located within the Office of the Dean of Students, it plays a critical co-curricular role. In serving on that committee, I sought a candidate who had a broad understanding of diversity, oppression, community, and economic and social justice who would be able to create

strong programs that benefit the entire student population, and not just a segment. One of the major challenges in this—and it is the same challenge I face with students when teaching Racism and Sexism—is to get majority students to see that diversity is about them or that they are part of the diversity. I need and want a Director of Multicultural Programs who is working on complementary tracks. This director will play an enormously important role in educating students in the ways that diversity is an integral feature of world. My commitment to making the campus more diverse also entails my regularly serving on faculty searches as the diversity representative, whose job is to recruit under-represented candidates and ensure that the process is transparent and fair. Diversity initiatives are one way that we can affirm excellence, justice, faith, service, community, and faith.

I also see as my responsibility as a tenured member of the faculty advocating on behalf of and in concert with those who possess less institutional power than I. One very concrete form this has taken is my work on behalf of women students on campus who are concerned about sexual assault and the policies and protocols for addressing assaults. I have also worked with various offices in Student Life, bringing a speaker from the nationally recognized organization Men Can Stop Rape to work with administrators, coaches, faculty, and staff to help transform our campus into one where sexual assault and violence against women are not tolerated.

I understand service to the College to also include service and leadership within our profession, since our work in the greater academic world reflects back to Gustavus. For three years I served on the Committee on the Status of Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals, and Transgendered Persons that is one of the standing national committees of the American Philosophical Association. During my time on that committee, I was part of an examination of the absolute paucity of articles in philosophical journals that addressed gay issues. Our study was prompted by several faculty who had received hostile and homophobic comments on their submitted work. At my suggestion, this committee has also recently begun to address the tension between academic freedom and religiously affiliated colleges. In the present political context, this is becoming an even more pressing issue and perhaps places an especial burden on gays and lesbians.

I also serve on the steering committee of the Feminist Ethics and Social Theory (FEAST) association, having been elected in 2004 to a three year term. FEAST is the leading organization in feminist ethics, and includes the most highly regarded contemporary feminist philosophers. It has been an honor to serve on this committee.

## Rising to Our Best Selves | Carolyn O'Grady

At my tenure interview with the Personnel Committee I was asked in what ways I envisioned becoming a campus leader if granted tenure. I can remember thinking "I'm way too burned out to even imagine any form of leadership," but I answered politely enough that I would try to put my skills to use where they were most needed. It was one of those noncommittal answers that didn't really mean much. Now, several years later, I find I have taken on a number of leadership responsibilities and these have forced me to examine my own ambivalence about leadership while exploring the challenges inherent in holding a position of some power and authority.

I was elected to the Personnel Committee and was elected chair. My experience on the Personnel Committee still counts as the most rewarding committee work I have had at Gustavus. Faculty members consistently rise to their best selves on this committee, and the work seems meaningful and purposeful even while it is time consuming.

Currently I am in my second year as chair of Curriculum Committee, having first been elected last year despite never having served on the committee before. As chair I have tried to move the committee in more of a policy making, and less of a rubber stamping, direction. In doing this, I was responding to concerns expressed by committee members who take seriously the committee's charge to "recommend to the faculty policies and programs that affect the college in general and . . . review and recommend departmental, interdepartmental, and interdisciplinary programs and policies." This year the committee decided to meet twice a month in order to accomplish some of the ambitious goals we've set for ourselves. These include monitoring the effects of moving to a six course load on inter-departmental programs, participating in the January Term review, addressing some of the challenges raised by the Academic Planning task force, clarifying the relationship of the Curriculum Committee to the Dean of Faculty and the Faculty Senate, identifying procedures for assessing faculty-wide support for inter-departmental programs, and trying to clarify what we mean by (and how we do) "engagement" on campus.

In chairing this committee, as with chairing Personnel, I have been able to do a good job in large part because I have had excellent committee members with whom to work. I do bring strong organizational skills, the ability to facilitate discussion (which includes ensuring that competing viewpoints are expressed), and an understanding of group dynamics. Ultimately, this committee work allows me (forces me) to quell my knee jerk impatience and practice listening deeply. I tend to be very impatient; it annoys me how much we faculty tend to talk things to death. Yet as chair of a “talk-y” committee like Curriculum I know that the quality of the conversation depends in large part on how well I invite everyone into it and how sensitive I am to when and how to wrap things up. So, I get to practice this at every meeting.

There are several other leadership roles I have recently played on campus. Those I am most proud of include the following:

- Student of Color Mentoring Program (pilot, 2006-07)  
Virgil Jones and Sujay Rao first had the idea of establishing this mentoring program. They invited me to be part of the leadership team. All first-year students of color were invited to participate. About half of this entering group responded affirmatively. Sujay, Virgil and I identified faculty and staff mentors (14), planned and co-facilitated an off-campus retreat on Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, and have continued to monitor and assess the program. At Fall mid-semester, those students who were involved in the mentoring program were doing better, on average, than students who did not have mentors. My work with this project is another example of my inclination toward collaboration. I could not have pulled off this program on my own, but working with Sujay and Virgil has resulted in synergy.
- Search Committee for Director of Multicultural Programs (Fall 2006)  
This committee was chaired by Jeff Stocco and included faculty, staff, and students. There was a large pool of highly qualified and very diverse candidates. The ultimate appointment of Virgil Jones to the position was a positive outcome of this well conducted search. Although it was time consuming, work on this committee was especially valuable because of the quality of the conversations among committee members and the significant input of the student representatives.
- Chair, Third Year Review Committee for Dean of the Faculty John Mosbo (Fall 2004)  
I was one member elected to this committee by the faculty, and was ultimately “appointed” chair by President Peterson during one of our meetings with him. Any member of our committee would have been an excellent chair, and I do not know why he singled me out in particular. However, as chair I took on the responsibility of making sure our review tasks were completed efficiently, and I also co-wrote (with Claude Brew)

the first draft of our committee's report to the president. This draft was reviewed by all members of the committee before submission. Our committee worked extremely hard, and very ethically, to gather as much information as possible and to present it in a way that was even-handed and formative. Once our report was submitted to President Peterson, our work was finished.

- Co-facilitator, "Teaching Multiculturally" Bush summer workshop (June 2003)

I helped plan this summer workshop (in collaboration with Steve Griffith, then Faculty Development director). As an expert in multicultural education, I facilitated the first day of the June session and co-facilitated the follow-up days in August with Laura Behling. Twenty-three participants from 12 departments applied for this opportunity. I also coordinated the visit of Christine Sleeter, Professor Emerita in the College of Professional Studies at California State University Monterey Bay, as our resident expert during the June week and I compiled resource packets for participants.

- Director, Writing Across the Curriculum Program (2005-present)

I receive one course release a year for this work. I enjoy being able to work with faculty on WRIT proposals, and as part of this role I have facilitated conversation on WAC during Faculty Development Day.





## A Chance to Participate | Michelle Twait

Working collegially both on campus and in the field provides me with vital access to information and a chance to participate in decision making that will enhance the library's programs and, in turn, gives me an opportunity to contribute a valuable perspective to constituencies outside the library.

At the departmental level, I serve on one standing committee, the Publications Committee. This committee is charged with coordinating the production and maintenance of library publications which, in our definition, includes the library's website. The website is the gateway to much of our collection and, as such, students need to feel invited to visit. In my committee work, I continually seek to provide a website that facilitates easy access to the resources faculty and students need for teaching and learning.

Within the library, I have also worked with colleagues on staff development initiatives. Along with Sonja Timmerman and Sarah Monson, I planned and implemented a series of activities for staff members. These activities ranged from discussions on the library's mission statement to an exploration of individual strengths. We tackled the valuable, though difficult, task of negotiating differences in how various staff members perceive the library's collegial management structure.

In my role as liaison to various departments, I assist departments in preparing for their external reviews. This involves analyzing the holdings in our collection, both online and print, in specific subject areas. I also provide statistics about the instruction sessions typically offered in courses in the department. In many cases, I meet with the external reviewers to answer questions or provide a guided tour of the facilities and collections.

For the past few years, I have participated in the informal "Sophomore committee," led by Chris Johnson and Amy Pehrson. This group provides a forum for people interested in the unique issues and challenges of the sophomore year experience. In addition to planning activities for sophomore students, we also discuss research and trends in higher education related to the sophomore year experience.

I have served on the International and Domestic Programs Committee (IDPC) for the past three years. In addition to participating in the standard work of the committee, I volunteered to serve on the Global Focus subcommittee of the IDPC, a group charged with developing a proposal for a program in which the College would focus on a particular region or theme. Having thoroughly enjoyed the work of this committee, I am excited to have been re-elected to the IDPC for another three-year term.

Last year, I was invited to join a working group for the leadership development strategic initiative. My contributions to this group included reviewing the library's holdings, making recommendations and budget estimations for collection development, and serving on the subcommittee that developed the curricular components of the final proposal.

I have enjoyed the many opportunities I have had to serve the campus and St. Peter community. Gustavus aims to prepare students for "lives of leadership and service" and I hope to be a positive role model in this manner. My involvement also demonstrates my commitment to the College, my department, my colleagues, the students, and the citizens of St. Peter.

## Critical to the Strength of the College | Colleen Jacks

Participation and leadership in college governance is a responsibility that I have accepted willingly at Gustavus. Faculty governance and oversight of the academic program is critical to the long-term strength of the college and I believe that faculty members need to take on service and leadership roles commensurate with their talents, experience and tenure at the college. I have enjoyed the variety of these experiences – some student-centered, some faculty development-centered and others, such as the Nobel Conference Committees and HHMI proposal development group on which I've served, provided a professional dimension to college service. The instances where I have had the greatest opportunity to provide leadership at the college I describe more fully below.

I served my department as chair for a full three year term (1997-2000) and again for a semester on a temporary basis (Fall 2001), times of transition due to the retirement and departure of several faculty members. In the model of a chair as “the first among equals,” I felt my role was to provide the opportunities for discussion of long term curricular and other programmatic issues, while supporting the work of my colleagues by taking care of many of the administrative duties that can be time consuming and take one away from focusing on scholarship and teaching. During my full term as chair, I led eight faculty searches, four of which were tenure track, wrote the department's first proposal for a six course teaching load, co-authored our first departmental assessment plan, co-headed an external review of the Biochemistry program and oversaw the department's tornado recovery.

On a campus-wide basis, I served as the chair of the 1999 Nobel Conference “Genetics in the New Millennium,” a two year responsibility that, in conjunctions with former director Richard Elvee, included forming a planning committee and selecting and inviting speakers, as well as the more visible participation that occurs during the days of the conference itself. I have been elected as an at-large representative to the Faculty Senate twice. I have also served on the Senate Compensation Subcommittee twice, most recently

from 2000-2004, serving as chair in 2002-2003. During the year I was chair we did a review of the current salary structure. An additional service activity that required a great deal of my time and that few people are aware of was my role as the College's Radiation Safety Officer (1988-1995; 1996-2004). During this time the duties of the College's R.S.O. expanded a great deal to include a biochemistry lab and the Physics department for licensed isotope use. At the same time the Nuclear Regulatory Commission increased regulatory oversight for use and storage of isotopes and radioactive waste. In addition to performing weekly surveys of our stored isotopes and waste and six month surveys of the Physics department sources, I oversaw a radiation protection program for faculty, students and staff. I also wrote lengthy license renewal applications and amendments (most recently in 2002) and served as the main contact person at the College for the NRC.

## An Active Role in College Life | Alisa Rosenthal

During my three years at Gustavus, I have become deeply integrated into the activities of the College. My service to the greater Gustavus community is evidenced through my participation in the formal college governance process and through my participation in a wide range of college activities. Last year, I was elected by my faculty colleagues to serve on the search committee for the new Provost/Vice-President for Academic Affairs. I have served as a member of the Faculty Committee on Student Life for two years and currently serve as chair (and consequently as a member of the AACC).

I also play an active role in college life beyond the formal governance process. I have participated in summer registration for new students and served as a faculty facilitator for discussions during New Student Orientation. The Gustie Greeters invited me to give the annual faculty address to new students at the President's Banquet in my second year at Gustavus, and I have served as the faculty representative to the Greek Judicial Board since its inception in the spring of 2005. On the request of the Dean of Student Affairs Hank Toutain and the then-co-presidents of the Student Senate, I moderated the "Campus Caucus" discussion following the drawing of a swastika in the snow in the courtyard of Uhler Hall. I serve as a member of the Commencement Committee and, beginning this fall, will serve as a member of the advisory board to the Diversity Center. In addition, I participated in the Hurricane Katrina Teach-In as well as *Roe v Wade* anniversary panel discussions, a forum to discuss last spring's U.S. Supreme Court *Gonzales v Carhart* decision, and Constitution Day events. I participate in Admissions Office events as well as serving as a Presidential Scholarship interviewer for accepted prospective students. Finally, I advise two student organizations, Gusties for Choice, and "The Round Table", a new group seeking to create a space for serious intellectual and political debate and discussion among the students.

In keeping with our commitment to academic excellence and, in the words of our Strategic Directions document, "aim[ing] for the highest levels

of academic achievement,” I spent much of January-term 2007 developing a proposal to better assist our highest-achieving students in competing for and winning nationally competitive scholarships and fellowships. As part of this project, I have consulted with the Dean of Student Affairs, representatives of the Advising Center, the Career Center, Corporate and Foundation Relations, Institutional Advancement, current and former GUNISA advisers, the Provost and Dean of Faculty’s offices, and several students interested in competing for these awards.

***Service to the Political Science Department.*** I have served as a committee member for the American Politics search, recording secretary for department meetings, as a subcommittee member for the selection of departmental writing award and Christenson scholarship winners, and as co-advisor to Pi Sigma Alpha, the political science honor society. In addition, I am currently the departmental liaison to the library. Working with Jill Locke, I have revised the political theory curriculum in the political science department by introducing a new introductory course in political and legal thinking (POL 160: Introduction to Political and Legal Thinking) and moving the historical survey courses in Ancient and Modern political theory to the intermediate level. I revised the department’s public law offerings to divide the Constitutional Law course from a one-semester course into a two-semester sequence. As the department prepares for its departmental review, I have been an active participant in our conversations about assessment, future goals, and departmental mission.

***Service to the Women’s Studies Program.*** In addition to teaching a course (POL 285: Sex, Power, and Politics) which counts for the Women’s Studies’ minor, I became a member of the Women’s Studies Committee during my first year at Gustavus and coordinated Explorations, our monthly colloquium, for two years. I also serve on the Program’s Subcommittee on the Status of Women. Finally, I serve as academic advisor to Women’s Studies majors and minors.

## Pulling the Campus Together | Matt Panciera

In my first few years at Gustavus I served on a number of committees including the Program Assessment and Development Committee for one year and the senate sub-committee for academic planning. Beginning just this fall I was elected and/or appointed to the faculty development committee, the FTS advisory board, and the presidential search committee. In addition to these committees, I was asked by the deans to serve as the Gustavus coordinator (there were a total of 6 Lutheran liberal arts colleges involved) on the critical thinking part of a study of the liberal arts funded by the Teagle Foundation. I would like to talk more in depth about both this work and my year with the group that worked on academic planning.

The academic planning committee was given a general charge by the senate to discuss and make recommendations regarding academic planning as part of a campus-wide planning effort. This was a daunting task set before the committee and I know that as a relatively recent hire I felt a little overwhelmed at the wide-open nature of our assignment. As a result we cast our net fairly wide and had weekly meetings, often with many emails sent before and after, where we looked at questions such as: What does liberal arts mean at Gustavus? What makes us distinctive? What should our ideal prospective student look like? Our ideal graduate? How can we better support our priorities? What external forces, including changing demographics, do we need to take into account? We established early on that the atmosphere on campus was not conducive to establishing very specific priorities such as picking “winning” departments that would gain greater funding and grow and “losing” departments that would be phased out. It took quite some time however before we eventually came to a consensus that “engagement” was real enough to represent a positive step forward in the academic program, an already present strength we could build on, and a strategy that could pull the campus together.

I accepted the deans’ generous offer to lead the critical thinking phase of the Teagle grant in part because I realized that, although I thought of it as a

goal of every one of my courses, I had never really fleshed out for myself a definition of critical thinking. This work began actually with my participation in the writing phase of the Teagle study led by Becky Fremo. I helped grade papers with the rubric her team had developed. At the next meeting my team brainstormed for two days about critical thinking and we eventually came up with several criteria that would make it possible for someone to quantify the critical thinking in a typical thesis-driven, argumentative essay. In order to then actually grade a representative set of papers we needed approximately 120 papers (60, freshmen, 60 juniors/seniors) from each college. I recruited a variety of professors to persuade their students to participate and organized the subsequent collection. I took part in a third meeting where we graded those papers, and a fourth meeting where we discussed the results and what new strategies we might introduce on our campuses to improve our students' critical thinking. As part of faculty development day this year I showed a surprisingly large turnout of my colleagues how to grade with a writing rubric that was heavily weighted towards critical thinking.



## Building Future Leaders | Pam Kittelson

Like most science-oriented academics I had no idea what faculty governance meant prior to coming to Gustavus. It took a lot of observation, listening and false starts before I began to feel confident in my voice and act as a leader on campus. By being a Department Co-Chair and serving on the Personnel Committee I had the opportunity to observe and work with a number of faculty role models from across campus. I not only served, but I better learned what it meant to be an effective leader and how effective leadership can be embodied in different styles of leadership. I have learned that active faculty governance in collaboration with non-faculty staff results in an effective and energetic academic community. Our community builds future leaders and fulfilling this common goal depends on open and frequent interactions and acts of leadership by all of us.

### *In the Biology Department*

“...be the change you wish to see in the world.” M. Gandhi

During my sabbatical I was asked and elected to serve as Co-Chair of the Biology department for a three year term with Jon Grinnell; we also served another additional year following this term. Jon and I worked hard to develop a collaborative leadership model. Happily, Jon and I continue to have a productive working relationship four years later. The department started exploring the merits of a co-Chair model in 2002. We thought this approach might work as a way to ameliorate the heavy work load associated with chairing such a diverse, large, and complex department (e.g. n~15 faculty, 260 majors, 50 lab/lecture sections to schedule each semester, aging expensive equipment and facilities, ~7 faculty to review each year, and ~2 new hires to make each year). While the model is not likely to be employed by all other Department members, it was fairly natural for Jon and me to pursue. We taught together each spring, and we respect one another's views and balance one another's traits well. While the intent of the co-chair model was to allow more time to engage in the scholarship that can slip away when one serves as Chair, it certainly did not 'free' us half-time. The workload

was still significant because we met regularly to complete or split up the significant regular workload, to discuss goals and outcomes. It took energy to develop an effective working partnership and negotiate approaches. In general I became responsible for anything related to personnel, hiring, scheduling and curriculum; he managed the budget and student issues. However, we made decisions about all these components or filled in for one another when needed.

Chairs have numerous regular responsibilities, but we also had opportunities to accomplish new work by setting the agenda, providing data and context on issues, facilitating discussions, and ensuring action toward these new final products. We facilitated a curriculum planning retreat to assess our core classes and how to scaffold scientific writing and other skills. We drafted language about the rights and roles of our instructors as a way to clarify their agency and responsibilities, we discussed how to better enhance and retain diverse majors, and how to sustain co-curricular and in-class research experiences. We resurrected a newsletter and other student-departmental links to stay in touch with our alumni and current majors. We restructured FTE to allow for further 'break-up' of large enrollment courses. We rewrote the Department's vision, philosophy and mission statements. We completed duties that were newly assigned during our tenure such as writing Department annual reports and the Department's strategic plan.

In addition to accomplishments related to the whole department I learned a significant amount about leadership, my Departmental colleagues and the College simply by being Chair. Early on, I attended a conference for new Departmental Chairs on conflict resolution, legal issues and how to better promote the department. However, no conference can really prepare someone for what you learn doing the job. I learned how to better support colleagues, how to evaluate and offer constructive feedback. I learned about college structure, how things are financed and how to advocate to the administration using data and examples of work that resonate with them. I became much more proud of our Department's accomplishments, our collective and individual dedication to excellence in serving our students and the institution. I have a deeper respect for my colleagues' work and concerns. We are the second largest major on campus, play important roles for other departments, interact closely with three interdisciplinary programs and general education (we teach  $\sim 1/2$  of the incoming class each fall), we produce top notch research alone and with students, and our high achieving graduates experience significant and broad success in post-graduate endeavors all of which serve as selling points to prospective students. I learned my role was to do anything I could to provide resources that would facilitate my colleagues' teaching, research, and service so that our collective outcomes continued.

Being a Chair is a school that reveals one's strengths and weaknesses and offers opportunities to explore new approaches. I quickly learned what not to do through experiences or outcomes that were less than positive. I grew

in the face of change, honed leadership skills that came more naturally and deliberately practiced those that were more foreign. I continue to realize that open and frequent communication is key to building an effective team. I advocate for or compromise for the good of the majority, but I also know that consensus on a final action may not occur. I am willing to have difficult conversations with people with the hope that a better understanding or working relationship may evolve as a result. I also always try to follow through for people in a timely manner. Certain aspects of my leadership style such as balanced diplomacy and understanding more indirect modes of communication continue to challenge my professional development. I tend to be direct; I tend to speak what I perceive to be truth with the hope that others do the same and better understanding results. Regardless, I always am willing to hear and consider others' viewpoints. I also can be self-reflective regarding my leadership traits and know aspects of my personality are opportunities for continued growth.

While I value my autonomy as an academic, I also am a team player and view committee service as a necessary civic duty. We all must participate in governance because active participation is necessary to maintain the functions and privileges of an institution like Gustavus. I try to be a team player in my Department in several ways, for example by doing the work of a Chair, but also by being an engaged member of my Department, which includes completing all aspects of Department work in an effective, timely and quality way. I also try to be a good department citizen by teaching overloads, regularly teaching core classes despite their large size and challenging populations, by offering 'my' favorite upper level courses to term appointments so they can develop their c.v.s, or by delaying a sabbatical to help balance the stress associated with three of us eligible for sabbatical at the same time. I will continue to participate in the regular activities of both the Biology department and Environmental Studies. For example, in Biology we are developing an assessment plan and are preparing for our 10 year review this spring. I also continue to serve campus events sponsored by the college, ES and the Arboretum such as Nobel, Earth Day and Linnaeus at 300.

*In the faculty and its committees.* After a very productive field season, I was grateful for academic privileges and I agreed to stand election to the Personnel Committee even though I was still co-chair. Minor arm twisting by colleagues also figured in the equation. Serving on Personnel was humbling, hard, serious but also a very satisfying job. I learned a tremendous amount about my colleagues and the college by observing classes, interviewing candidates or their departments, critically examining tenure and promotion files or letters, and working with other colleagues on the committee. The mission and productive approach to work of the Personnel Committee resonates with me, and it is a type of service that I envision maintaining long-term at Gustavus. As such, after my term on PC was complete, I decided to serve

as a on the Third Year Review Committee; the third year is a crucial formative time for new faculty and the review offers opportunities to better understand the criteria for tenure and how to maintain a path that complements their professional vision.

***In other college positions.*** My experience as Director of the India Program reinforced that many of my leadership objectives are well served in program development more directly related to student learning. With that in mind, I decided to serve as the Coordinator/Director of the HHMI Institute Peer Mentoring Program. I have talked about this program's relationship to the criterion for teaching and program development, but the position also requires leadership related to college governance. I work with six to 10 faculty each semester to plan and develop a supplemental curriculum for four courses. I hire and supervise 13-17 peer mentors in collaboration with faculty across two departments and one interdisciplinary program. The success of this program relies heavily on faculty participation and how they structure their courses to fit the program objectives, philosophically and logistically. My role is to encourage faculty participation and endorsement because the program results in learning outside the classroom, and gives students and faculty a means of better understanding one another. I am responsible to and for people, curriculum, program assessment and end of the year reports. My role is to build and administer the policy and affairs of this program, in other words to govern in a broad sense. Moreover, our program is novel and effective, and what we have learned could serve as a model for others.

## Student Experiences, Learning Opportunities | Kate Knutson

I have been an active participant in a wide array of campus activities and have intentionally developed a thematic approach to my service in which my activities are linked and synergistic. The primary theme of my service to the Gustavus campus involves student life on campus. During my five years here, I have served as the Head Resident (HR) of Rundstrom Hall. It has been a pleasure to take on this additional role as it has given me the opportunity to learn firsthand what life is like for students at a residential, liberal arts college. It has also, of course, come with its fair share of challenges, such as middle-of-the-night fire alarms and late-night requests for help with homework. As a Head Resident, I am responsible for community development within my building and I supervise a small staff of Collegiate Fellows (CFs) in helping to plan developmentally-appropriate social and educational events. My position as a HR has also led to my participation on a variety of hiring committees for CFs, other Head Residents, and one Area Coordinator.

Because of my experience living in the residence halls, I was drawn to service on the Faculty Committee on Student Life. The tasks assigned to this committee fit within my broader thematic goals for service and I felt my unique experience as a Head Resident would be an asset to the committee. I served on this committee for two years and was chair of the committee during my second year of service. As committee chair, I helped design and implement the “Intersections” program, which brings together faculty and student affairs professionals to discuss issues of concern to both constituencies such as high-risk drinking, mental health challenges, and the busy lives of students.

My interest in student life also led me to volunteer for service on the College Judicial Board, of which I have been a member for two years. I also serve on the Grade Appeals Board. Service on both of these boards has challenged me personally and professionally through several difficult cases, but I have enjoyed the opportunity to work with colleagues across campus on these tough issues.

I currently advise two student organizations—Proclaim and Democracy Matters. Proclaim is the largest student organization on campus and I have greatly enjoyed my role as adviser for the past three years. Because the group is so large, I primarily work with the student leadership team, which has ranged from 7-12 members. In addition to attending the Proclaim service on Tuesday nights at 9:00 nearly every week, I attend approximately one leadership meeting each month. Over the past two years, I have also taken a more intentional role in mentoring and developing the student leaders through hosting regular Bible studies, book studies, and fun activities for the group. I have taken a more hands-off approach with Democracy Matters, which was started by two of my Rundstrom residents in the spring of 2006. When they approached me about being their adviser, I agreed, but was upfront about the fact that I didn't personally support the goals of the national organization (to create a full publicly-financed campaign system). Each year I give the new incoming presidents the same disclaimer and give them permission to find an adviser who can be more committed to the mission, while letting them know that I am still happy to serve as their adviser and to support their interest in politics.

Working with others on campus, I have helped organize two campus-wide events: Day at the Capitol and the Gubernatorial Candidate Forum. The Minnesota Private Colleges Council sponsors an annual Day at the Capitol event in which students travel to St. Paul to advocate for the Minnesota State Grant Program. Gustavus benefits tremendously from this program as over one-fourth of our students are beneficiaries of a State Grant. In 2008, I encouraged my Public Policy students to attend the event and they returned saying that it was very interesting but that they felt unprepared to talk to their legislators about the issue. Building on this feedback, I approached Gwen Freed in Marketing and Communications about the possibility of turning the Day at the Capitol experience into a service-learning project for my spring Public Policy class. She was excited about the potential and for the past two years, we have worked together (along with a team of students, faculty, and administrators) to organize the event. My students take a leadership role in educating participating students about the Minnesota State Grant Program, their elected representatives, and tips for advocacy success. Based on our experience working together on this endeavor, Gwen floated the possibility of Gustavus hosting a gubernatorial candidate forum in the fall of 2009. Again, we worked with a team of students, faculty, and administrators to plan this successful event. I moderated the forum, which drew twelve gubernatorial candidates and nearly two hundred audience members.

One aspect I have particularly enjoyed about working at Gustavus is the opportunity to work with those outside of my discipline. Over the past five years, I have had the chance to participate as a guest speaker in a variety of curricular environments. At the request of students, I participated as a

panelist in a Developmental Psychology class for Dick Martin and as a witness in a mock trial for a Legal Argumentation class taught by Terry Morrow. I visited Elizabeth Baer's Ethnic American Literature course in 2007 to speak about the politics of immigration reform and spoke to Lori Carsen Kelly's Individual and Society class (CII) about social scientific approaches to research. I gave a continuing education lecture on the politics of immigration in 2006 and presented on religion and politics in America in the continuing education seminar "The U.S. and the Abrahamic Faiths (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam: The Public Role of Religion" sponsored by Darrell Jodock in 2009. This willingness on the part of my colleagues to reach beyond disciplinary lines is something that has inspired me.

From participation in first year orientation Gustie Greeter groups for the past four years to being a server at several Midnight Express events to helping with Presidential Scholarship interviews for the past three years, I have enjoyed opportunities to meet students and serve in memorable ways. I have had the opportunity to register incoming students register during summer registration and have helped ease their transition into college during a canoe trip to the Boundary Waters. I have also helped to dream big about ways to improve their experience on campus through participation on the Commission Gustavus 150 Task Force on Student Life and the Living-Learning Task Force. In all of these activities, I have worked to develop all aspects of the student experience on campus into learning opportunities for our students.

***Service to the Political Science Department.*** In addition to service to the larger campus community, I have also been an active member within the Political Science Department. It has been my personal goal over the past five years to help develop and nurture a strong community within the department. This has taken the form of initiating small changes such as purchasing art work for our office suites and classroom space to make the area more hospitable to students and supporting community-building events such as the annual cookie bake-off, department coffee hours, and the Polstitutional Olympics (an annual competition between my Public Policy course and Alisa Rosenthal's Constitutional Law course). I look for ways in which my colleagues and I can facilitate community building among our students because I believe that students who feel a strong sense of community outside the classroom will be more engaged and participatory inside the classroom.

I also participate in more practical ways within the department. I serve on the Technology Committee for the department, have served on selection committees for our writing and service awards, participated in writing our self-study report for our ten-year department review, participated in hiring a new tenure-track faculty member, and served as a chaperone for the Model UN team's trip to Boston. One of my most significant contributions to the department has been my role as co-adviser of Pi Sigma Alpha, the Political

Science honor society. I have served in this role for the past four years during which we have coordinated many events benefiting the campus community and political science students. In the spring of 2010, I co-organized the Midwest Political Science Undergraduate Research Conference, an annual conference for students of political science that is hosted by a rotation of Midwest colleges and universities. Though I had not participated in the conference in other years, I, along with my co-organizer Alisa Rosenthal, was able to draw upon the experiences of my colleague Richard Leitch as well as some notes from past conference organizers to plan all aspects of the conference. The event was a success and drew over 40 participants from twelve schools from around the Midwest.



PART IV

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**Mission**

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## So That They Too Can Eat With Elders | Paschal Kyoore

Hymn number 840 of our Catholic Ritual Song book evokes Bible verses in a manner that I find relevant in understanding what we are committed to doing in our profession as teachers, and ultimately in how we go about accomplishing the mission of our college: “We are many parts, we are all one body, *and the gifts we have we are given to share*. May the Spirit of life make us one indeed; one, the love that we share, one, our hope in despair, one the cross that we bear” (italics and emphasis mine). In many ways over the years I have shared the gifts that I have in a church-affiliated college that has a mission to educate students to go out into the world after graduation to also share their gifts and their love with others by being responsible citizens in our increasingly challenging world. Among other things, I teach them that to be a responsible citizen of our contemporary world means they should respect others who do not share their religious faith or who come from a different cultural background.

I strive to help my students make relevant connections between scholarship, what I teach them in the classroom, and their lives. After all, is that not what our liberal arts education in this church-related institution is all about? For example, for me the interest in Caribbean history and culture goes beyond a yearning for academic scholarship. It is personal because it is about my identity, my soul. The late renowned Burkinabè historian Joseph Ki-Zerbo sums up the importance of identity in the following proverb: “*Un arbre qui n’a plus de racines n’est plus un arbre*” [a tree that has lost its roots is no longer a tree]. Some students might not understand completely how this identity is about my soul, but I hope that they will eventually be able to understand that the History of Guadeloupe, or St. Vincent and the Grenadines, or Trinidad and Tobago, or Bordeaux in France is not just a history of the “Other”, or “that other” history. My wish is that they will see the importance of the connection between historical sites in Puerto Rico, Guadeloupe, Martinique, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, South Carolina-Georgia, on the one hand, and the slave castles in Elmina and Cape Coast in Ghana and the Gorée

Island in Senegal. We say in our mission statement that we strive “to balance educational tradition with innovation and to foster the development of values as an integral part of intellectual growth”, and also that we want “to help students attain their full potential as persons”. As a faculty member, what I hope I have been able to do since I came here in 1991 is help to accomplish this lofty mission by challenging students to see the humanity in how peoples’ histories have shaped the world in which we live today, and how learning can positively help them understand their own communities and the world at large. After all, as a Sudanese proverb proclaims: “No matter how big a tree is, an axe is always its enemy”.

Between the ages of eleven and seventeen years, I attended a Catholic Minor Seminary. The school has as its motto: “*Lumen Splendet*”—“let the light shine”. That motto has been a motif for me in life. I have learned in my profession that there are many ways in which I can let that light shine, and I believe that over the years, I have done that in various ways that have been very beneficial to my students and the college community at large. I hope I have been able to educate them to understand why they need to take control of the knowledge that they acquire in order to understand themselves better, because as Joseph Ki-Zerbo once said “*Dormir sur la natte des autres, c’est comme dormir sur le sol*” [sleeping on another person’s mat is like sleeping on the ground].

My involvement with the St. Peter community at large has grown over the years. We do not consider that as service to the college. However, it is one way of representing the college well, and that in my view tallies with the mission of our college. I have participated in the International Festival at South Elementary School, done presentations in classes in the schools in town, coached soccer in summer, done African xylophone music performances, and so on and so forth.

As I have already alluded to above, one key mission of our college is to expose students to a knowledge of and an appreciation of different cultures of the world. I believe I have helped in fulfilling this mission through the kinds of courses I teach, the type of scholarship that I bring into my teaching, and the service that I have rendered to the community so far. For my university education, I had the privilege of attending five institutions in three continents, four countries, and in four very different education systems. It has served me well, and my students have always benefited from this diverse experience which for me has been important in how I help the college accomplish its mission.

I will end my personal statement with some proverbs. The first one is a Dagara proverb (Ghana, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire), and the second is an Igbo proverb (Nigeria). The Dagara proverb asks a rhetorical question: “*Aa dang kyere bie kaafu e sogre a bie yuor?*” The proverb means: “Who asks for the name of a baby that he or she is going to baby sit?” I would like to believe that I did not find it necessary to ask for the name of the baby that I was going to

baby sit, and that after seventeen years, I know the baby pretty well. The Igbo proverb is taken from a novel of one of Africa's most renowned writers, Chinua Achebe of Nigeria. The novel is called *Things Fall Apart* and the proverb says that a child who washes his or her hands can eat with elders. This proverb is not unique to the Igbo people. It is a profoundly African way of seeing the relationship between people and what learning entails. Over the years, I have done my best to inculcate in students what learning means and where it can take them. I want them to wash their hands so that they too can eat with elders. Eating with elders entails having respect for others, and understanding the values that their society cherishes.

Another Igbo proverb states that the lizard that jumped from the top of the high *iroko* tree to the ground said it would praise itself if no one else did. I believe I have jumped from the top of the high *iroko* tree to the ground. Fortunately for me, my legs and my stomach are still intact! Yet, unlike the proverbial lizard, I am not praising myself. The Bible admonishes us thus: "God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble" (Proverbs: 3:34; 1 Peter: 5:5). This letter is called a "personal" statement. I have tried to provide the sort of information about myself that would help the people involved in the evaluation process to see how I have met the four criteria for promotion to full professor.



## The Potential to Contribute Much to Society | Jennifer Ackil

I am mindful of the fact that my daily interactions with students both in and out of the classroom play an important role in their development not only as scholars but also as thoughtful, balanced individuals with the potential to contribute much to society. As a psychologist, my courses are most obviously designed to provide students with the opportunities necessary for developing a mature understanding of the discipline. Even a casual observer would note that the readings I choose, the assignments I have created, and my high expectations for the students I teach are all intended to help them master course material as they work toward developing a comprehensive understanding of the field. Arguably of equal importance however, are the many more subtle objectives that I keep in mind and attempt to accomplish along the way. First, a primary aim of my teaching is to foster clear, objective thinking skills that are of value across the disciplines. While I emphasize these skills in all of my courses, my Cognitive Psychology course is ideally suited for emphasizing these skills in the context of the kind of interdisciplinary connections valued by our community. In the last several years this course has increasingly attracted students from a variety of disciplines across the College. This provides a natural avenue for examining the manner in which cognitive research can both inform and benefit from conversations and collaborations with those in other disciplines. Moreover, in this and other courses I am intentional about providing opportunities that challenge students to evaluate theories and ideas in light of empirical research findings and to discuss their ideas openly in class and in their written assignments. I hope that by discouraging the passive acceptance of facts and encouraging the open exchange of ideas from a variety of perspectives, students will develop as independent thinkers and skeptical consumers of information – skills that should serve them well throughout their lives.

Second, my courses are intended to reveal to students all of the possibilities of psychological science. While this may seem an obvious objective, I am acutely aware of the fact that most students come to Psychology courses with

an extremely narrow view of the field. My experience has been that the vast majority of our majors enroll with the intent to learn the skills necessary for assisting others through counseling and therapy. While this is for many reasons a laudable goal, my courses necessarily force them to expand their view. I hope that those considering a career in psychology come to realize that the contributions they might ultimately make as psychological scientists may be as valuable and rewarding as those they might make as counselors and therapists. Emphasizing this possibility for women and members of underrepresented groups is especially important, as they seem to have a particular tendency to limit their choices in the field to clinical/care-giving roles. Remaining active as a scientist myself and thus, modeling this possibility is one way to expand this view. Providing opportunities for students to experience the excitement of scientific discovery also brings this possibility to life. Moreover, explicitly helping students to understand how psychological science enables individuals to make judgments that strengthen community and inform public policy is of benefit to us all. Sponsoring student internships and career explorations during January and during the regular semester has provided a natural opportunity for me to raise these issues with students. Integrating conversations about these issues in my classes provides another avenue and one that I look forward to expanding upon. Teaching a course on applied cognitive psychology that would explicitly focus on the pragmatic value of cognitive research and its potential to positively impact the greater community is something I am eager to explore.

Third, providing opportunities for students to engage in psychological science (both in and outside the classroom) benefits students beyond simply enhancing graduate school applications. In January 2004 I participated in a month long faculty group discussion organized by our Biochemistry colleague, Jeff Dahlseid, aimed at discussing the National Research Council's book, *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School*. To have the opportunity to think and reflect with faculty across the College about the best practices to promote student learning was enjoyable and productive. Among other things, this discussion solidified my belief in the highly valuable and generalizable skills that students acquire through the process of research. Developing an understanding of and appreciation for the origin of knowledge, developing oral and written communication, learning to balance independent thinking with collaboration, and developing a tolerance for obstacles are among those that have the potential to serve them well in a variety of professional endeavors throughout their lives.

Fourth, much of the material in my courses calls for discussions of responsibility, ethics, and compassion for others. Whether students are conducting their own research in the upper level courses or simply reading about research in the introductory course, challenging them to think about these issues is an important exercise. What obligation do psychology scientists



have to share their research findings with the public and how might this obligation best be met? What are the ethical implications of conducting research with human participants? How should psychological scientists weigh the benefits of research against any risks of participation? At various points in each course and in a variety of different ways, I provide opportunities for students to identify and wrestle with these kinds of questions in an attempt to emphasize their responsibility not only as students of psychology, but as educated members of society. Moreover, many of the various research topics and psychological findings that we discuss in my courses (e.g., stereotypes, implicit racism, authority, false memory, biased reasoning) naturally elicit discussions of values. My hope is that providing students with opportunities to discuss these issues in the confines of our classroom encourages them to reflect upon and evaluate their own values and actions as they face relevant issues and situations throughout their lives.

Finally, I hope that students leave my courses with a desire for lifelong learning and a commitment to excellence in whatever they ultimately choose to pursue. Although it is difficult to assess the extent to which I am successful in this regard, the variety of students (e.g., psychology majors, non-majors, advisees) who consistently seek my input in discussions on a broad range of issues may be an indication that I am on the right track. Whereas these conversations frequently begin with students' practical need to choose classes, discuss career paths, or request recommendations, they typically develop into more meaningful conversations that I hope lead students to consider their personal values, passions, and goals. I view these conversations as an important part of a liberal arts education and believe they are necessary for encouraging our students to consider their responsibility and potential as contributing members of society. Moreover, I am encouraged by student comments that go beyond mention of the course material that indicate a change in their approach and thinking. Though it is clear that most of the students I teach will not go on to become cognitive psychologists, I hope that my enthusiasm for the material in my courses and my passion for my own research will motivate them to continue their intellectual pursuits and inspire them to seek experiences in their lives that they will find equally as fulfilling.

***Some Final Thoughts and Reflections on Promotion.*** Whereas the majority of this statement has highlighted my contributions and accomplishments thus far, it seems appropriate to end with a few brief thoughts on the contributions I might make in the future. As I look forward beyond my everyday responsibilities several things come to mind. First, beyond the teaching endeavors mentioned previously, I look forward to the possibility of becoming involved in the Curriculum II program. Having been invited to team teach the capstone course with a colleague in the humanities is a prospect to which I am looking forward both for the new challenge it will provide and for the opportunity to share psychological science with students in a new format.

Moreover, I am hopeful that with the expected addition of a new tenure track cognitive psychologist will come flexibility in my teaching assignment that may open additional opportunities for new collaborative endeavors. Shared interests with my social psychologist colleague Dr. Marie Walker have afforded several collaborative opportunities in the past including a team taught January term course (Psychology and the Law) and a collaboration between students in our separate seminar courses (Dr. Walker's seminar on The Self and my seminar on Autobiographical Memory). My interest in memory (autobiographical recollections, in particular) has also elicited informal conversations with history colleagues who share an interest in understanding how people reconstruct the past. These possibilities are intriguing to me personally and would provide another avenue that would strengthen my support of the College's commitment to interdisciplinary learning.

Second, my program of research continues to raise as many questions as it answers. Thus, in addition the work already in preparation (as indicated in my vita), I have several projects in line. One of these will aim to further uncover the mechanisms responsible for the forced fabrication effect by examining more closely the consequences of participants' resistance to fabricate misinformation. Including student collaborators in this project will continue to provide opportunities for them at all levels of psychological research. A second project aims to examine adult and children's long-term retention of traumatic and nontraumatic experiences. Maintaining an active program of research is vital for satisfying my own personal curiosities and for fueling my interest in and passion for cognitive psychology. That my research has the advantage of continuing to provide collaborative opportunities with students that are mutually beneficial is particularly fortunate.

Finally, promotion to the rank of full professor brings not only recognition of one's accomplishments, but the responsibility to be an active, engaged, and mindful leader both in one's discipline and in the Gustavus community. Serving as a mentor and resource for less experienced faculty colleagues, and taking on additional leadership roles in the discipline, my department, and on committees across the College are among the more obvious steps toward meeting this obligation and I look forward to continuing my work to this end. Of equal importance however, is the responsibility to be vigilant as a leader "behind the scenes" by making sure the College upholds issues of justice and fairness for all members, but especially those in untenured or support positions who may as a consequence feel more vulnerable when expressing their views. Being aware of and committed to upholding these responsibilities is in keeping with the spirit of the Gustavus Mission and is necessary for insuring the continued well-being of the College.

## Seeing the World Through the Eyes of Another | Priscilla Briggs

Although I have pursued art and teaching because I enjoy both disciplines immensely and try to approach both with humor, I take what I do very seriously. It is my responsibility as a teacher to open the minds of students to new ideas and make them aware of how, and through what filters, they see the world. I teach a rigorous class and challenge students on their ideas, regardless of content. Students often bring up religious and ethical themes in their work and I encourage them to think about their topics with a sense of personal responsibility and a “mature understanding of their faith tradition”, rather than thinking of faith as a list of rules you follow without question. For example, one student made a video in which the narrative followed the life of a young wayward man who steals beef jerky from the gas station and sneers at minorities before he finally walks into a church and is saved. This narrative fell flat because there was no indication of why the young man did any these things, including why or how he found Jesus. I encouraged the student to rethink the narrative to figure out how he could tell the same story in a way that would exhibit the critical thinking of the character that led him to being saved and, thus, engage the viewer in the transformation of the character. In order for the student to do this, he needed to reflect on his own moral development. This type of reflection evidenced in the work leads to a higher degree of overall excellence within the discipline.

My goal is to get students to understand themselves but to also look toward the outside world. To do this I integrate assignments into my classes that direct the content of their work toward social or political issues about which they feel strongly (but also stressing that the personal can be political). In the Video Art class, students are asked to create a “commercial” that addresses a social or political issue and is exactly 45 seconds in length. The Interactive Media class is given an assignment in which they must address the same issues in a net.art format. In my Digital Photography class, we address the ethics of photo manipulation, issues of war photography, and the moral issue of human cloning and stem cell research. I feel these types of assignments

and discussions help students to understand how art functions as a tool for both social inquiry and propaganda, providing a platform from which they can “integrate moral development with intellectual growth.”

During the summer of 2005, I participated in the Summer Workshop on Teaching Ethics because I wanted to figure out how to approach the subject in my classes. The majority of participating faculty worked on designing classes that focused on a single ethical topic in depth. I usually do not assign specific issues to the content of projects directed toward issues of social justice, but give a broad assignment asking them to address a topic about which they feel strongly. During critiques of these projects, students tend to shy away from discussing the actual subject matter and focus on the formal elements. I stress that the point of making art is to create a dialogue about the subject and that this dialogue promotes understanding of other points of view and, thus, tolerance. Because art helps us to see the world through the eyes of another, the dialogue surrounding it can “encourage respect for others and sensitivity to community.”

Project ideation is the most difficult thing for my students to do. I guide them by asking questions during individual conferences and teaching them how to brainstorm for ideas. Their independent thinking is critical to their creative development as an artist. The final project in each of my classes requires the student to design their own assignment by defining the technical and conceptual elements they will be tackling. This is appropriately the most difficult assignment, but is also the one that propels each student into his or her own personal artistic direction. The final project is where the student demonstrates their ability to think independently. Their successes here help me to judge whether I have fulfilled my responsibility, as defined by Lev Vygotsky, to provide “unfamiliar content and the setting for learners to step from their current level to a higher level of understanding.” It is my hope that this experience will resonate within the student as a sort of awakening that, as part of a “capacity and passion for life-long learning”, will inspire an enduring interest in the arts, even if it is simply as an art appreciator.

## Defining Characteristics | Tom LoFaro

Eight years ago, when I interviewed for this position, a student asked me “why do you want to work at Gustavus?” The response was easy and immediate: “why did you choose to attend Gustavus?” I then explained how I wanted to teach at a school with a sense of community, a place where faculty and students are involved in both academic and social issues. In the time since that first visit to this campus, I have come to believe that one of the defining characteristics of this campus is its sense of community.

The Gustavus Adolphus College Mission and Core Values Statement defines our sense of community. It asserts that we continually strive to be a community that seeks excellence and nurtures talents. It asks us to continually assess our teaching methods and develop innovative methodologies while retaining those techniques and ideas that work. It demands us to respect all members of the community and to engage the local and global community in ways that foster respect, leadership, and caring.

I hope that in the preceding sections I have made it abundantly clear that not only do I seek excellence in my teaching and research but that I instill in my students the same level of enthusiasm, excitement, and determination. In advanced mathematics courses I strive to provide my students with an in-depth understanding of the material that allows them to appreciate the beauty and depth of the material. In introductory courses my excitement about the material is also clearly evident. I strive to demonstrate not only the power of mathematics, but also the importance and utility of the problem-solving thought processes that can be developed and refined by solving complex mathematical problems. I chose to become the Director of the Rydell Professor Program primarily because I believe this program provides our community with the opportunity to engage in a meaningful and profound way with people whose work exemplifies excellence.

I have consistently refined my teaching methods and have introduced innovative courses and materials to the mathematics curriculum both here at Gustavus and throughout my discipline. The projects I’ve authored are

the most visible form of innovation as these have been published on the web, in textbooks, and on CDs. But there is other, less visible, evidence of innovation. The use of software such as *Maple* in most every class I teach and the planning of an active-learning classroom in the MCS department are two such examples.

I have consistently involved myself in activities that foster respect, leadership, and caring in our community. When serving on Judicial Boards, or hosting international students, or taking incoming freshman to the Boundary Waters, I have used these opportunities to serve as catalysts for growth for both the students and myself. My favorite memory of my first Freshman Wilderness Experience trip embodies the personal and communal growth I hope to foster. Our first several portages were a mess. It seemed it took longer to decide who was going to carry what than it did to carry everything over the portage. On the second day out, on arriving at yet another portage, several of the students suggested a division of the packs and canoes so that the two people in each canoe could be responsible solely for their canoe and the things it carried. We had heavy packs and light packs, backpacks and Duluth packs, heavy canoes and light canoes. Yet the assignment of packs to canoes was flawless. This was remarkable. But what made it even more satisfying is a picture I took on a long portage of a student with one pack strapped to her back, a second pack strapped in front, paddles in each hand, and a smile of triumph across her face! She double-packed so that her partner need only carry the canoe on what would be a long portage.

When I came to Gustavus I knew I needed to work in a community that cherished ideals such as these. After nine years on this campus I realize that this institution has instilled in me a greater understanding of what it means to be an active participant in a community and I hope that in the years to come this level of involvement will continue to grow.

## Engaging in a Process of Discovery | Margaret Bloch Qazi

I don't think I truly understood what the liberal arts perspective was until my junior year of college. While I took a variety of classes because I enjoyed learning, there was no intentional connection among them. When I started an independent research project in my Ecology class while studying Descartes in my Modern Philosophy class I had an intellectual epiphany: Descartes' reductionist philosophy clarified why the hypothetico-deductive method I used in my biology classes was so powerful. From that point on I was hooked. I encourage interdisciplinary approaches in my classes by inviting students to share other perspectives on topics that we discuss and I point out how animals we study can be appreciated from other perspectives. I share relevant poetry and passages from literature with my classes, describe animal roles in mythology, and images in art. I encourage my advisees to 'scaffold' their classes to approach themes such as the environment, particular diseases (i.e. malaria), and the way(s) that female animals influence reproductive decisions in a multidisciplinary way. I enjoyed writing an essay for the Hillstrom Museum of Art's exhibit on moths called "Night Visions: The Secret Design of Moths". I think the world is richer and much more interesting through an integrative perspective. I learn from my colleagues in other departments, share it with my students, and encourage it from my advisees.

Science is a powerful discipline. We have learned a great deal about the physical living world and this understanding gives us an ability to manipulate processes to direct their outcomes. This raises the critical question, "Just because we can do something (i.e. clone humans or genetically modify organisms) should we do it?" The importance of exploring values with class content is supported by the work of several scholars. I have heard Drs. A. and H. Astin report the results of longitudinal studies describing student perceptions of the role of spirituality (and related concepts such as compassion, justice, and faith) in their own education[1], and Dr. J. Norden talk about her efforts to integrate "humanity" into classes at Vanderbilt University's medical school.[2] Evidence suggests that students desire opportunities to talk

about values and meaning. Two specific examples of how I explore this in my classes are provided to illustrate my point. To explore ethical, economic and environmental impacts of transgenic farming students in Organismal Biology read “Desire: Control/Plant: The Potato” from Michael Pollan’s book *The Botany of Desire*. In class, students form community groups in which each individual is a different character. Characters represent different parts of the population and are described such that there was no clear-cut ‘good’ or ‘bad’ character.[3] Students shared their perspectives with each other and some communities devised novel solutions to address the economic, environmental and philosophical challenges posed by different farming practices. This required a type of creative, critical analysis of the problem and models what they will need to do as members of a college and other communities. In my upper level Developmental Biology class, we have a number of ethics discussions in which we explore topics such as when life begins (and the consequences of deciding when it begins), when is it appropriate to use stem cells, and the ethics of therapies to extend life spans. These are intended to encourage students to articulate different perspectives and the circumstances contributing to particular perspectives. In general, students seem to appreciate the chance to talk about these ideas. I have been extremely impressed with the thought, poise and respect students demonstrate when exploring these topics as well as their willingness to “play with” or “try out” different ideas and perspectives. I think these conversations are essential for preparing students to respectfully consider a variety of perspectives and to fulfill Gustavus Adolphus’ goal of preparing students for “fulfilling lives of leadership and service in society.”

I am committed to the college’s goal of encouraging and supporting a diverse community. This stems from my conviction that diversity is the fodder for creativity – different perspectives enrich our understanding of topics and challenge us to see the world in a more nuanced way. There are many categories by which one can define diversity. In addition to the idea of supporting the sharing and consideration of diverse perspectives on ethical issues related to biological topics described above, I am engaged in supporting religious and racial diversity on campus. I participate in several Diversity Center initiatives such as mentoring first-year students of color and events related to Asian and Muslim culture such as Amid Safi’s lectures, Ramadan, and Diwali. I continue to learn about the special issues facing students of color in order to improve my ability to support my students and advisees. Finally, I encourage my advisees to travel abroad. I think these experiences help students appreciate different cultures and perspectives. I also think it is very useful for students to learn how the United States ‘looks’ from the outside and how our country’s actions (or lack thereof) impact those of other nations. Students return to this learning community able to share new and diverse information/experiences.



In summary, a liberal arts education engages students in a process of discovery with the goal of preparing individuals to be citizens of the world able to seek truth with compassion. To support our institution's mission, I am constantly working to provide effective, engaging and challenging educational opportunities for my students and advisees, to continue my scholarship into mechanisms of female sperm storage, and to be an active member of the college community through service outside of the classroom.

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[1] Astin A and Astin H. February 24, 2007. "Assessing and Nurturing the Spiritual Life of College Students and Faculty". At: *Uncovering the Heart of Higher Education; integrative Learning for Compassionate Action in an Interconnected World*. Co-sponsored by the Fetzer Institute and the California Institute of Integrative Studies San Francisco, CA.

[2] Norden J. November 17, 2007. "Motivating students to develop on intellectual and personal levels". At: *Promoting Deep Learning: Cultivating Intellectual Curiosity, Creativity, and Engagement in College*. Sponsored by The Collaboration. Minneapolis, MN.

[3] For example, one character was described as: "You are a molecular biologist working for the Monsanto Corporation. Your job includes developing transgenic plants that are resistant to herbivorous insects, fungi and nematodes (round worms). To do this, you examine how these parasites develop and behave as well as various methods (such as *Bt* and plant-based defenses) to control them. After creating the transgenic plants, you record their rate of growths and yields. You grew up on a farm and understand how difficult the profession can be. After seeing farms fail, you decided to have a career that would allow you to help farmers. You see technology such as genetically modified crops as offering solutions that result in increased yields and productivity by decreasing losses to pests and disease."



## A Remarkable Community | Michele Koomen

I am a strong advocate for the liberal arts: although I did not attend an undergraduate liberal arts institution, three of my children did. After I completed my doctorate, I had the option to choose another institution for my professional work. I chose Gustavus as the place to continue my career in education with full knowledge of what a liberal arts setting is and aspires to.

I believe that I work hard toward *excellence* in all that I do both as a teacher, a scholar and a member of the community that is Gustavus. I am critical of myself, sometimes overly so, when I do not measure up to said excellence. I have high expectations for my students as learners, future teachers and as human beings in the world. I believe that my teaching and my scholarship speak loudly to my commitment to encouraging *respect for others*, and *sensitivity to diversity*. In addition, I embrace critical theory and pedagogy in my scholarship and teaching as a way to evaluate my own advancement toward democracy and greater humanization. I have been deeply influenced by the work of Paulo Freire and like him, imagine a world “that is less ugly, more beautiful, less discriminatory, more democratic, less dehumanizing, and more humane,” a vision that I believe is completely in sympathy (harmony) with the Gustavus Adolphus mission.

I have always supported international travel as a means of *broadening our understanding of international perspectives*. As I wrote earlier, I traveled with 32 students to Namibia and South Africa during Jterm 2009. I was fortunate to be part of the fourth GAC faculty development Service Learning and Social Justice travel seminar in June of 2006 and during touring week of 2007, the Latino Academy in El Paso/Juarez. The experience of learning about post-apartheid Southern Africa, plight of women, access to health care, challenges of equity in education (among others), and issue related to immigration and schooling at the borders, influenced my professional and personal life and has fostered greater commitment to working in developing countries for me with our GAC students.

During my sabbatical leave (2010-2011), I will be part of professional development for math and science teachers in Namibia and South Africa. I received an invitation by the principal at the Steenkamp School in Katutura, Namibia to work with their teachers. I am committed to providing opportunities for teachers that will promote better teaching and learning for their students, but will also be sustainable by them so that there is change in place that may last. It is neither ethical nor desirable, in my mind, to do a drop in sequence of workshops and be done and leave. Their needs are simply too great.

I will conclude this section with a few remarks regarding faith and the Lutheran tradition. I am in harmony with all of the ideals of the Gustavus Adolphus mission including the core values that are considered to be Christian and faith based. I also value the Lutheran perspective that is articulated by Darrell Jodock in the *Statement of Church Relatedness* that suggests that the Lutheran tradition supports a commitment to excellence, genuine service involving a courageous commitment to justice, love, wholeness and human dignity, a sense of wonder and a foundation for inclusiveness. However, even though I recognize and try to emulate what I consider to be the Lutheran values, and the mission of this college, I am not aligned with any religious entity. My beliefs, so to speak, rest on my core values that are beyond faith, including, but not limited to fairness, honesty, humility, service, excellence, commitment, inclusion, and democracy.

Finally, I must acknowledge the *shoulders of giants* that I stand on in all the work that I do and have done at Gustavus. Gustavus is a remarkable community and I am honored to call it my professional home. I am very grateful for the many conversations I have had with other faculty about teaching and learning. My scholarship continues to focus thanks to the suggestion and careful edits of many other scholars on campus. I am so very fortunate that so many other members of the community took the lead before me in service so that I may benefit from their insight and wisdom as I stepped forward.

## Seeing Moral Dimensions of the Familiar | Peg O'Connor

The thread that runs through all my work is attention to the normative dimensions of our lives. All of the classes I teach are concerned with normative matters, such as the nature of oppression and discrimination and the responsibilities of members of the community to promote social justice. My commitment to the core values of the College prompted me to ask whether our College Curricula provide the best ways to realize these values. Creating community is one of the things I must do within a classroom, in the college, and in St. Peter.

One of the most important ways I serve the College and embody the mission is through the organization of teach-ins. If I had to identify one contribution that I have consistently made to the Gustavus and broader St Peter community, it would be the various teach-ins I organized about Kosovo, 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and hate speech after the appearance of a swastika outside of Uhler Hall. Teach-ins are one way to harness the incredible knowledge base our faculty, staff, and administrators possess, and by doing so show our students the multifarious dimensions of these events. We also create an intentional community of learners and teachers. With the hurricane Katrina teach-in, the geologist's question about increasing water temperatures together with a geographer's analysis of disappearing wetlands intersects with another geographer describing the layout of New Orleans, which leads to a political scientist looking at the concentration of wealth in parts of those areas hardest hit by Katrina while a theologian asks how God could do/allow this. These are just the sort of questions that we hope that our liberally educated students will be asking. They are sorts of questions that persons of moral character ask. It is my job as a teacher to help frame the questions and seek the answers. The teach-in about the swastika provided important history lessons as well as lessons about how such acts of violence or hate speech tear the fabric of a community. They are questions that point towards the responsibilities that community members have for the well-being of the community.

Questions about individuals' responsibilities for the well-being of others—some of whom may be at a great remove from us—are the ones that structured the January term service learning course “Just Food” that Lisa Heldke and I taught in Boston. Working at various agencies that provided emergency food and/or shelter, students wrestled with issues of poverty, disenfranchisement, and the radical insecurity that a vast number of US citizens face each day. As a class, we grappled with questions about the extent to which one's socioeconomic status may be somewhat a matter of personal choices or bad decisions, but perhaps far more so a matter of structural and systemic inequality and oppression. And where there is oppression, there is always its complementary companion privilege. What responsibilities do those of us who are privileged have for those who are not, since our privilege may be predicated on their oppression? But here, one must be careful not to let guilt or a sense of fatalism triumph and keep us from doing anything. Wrestling with questions and challenges such as these prepare students for lives of leadership and service.

Another way I seek to build community is by serving on the board of the St Peter Food Coop. I have been attempting to formalize connections and collaborations with the College. Recently I have been advocating for the coop to work with Noreen Buhmann in community service/service learning office. As a cooperative business that is for profit, the coop provides interesting opportunities for service learning projects in many of our marketing, financing, and accounting courses as well as some in communication studies. The coop's values complement many of the College's values and afford students the opportunity to become familiar with many of the moral and political dimensions of our food production, distribution, and consumption. I see my role as an educator to help students see these dimensions in the most familiar aspects of life. To me, this is one of the best things about a liberal arts education.

## Words Have Power | Carolyn O'Grady

*Continuing evidence of sympathy with the aims and purposes of Gustavus Adolphus College  
as stated in the Mission Statement of the College.*

Before writing this section I decided I needed to look up the meaning of “sympathy” in order to be as accurate as possible in commenting on my relationship with the mission. I discovered that “sympathy” can mean “ability to enter into, understand, or share somebody else’s feelings,” but it can also mean “the inclination to think or feel the same as somebody else” and “agreement or harmony with something or somebody else.” I must say, then, that I both am and am not in sympathy with the mission of Gustavus. First I will describe the ways I enthusiastically support our mission; I will then discuss my reservations.

I am in complete harmony with the college’s aspiration to provide a high quality education that emphasizes the values of service and justice. I have spent several years working with service learning pedagogy, and most of my teaching and scholarship revolves around social justice issues.

Likewise, I am an advocate for helping students draw connections between their moral values, their intellectual work, and their plans for the future. In *The Spirit of Service*, Brian and I write about how these connections can be enhanced. Ideally a liberal arts education should nourish students’ capacity to think interdisciplinarily and to relish opportunities to learn throughout their life. I try to provide a role model to students as a life long learner. A few years ago I decided to gain some expertise in hip hop culture and music. I started reading *Vibe* and *The Source* (two popular culture magazines for the hip hop cognoscenti), listened to a lot of rap, and read widely in the academic literature on hip hop (yes, there is quite a bit of it). My students do laugh at me when they hear me listening to Nas or Shyne or Mos Def; they think it’s peculiar that a 50+ gray hair could possibly *like* this stuff. But when I can make a connection with urban high school kids over rap music, my pre-service teachers realize it

might be useful to know something about the culture and norms of urban youth.

I do try to strive for excellence in all my work and expect students to do the same, while having compassion for them and myself when we inevitably fall short of our ideal. I recognize that sometimes the best I can do is to be “good enough,” and I remind myself of this at about the point every semester when I have to face that all I’d hoped to accomplish in each class may not be accomplished. Still, I start each semester having ambitious goals and a challenging set of readings and activities for students.

When it comes to developing an international perspective, I am far more able now to articulate my commitment than I was when I came up for tenure. I myself have traveled extensively, and have always been an advocate for our International Education office. I was finally able to teach a Gustavus travel course in 2004, and this was a very rewarding experience despite the fact that we had some unusual circumstances arise on this trip to Northern Ireland. One of our students lost his passport the first weekend, another had an emergency appendectomy, and we had a disabled student who needed more assistance than we had been led to believe. The education we all received during this January was well worth the trouble, but it confirmed my belief that the best travel courses involve faculty collaboration. I have had conversations with Pat Quade about the advantages of our linked course model, which provides interdisciplinary perspectives as well as teaching flexibility.

My commitment to interdisciplinary education should be clear in this description of the January travel course, my past involvement with Women’s Studies as co-director, my scholarly collaboration with individuals outside my discipline, and my teaching in First Term Seminar and Curriculum II. Further, I helped the Curriculum Committee develop language (supported by the faculty at its April 2006 meeting) that ensures the well-being of interdepartmental programs as we move to a six course load and as departments make program changes or hire faculty.

It appears that I am in sympathy with the College’s mission. I do, however, have issues with some of the language in the institutional values, which I would like to explain here. I am dismayed by two particularly Christian phrases, that leadership through service is a “biblical notion,” and that our world is “divinely ordered.” I expressed my concerns about this language when the mission statement was being revised, yet there it is. As a writer, as a teacher, as a lover of language, I firmly believe that words have power. I am convinced that this language misrepresents the nature of the Gustavus community (though I do believe it mollifies the religious conservatives who are also part of our community).

Let me explain more fully. I wholeheartedly embrace the Lutheran heritage of Gustavus and recognize the ways our values of service, leadership, and justice emerge from this foundation. I attend chapel more or less regularly (de-



pending on the semester), and I have spoken in chapel several times. I strongly support the expectation that students will develop a mature understanding of the Christian faith, and I recognize that three-quarters of our students self report as either Lutheran or Catholic. My own research is much involved with religious/spiritual understandings, and I have maintained a spiritual practice for more than 20 years. But I am not a Christian, and to the extent that any of the language in our most public guiding documents presupposes specific theistic belief systems, I am not in sympathy. How can a college which relishes its intellectual and academic rigor – and professes this as its first institutional goal – allow this specific language in its core values to sound so doctrinaire?

In short, I believe that I am in sympathy with the most essential aspects of the mission and, indeed, that my work here (teaching, leadership and scholarship) contributes to our mission. But I would be dishonest if I didn't admit that I have to constantly reassess and renegotiate what the mission means to me. In doing this, I keep in mind the gratitude I feel at being able to work in a place that allows me opportunities to grow as a teacher, enables me to hone my leadership skills, and gives me wonderful colleagues with whom to engage in dialogue and debate.



## Helping Students to Explore, Discover, and Create | Michelle Twait

When I was offered the opportunity to return to my alma mater, I was thrilled. While pursuing my graduate education, I knew I wanted to teach at a liberal arts college. Many of the same reasons that made Gustavus appealing to me as a student – small class sizes, strong commitment to teaching excellence, emphasis on service and lifelong learning, and the Scandinavian and Lutheran heritage – drew me back as a faculty member.

Personally and professionally, several parts of the Mission statement resonate with me. Gustavus expects its graduates to have “a capacity and passion for lifelong learning.” I am grateful for the opportunity to share my passion for lifelong learning while helping students develop the skills that will equip them to pursue their interests. Librarians teach students to be information literate; they teach students to define their information needs, find the appropriate information to address those needs, make qualitative judgments about the information, and finally, how to use the information appropriately and ethically. Whether they are deciding which candidate deserves their vote or finding a cure for AIDS, I hope that students apply these skills in all areas and aspects of their lives.

I believe a liberally educated person should learn to evaluate information critically and also be aware of the social and cultural aspects of information. Gustavus’ Lutheran tradition “insists upon freedom of inquiry and criticism in the pursuit of knowledge and truth.” Helping students gain these skills is vital for a healthy democracy. At the reference desk and in the classroom, I hope to help students understand the role that information plays in our society.

Building a strong collection is an important responsibility, as it provides the College with the means to fulfill its mission to promote “the independent pursuit of learning.” As I select resources and materials for our students, I am keenly aware of how these tools enable them to explore, discover, and create.

The teaching and learning at Gustavus occurs “within a general framework that is both interdisciplinary and international in perspective.” My work reflects this. While I am a generalist, global and interdisciplinary perspectives are woven into my research, teaching, and service.

I am honored to be part of a community that aims to prepare students for “fulfilling lives of leadership and service.” Effective leaders need to be savvy consumers of information. I have incorporated service learning into my courses, so that students might better understand the communities to which they belong. I sincerely hope that students’ lives are fulfilling and my commitment to vocational reflection and mentoring is a testament to that.

The core values of Gustavus: *excellence, community, justice, service, and faith* are values that I hold as an individual and that led me to where I am today. I have pushed myself throughout life to excel and expect the same from students. Part of my identity is being a valued member of several communities, including the Gustavus community. I practice servant leadership in my daily life and work. I am guided by high moral principles and my concerns related to information inequality issues reflect a concern for justice. I am a person of deep faith who values the gifts and challenges Gustavus’ religious heritage presents. It will continue to be my goal to act as a role model for students by exemplifying the mission of Gustavus.

The past several years at Gustavus have been the most challenging, but certainly the most rewarding, of my professional career. At Gustavus, I feel I have found a place where I can teach and learn to the best of my ability.

## A Commitment to Our Common Life | Alisa Rosenthal

A year and a half ago, I sat in Linner Lounge listening to the reflections of the students who had just returned from Hurricane Katrina relief work in Mississippi. They spoke about their sense of community with one another, with the people of Ocean Springs, with the dispossessed and disenfranchised everywhere. They spoke about their responsibility to understand the sources of that dispossession and their obligation to work to ameliorate it. They spoke about their responsibility to serve others and of their obligation to live morally responsible lives.

At times, I have wondered whether being a non-Lutheran might impede my full engagement with the aims and purposes of the College. As I sat listening to these students talk about how that experience epitomized, for them, what it meant to be a Gustie, I was reassured that no such obstacle existed. My active involvement in the life of the College, in the classroom, in public *fora*, and in personal interactions with students, fellow faculty, and staff evidences my commitment to the common life of the College as a place that aspires to “respect and affirm the dignity of all persons,” to nurture lives of service, and to “work toward a just and peaceful world.”



## To Become Curious, Thoughtful, and Caring | Matt Panciera

In my opinion the strength of the educational experience that we offer at Gustavus emanates from our identity as a liberal arts college. This is the part of the mission statement that I feel most deeply. It emphasizes the education of the whole person – not just that we seek to make our students expert in their major and conversant across disciplines, but that they will become curious, thoughtful, caring people who continually strive for a serious understanding of who they are, what the world is and ought to be, and how they will make a conscious connection between themselves and that world.

Will Friert often says that someone just “gets it” – in other words they truly understand the purpose of the liberal arts and they put that understanding into practice every day. A particular aspect of the liberal arts – the overlap between teaching and research – permeates my thinking now. Knowledge and the search for understanding cannot be broken into separate and distinct activities called “research” and “teaching,” nor are they conducted by two completely different species known as “student” and “professor.” My research begins with an attempt to understand something and ends with the teaching of what I have found to my colleagues and students, and my teaching should inspire the students to go out and do research, discovering answers (and more questions) that are not yet imagined.

My belief in this idea has resulted in assigning myself the research paper in many of my upper level classes – participating in my own courses as both student and professor. Thus, I developed my idea on Plautus’ use of the formula *amabo* (I will love = “please”) in the class I taught on Roman drama. I did each stage of the paper and presented it in class just as I was asking them to do. I followed a similar procedure working back through the basic research for my presentation on the graffiti from the Pompeian brothel when I taught the Classics capstone seminar on the topic of love, sex, and marriage in the ancient world.

Last spring, my colleague, Eric Dugdale, asked me to submit a proposal for a book on Pompeii to a series which he is editing. The series is entitled

Texts and Contexts and is designed to introduce a topic or author, through a discussion of the primary sources, to a college age audience. At first I was worried that the sort of thing that Eric wanted, a general guide to the various primary sources from Pompeii, had already been done and that I would only do it worse. Then I began to think about my frustrations with all the books that I have used (or could use) for my course on Roman art and archaeology: they are too crammed with information for the sake of information, they do not delve into bigger questions, they leave little room for students to reach their own conclusions. So I began to imagine the sort of book that would do the sorts of things I hope to accomplish in class. I proposed to Eric that the book would focus on domestic space in the Roman world, would explore how the arrangement of domestic space expresses and shapes the values of their society, and would be organized in such a fashion that the earlier chapters would prepare the students to do their own “reading” of Roman domestic space with evidence that they had not already studied and discussed. He thought this sounded like a good idea.

I think I’ll take a few days off and start this project next week.



## Engaging in Constructive Dialogue | Kate Knutson

My life and work at Gustavus reflect the values inherent in our Mission Statement. As my teaching record demonstrates, I am committed to advancing a liberal arts approach to education. I value the interdisciplinary nature of my field of study and work to incorporate an interdisciplinary and international approach to what I teach. This shines through in my courses in the ways I draw upon research and readings from fields such as sociology, communication studies, religion, gender studies, history, economics, and psychology and in the ways I help students explore international topics in courses such as Analyzing Politics, Interest Groups, The Presidency, and U.S. Congress. My courses seek to model and teach intellectual diversity and critical thinking as students engage in controversial and value-laden questions facing this nation. My commitment to helping students develop the skills necessary to engage in constructive dialogue has only strengthened during my years here. Dr. Will Friert wrote in his introduction to *Seven Liberal Arts and Counting: A Faculty Symposium*, “When all is said and done, our mission here is to wake students up to the joys of wonder, the rigors of thinking, and the responsibilities of integrity.” This statement certainly reflects my personal mission at Gustavus both in and out of the classroom.

A second distinctive feature of Gustavus is that it is a residential college. As my five-plus year service in Residential Life indicates, I value this dimension of the College. So much of the learning students experience on this campus happens in the residence halls. From learning how to negotiate uncomfortable situations to facing diversity in close quarters, I have had the unique opportunity to help students grow and develop in their personal lives as well as in their academic lives.

Finally, Gustavus is an institution committed to nurturing a “mature understanding of the Christian faith.” Though I do not teach in the Religion Department or serve in the Chaplains Office, I perceive myself to play a role in this aspect of the mission as well. My research, which focuses predominantly on the role of the religious left, helps advances a more nuanced role of religion

in the public sphere. Out of the classroom, my service to Proclaim allows me to be accessible to students who are struggling with matters of faith and to help model appropriate expressions of faith on campus. I have also had the opportunity to give three chapel homilies, which provided me with another venue for influencing students in this area.

As the Mission Statement articulates, “the purpose of a Gustavus education is to help its students attain their full potential as persons, to develop in them a capacity and passion for lifelong learning, and to prepare them for fulfilling lives of leadership and service in society.” This statement accurately characterizes my approach to my work over the past five years, work that is even more fulfilling given my own sense of calling to the task.

## An Appreciation and Understanding of Nature | Colleen Jacks

The mission statement of the College describes the excellence of education provided by Gustavus and that the faculty are expected to “embody the highest standards of teaching and scholarship.” In the spirit of the mission statement, I try to instill in my students an appreciation and understanding of nature. This understanding is critical as humanity attempts to solve its social, political, and economic problems such as world hunger and pollution. The applications of our accumulating knowledge in the field of genetics have spawned new and important ethical questions, none with easy answers. To “foster the development of values” in a scientific context, I use these questions and others related to issues in biology to encourage my students to consider moral and ethical dimensions of scientific results. Hopefully they come to a deeper understanding of these complex issues and what constitutes moral behavior in our society.

I greatly appreciate the sense of community that makes Gustavus distinctive among other colleges in our cohort, and feel that this fosters a positive environment for students and faculty alike. I support the goal of diversity found in our mission statement – the institutional grant projects in which I’ve participated such as HHMI and S-STEM have had a goal of increasing and nurturing diversity at our institution. I also take great pleasure in the co-curricular aspects of the Gustavus experience, attending my students’ sporting events and artistic performances, both for their entertainment and aesthetic values as well as for what I learn about my students’ abilities and interests outside of the classroom.



## Resolving Mystery, Revealing Mystery | Pam Kittelson

*“Creation is never over. It had a beginning, but it has no ending.  
Creation is always busy making new scenes, new things, new Worlds.”*

*I. Kant*

Gustavus Adolphus College offers the kind of environment that sustains my professional and personal interests significantly. I affirm both the Gustavus mission and its manifestations. I am a product of a liberal arts environment whose mission it was to educate the whole student for a life where they must confront change and complexity with thought and action. As such, I strive to provide an excellent liberal arts education for our students that is rigorous and innovative, focusing on intellectual and personal skills as well as building knowledge. My objectives are to help students weigh evidence, read and think critically, reflect thoughtfully and express ideas with precision and grace. I help them become persons who have learned how to learn, who love connections among ideas, and who revel in the intellectual journey as much as the destination. I help students learn about the strengths and limits of science. They come to better understand science as one way of knowing and understanding the world, but not the only way, and not one that can answer all of the questions that humans ask.

The passion for live long learning can be nurtured in our students via classroom, lab, co- or extra-curricular endeavors as well as in wilderness and abroad. Through research experiences in my classes or research lab, my students develop a habit of independent thought and gain confidence in their ability to make scholarly contributions. They get inspired by looking for patterns in the natural world, by documenting forces of change, and by answering their questions all the while recognizing that new questions endlessly arise whenever one looks. They begin to love the challenge and rewards of the quest, the satisfaction in elegantly addressing a hypothesis, publishing a paper, or simply learning about past and present ecological interactions. They contemplate the unknown. Giving them opportunities to respect and express awe for the mysteries of life is as important as communicating what

we know. Learning resolves mystery and reveals mystery; learning is about opportunities to explore “new scenes, new things, new Worlds” and this is one reason I love the academic life.

I also believe a liberal arts college helps students articulate a personal vision that is hopeful and inspiring, and can ultimately help to create a more humane world. I help students gain a sense of vocation. I help students explore their deep idealism and desire to work toward a socially and environmentally just world. I advise them, challenge them, encourage travel across the globe or in the wilderness so they can observe and better understand ‘otherness.’ I try to help them recognize how the world’s issues intersect with their life choices, to recognize their own power and privilege and to work toward helping others, including non-humans, thrive. I encourage and facilitate the development of leadership skills through structured and meaningful experiences in their local communities, in wild lands and as a global citizen.

I intend to keep responding to time and changing circumstance, to create good work in collaboration with students, research colleagues and various communities. I will always enjoy sharing the beauty of this world in the context of an interdisciplinary liberal arts college dedicated toward facilitating excellent experiences and action.







# About the Authors

Though all faculty who go through the tenure and promotion process write eloquently about their work and how it supports the mission of the college, the following faculty volunteered to have their statements made public.

**Jennifer Ackil** is a professor of psychological sciences and chair of the department. Her research deals with human memory processes. Recent publications concern different influences on the formation of false memories and the relationship between stress and children's memory.

**Margaret Bloch-Qazi** is an educator who teaches courses in organismal, invertebrate and developmental biology. Her research, which involves undergraduate students, examines aspects of insect female reproductive physiology. She is in her third year as the director of the college's faculty development center, the Kendall Center for Engaged Learning.

**Priscilla Briggs** is an artist who teaches Digital and Darkroom Photography, Video Art and Interactive Media. Her work has been exhibited at various venues including the Manchester Craftsman's Guild in Pittsburgh, Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, the Minnesota Center for Photography in Minneapolis; her videos have been screened at Charles Theater in Baltimore, MD, the Women's Caucus for the Arts International Film Festival in Boston, MA, and the School of Visual Arts in New York, NY.

**Barbara Fister** (the editor of this collection) is a librarian who teaches library research methods. She writes regularly for *Inside Higher Ed* and *Library Journal*. Her research interests include popular literacy and the future of publishing.

**Colleen Jacks** is a professor of biology who teaches genetics and cell and molecular biology. Her research focuses on gene expression and how gene expression is regulated using the plant model organism *Arabidopsis*.

**Pamela Kittelson** is a professor of biology and environmental studies with a particular interest in processes that generate and maintain diversity within and among plant populations. She has served for many years as department co-chair and led the Semester in India. Her recent publications are on grasslands, oak savannas, and on the pedagogy of peer mentoring in the sciences.

**Kate Knutson** is an Associate Professor in the Political Science Department, teaching courses on American politics and public policy. She recently completed a book manuscript, *The Unlikely Ties That Bind: How Jews, Christians,*

and Muslims Work Together to Influence Policy, which focuses on the work of an interfaith advocacy group active in Minnesota politics.

**Michele Hollingsworth Koomen** is an associate professor of education. Her teaching and scholarship focus on pre-service science and mathematics teacher preparation, exemplary teachers, and learning by under-represented youth in science and math classrooms, including youth with exceptionalities and second language learners in regular education classrooms. She co-authored a paper with Jamie Mitchell '10, "Descriptive Inquiry in the Throes of Learning to Teach: Can Prospective Teachers Learn to Teach and Study their Teaching Closely?" that won the Association of Science Teacher Education 2012: Award IV: Innovation in Teaching Science Teachers paper.

**Pachal Kyoore** had his university education in four countries, three continents, and five different institutions, and has published on francophone writers as well as African folklore. He is a Professor of French, and Latin American, Latino, and Caribbean Studies, and is the Director of the African Studies Program.

**Tom LoFaro** is a professor and chair of the Mathematics and Computer Science Department. He has been involved in developing differential equations modeling projects for over 10 years. Tom's nonacademic interests include fly fishing and coaching little league soccer.

**Peg O'Connor** teaches applied ethics, racism and sexism, formal logic, and a seminar on feminism and popular culture. Her current scholarship focuses on interrogating the mind/body dualism from the perspectives of abuse and trauma survivors and philosophical approaches to issues of addiction and recovery. Some of her essays on this topic have been published in *The New York Times*.

**Carolyn O'Grady** is a professor of education and currently serves as the director of the Center for International and Cultural Education. She is one of the editors of *The Spirit of Service: Exploring Faith, Service, and Social Justice in Higher Education* (Anker, 2006).

**Matt Panciera** received his PhD from the University of North Carolina and has taught at UNC-Greensboro, the College of Charleston, Hamilton College, the Intercollegiate Center for Classics Studies in both Rome and Catania, and is now an associate professor of Classics at Gustavus Adolphus College. He enjoys teaching a little of everything at Gustavus, but his highest highs come in Introductory Latin.

**Alisa Rosenthal** teaches constitutional law, a course on sex, power, and politics, as well as other courses in the political science program. Her research is in the areas of political theory, reconciliation studies, constitutional law, and feminist theory.

**Michelle Twait** is an Associate Professor in the Library at Gustavus Adolphus College. Since her tenure review, she has taken on a more active role in grant-writing for the library. She also recently co-authored a chapter

in *Librarians as Mentors in Librarianship for Adults and Students* (McFarland, 2011).

**Esther Wang** is a pianist who has appeared on numerous concert series, including the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concerts in Chicago and the A. Mozart Fest Series in Austin, TX. She performs and lectures on J.S. Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier as a member of The Bach Four and has recorded solo and chamber works by Jan Radzynski on the Centaur label.





