



GRANTS SHARING DAY

THURSDAY, APRIL 11

8 a.m.–3:30 p.m. | Ely Hall

CURCA Space, 2nd floor in Library

12 P.M. | LUNCH BREAK AND ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

- 12:45 p.m. **Dr. Mark Abate** – International Travel Grant Program
Dr. Melissa Roti – Innovative Pedagogical Initiative Program
- 1 p.m. **Dr. Robert Chatt** – Innovative Pedagogical Initiative Program
Dr. Christopher Gullen – International Travel Grant Program (Room B)
- 1:15 p.m. **Dr. Carsten Braun** – University Research Grant Program
Dr. Shirley Wong – Innovative Pedagogical Initiative Program (Room B)
- 1:30 p.m. **Dr. Carol Bailey** – International Travel Grant Program
Dr. Jason Ramey – Student Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (Room B)
- 1:45 p.m. **Dr. Eroid Bailey** – International Travel Grant Program
Dr. Michael Files - Student Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (Room B)
- 2 p.m. **Dr. Liam Harte** – International Travel Grant Program
Dr. Tarin Weiss – SMARTS (Room B)
- 2:15 p.m. **Dr. Hugh Jo** – International Travel Grant Program
- 2:30 p.m. **Dr. Heidi Bohler and Dr. Holly Noun** – Innovative Pedagogical Initiative Program and University Research Grant Program
- 2:45 p.m. **Eric Parness, MFA** – International Travel Grant and Innovative Pedagogical Initiative Program
- 3:15 p.m. **Dr. Edward Orgill** – International Travel Grant Program

GRANT SHARING DAY SCHEDULE

- 8:30 a.m. **Dr. Diane Prusank** – Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 8:45 a.m. **Dr. Kimberly Berman** – University Research Grant Program
- 9 a.m. **Dr. Felicia Barber** – University Research Grant Program
- 9:15 a.m. **Dr. Terri Griffin** – Innovative Pedagogical Initiative Program
- 9:30 a.m. **Dr. Joan Kuhnly** – Innovative Pedagogical Initiative Program
- 9:45 a.m. **Dr. Brian W. Conz** – Innovative Pedagogical Initiative Program
- 10 a.m. **Dr. Tamara Smith** – SMARTS
- 10:15 a.m. **Dr. Rachel Gibson** – SMARTS
- 10:30 a.m. **Dr. Elizabeth Starr** – SMARTS
- 10:45 a.m. **Dr. Paige Hermansen** – SMARTS
Dr. Ricki Kantrowitz – International Travel Grant Program (Room B)
- 11 a.m. **Dr. Rebecca Morris**
Dr. Max Saito – International Travel Grant Program (Room B)
- 11:15 a.m. **Dr. Kimberly Sherman** – International Travel Grant Program
Dr. Jessica Holden – Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Grant (Room B)
- 11:30 a.m. **Dr. Robin White** – University Research Grant Program
- 11:45 a.m. **Dr. Philip DeOrsey** – Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
Dr. Alex Daniel – STARS and Faculty Facilitation Award (Room B)

OUR SPEAKERS

DR. DIANE PRUSANK

PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Welcome and Opening Remarks

DR. KIMBERLY BERMAN

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, BIOLOGY

Effect of quercetin on pro-inflammatory cytokine release from human-derived macrophages

In an Independent Study (BIOL 399) and in Research Experience (BIOL 377), students spend the semester performing inquiry-based experiments in the microbiology lab. The focus of these courses is to study the interaction between host cells and microbes (and their related molecules). This semester, students were taught an integral assay to studying human immune responses, the ELISA. The ELISA is one of the most widely used assays to test for inflammatory cytokines secreted by immune cells. The funding provided by the URGP grant not only supported the purchase of all the reagents to perform the ELISA assay but the specialized multichannel pipets as well.

DR. FELICIA BARBER

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, MUSIC

Fostering Diversity in Our Choral Ensembles

Presented at National American Choral Directors Association Conference, Kansas City, MO

This session will focus on ways that teachers may encourage diversity within their ensembles specifically with recruiting, engagement in cross curricular activities, as well as diverse repertoire. The session hopes to give teachers practical strategies for the classroom as well as a sample reading packet of repertoire that will strive to highlight underrepresented cultures, styles, and composers.

DR. TERRI M. GRIFFIN

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, EDUCATION

Teaching for Social Justice: Critical Literacy Practices in the Elementary ELA Classroom

Teaching for social justice through critical literacy practices is a compelling pedagogical approach to teaching the English Language Arts to young children. This approach addresses the content demands of the elementary level ELA classroom, the social-emotional needs of young students from diverse

backgrounds, as well as civic learning expectations, in a culturally sustaining and developmentally appropriate manner. Current educational research consistently underscores the need for issues of race, gender, culture, and power to be brought to the forefront of classrooms so all students can engage with the curriculum equitably. With funding from an IPI grant, I purchased a collection of multigenre, diverse children's books that focused on 5 social justice themes: Peace, Environmental Justice, Class, Race, and 'Making Change'. I then used these text collections to support my undergraduate teacher candidates in their efforts to both master the rigor of state expectations around ELA teaching and address broader issues of equity, community, and empowerment in the teaching-learning environment. For this project, I organized students into 5 working groups that were responsible for engaging in an inquiry project anchored in the theme of their text set. Students analyzed texts from a critical perspective as a group and then engaged in research that resulted in the production of a piece of persuasive writing directed to varied audiences. Students received feedback from their peers and from the instructor. This project supported my students' ability to demonstrate our department's teacher dispositions related to diversity, social justice, community, scholarship, and reflection and offered my students pedagogical tools for engaging their young students in meaningful literacy experiences that teach both the 'word' and the 'world'.

DR. JOAN ESPER KUHNLY **ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, NURSING**

Using a pregnancy simulator to attain empathy in nursing students

Background: Empathy is central to the nursing role, although it is sometimes considered elusive and difficult to measure. Nursing education has to include massive amounts of content on physiology, pharmacology and technical skills due to the scientific advances in health care. In an effort to promote the acquisition of empathy as a primary component of the nursing student's practice, evidence supports including empathy in nursing and healthcare education (Dal Santo, et al., 2014 and Scudder, 2012, Chen, et al, 2012). Some evidence is building on how to teach empathy effectively (Maruca, et al., 2015).

Methods: The purpose of this project is to implement a teaching project to teach empathy to nursing students during their senior year (NURS 0320 and/or NURS 0397) by funding the purchase of a pregnancy simulator. After implementation of the teaching project, qualitative analysis of the reflective journals will be conducted to evaluate the acquisition of empathy.

Results: The empathy belly is being used continuously during the semester and students are actively engaged in reflective journaling. Analysis will be conducted after the semester ends and IRB approval is granted.

DR. BRIAN W. CONZ
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, GEOGRAPHY, PLANNING
AND SUSTAINABILITY

**Permaculture Demonstration Sites in Central America:
Contributions to Agroecological Transition and Implications for Educators**

Central America has been an important region for the agro-ecological revolution, building on a history of intensive smallholder farming practices, farmer-to-farmer knowledge sharing and agrarian social movements. Permaculture is an approach to ecological site design and agro-ecological transition, which has grown in popularity in Central America in recent years. Permaculture's entrance into the larger movement for agroecology in Central America raises some important questions. How does permaculture intersect with these existing forces? How can permaculturalists address perceptions that it is yet another colonialist development intervention by well-meaning Northerners? What are the implications for educators who visit permaculture demonstration sites with students?

In order to explore these questions and to contribute to discussions regarding permaculture's contribution to agro-ecological transition in Central America I visited two permaculture demonstration sites and participated in site tours. I discussed site features with farmers and gathered information from farm websites. I concluded that permaculture sites make valuable contributions to agro-ecological transition in Central America. I also identified important risks that sustainability educators using permaculture demonstrations sites should be aware of and I offer suggestions for addressing these risks.

**Bringing Participatory Climate Change Research in the High Mountain
Forests of Guatemala Into the Physical Geography Classroom**

For the past 10 years several paleoclimatologists and geographers from U.S. and Guatemalan universities have been scouring the mountains of Guatemala in search of the oldest trees to take core samples from in order to establish a climate record for the country. In November of 2018, I was invited to travel with this team of researchers to provide support for their efforts to connect with local communities and make data collection a more participatory endeavor. The hope is that this will make the data more useful to local people as they attempt to transform research into policy and to confront the risks and vulnerabilities of an uncertain climate future.

Climate science is a central theme in physical geography and a topic I spend considerable time on in my course GPS 102 Physical Geography. In order to illustrate the importance and significance of field work and data collection, participatory processes and citizen science I attempted to bring my fieldwork experience directly into the classroom by setting up a live video feed from the Guatemalan Highlands to address my class. Follow-up discussions included the importance of building trusting relationships with indigenous communities and the mechanics of climate data through dendrochronology.

DR. TAMARA SMITH

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, SOCIOLOGY AND FACULTY COORDINATOR OF CIVIC LEARNING AND DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT

Annual Eastern Sociological Society Meeting

Attended with undergraduate students

The sociology department is small but vibrant. Our students are required to complete both a capstone course and an internship in their senior year. Attending this conference provides our students a chance to showcase their own work during the undergraduate research poster session, and it allows them to become professionalized into the larger world of sociology. During the conference, students attended different panels and discussions, professionally mingled with other students and faculty, and learned more about different areas of sociology. This conference also provided students the change to examine new sociology texts and area books, allowing our students to be a voice in building the sociology library at Westfield State.

DR. RACHEL GIBSON

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, MUSIC AND COORDINATOR OF MUSIC EDUCATION

Fostering Diversity in Our Choral Ensembles

Keep it Moving: Traditional World Dances and Singing Games and Activities for the Elementary Music Classroom

Grant funding supported attendance at the Massachusetts Music Educators Association's Annual Conference in Boston during which I attended workshops, chaperoned WSU music education students in attendance, staffed the university advertisement booth, and presented two workshops for teachers:

Keep it Moving: Traditional World Dances

Come engage in folk dances from a variety of world cultures that are suitable for the elementary music classroom and beyond. Enhance your music curriculum with activities that allow for social interaction, responsive movement, exposure to world music, and participation in a joyous living tradition.

Singing Games and Activities for the Elementary Music Classroom

Come engage in singing games suitable for the elementary music classroom. Music activities that emerge from the songs will be presented and include several areas of a music curriculum such as rhythmic and melodic literacy, harmonic development, and improvisation. Learn new singing games and strategies to foster music literacy, engage students in musical play, and promote joy in the classroom!

DR. ELIZABETH STARR
PROFESSOR, ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society Convention

Dr. Elizabeth Starr and Professor Glen Brewster accompanied eight students to the Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, from March 21-March 24, 2018.

Of these eight students, Jaime Boucher, Elizabeth LaBruna, Christine Luongo, Kathleen Morris, Elizabeth Potter, and Morgan Stabile, Ashley Linnehan, and Lilly Whalen, six were awarded GSMARTS funding to help with their travel to the convention. They presented their creative work and research at the conference as well as moderating panels and attending other student presentations, author talks, and leadership workshops. Elizabeth Potter was honored at the convention with a first-place award for her presentation in the creative non-fiction category. Ashley Linnehan was elected as Associate Student Representative for the Eastern Region.

DR. PAIGE HERMANSEN
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, ENGLISH

DR. SOPHIA SARIGIANIDES
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, ENGLISH

National Council of Teachers of English Conference, Houston, TX

The G-SMARTS grant enabled me, alongside Prof. Sophia Sarigianides, to accompany Liz LaBruna and Jaime Boucher, two outstanding students in the English education program, to attend the National Council of Teachers of English Conference in Houston, Texas, in November 2018. In addition to experiencing a professional conference, Liz and Jaime presented research and interacted with teachers and teachers-in-training from around the country. Liz and Jaime shared their research on honoring linguistic diversity in the English Language Arts classroom during a Future is Now session, which provides an opportunity for undergraduate students to discuss their research, practices, and strategies with other aspiring English Language Arts teachers. Other English education students who have attended national conferences have returned with newfound passion, energy, and focus for their field, and this opportunity for Liz and Jaime was no exception.

Further, the English department (and, specifically, faculty and students in the English education concentration) will benefit from the opportunity to learn about Liz and Jaime's experiences at the conference. Liz and Jaime will be able to advise and inform other students who are pursuing teaching licensure and are interested in participating in conferences. Liz and Jaime have discussed the possibility of developing a workshop to help other students pursue similar opportunities for professional development. As a faculty sponsor, the conference gave me valuable insight into how to best support and supervise undergraduate research, since this was my first trip to a major national conference as a faculty sponsor.

DR. RICKI KANTROWITZ
PROFESSOR, PSYCHOLOGY

CIEE IFDA Seminar in Cuba

I attended the CIEE (Council on International Educational Exchange) International Faculty Development Seminar in Havana, Cuba held from June 18-28, 2018. The seminar was entitled Contemporary Cuba: Present and Future Challenges and combined academic lectures by Cuban scholars with walking tours of Havana and museum visits. Particularly relevant to me were lectures about healthcare in Cuba and about export of trained medical professionals to other countries as a way for the Cuban government to receive money or resources. In addition, I visited a community mental health clinic and a polyclinic treating people with HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, I heard a lecture by a social psychologist about the challenges of conducting psychological research on the rapid changes taking place in Cuba, and I was invited to the home of a psychologist who was involved in the literacy campaign of 1961 and now is a mentor to LGBT Afro-Cubans. Participation in this seminar reinforced my belief in the importance of international experience and exchange for faculty and students.

DR. MAX SAITO
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, COMMUNICATIONS

Intersectionality between Our Way of Life and Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

This presentation explores how the U.S. economy and citizens benefit/suffer from the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and invites participants to consider their own roles and communication practices in everyday life in society. It pays close attention to the benefits of the conflict that actually strengthens the U.S. petrodollar, support for the huge military budget, national security, the U.S. economy, and nationalism. Furthermore, this approach explicates stereotypes about religions: Judaism and Islam. Public perceptions about the conflict, together with stereotypes, constitute a hegemony in which individuals feel reluctant to discuss the conflict-related issues in the classroom. Discussions or debates will often result in creating more divisions among the students and marginalizing certain groups. Analyzing the intersectionality opens up a new way for addressing this very important issue which is vital to the national security of the United States in terms of energy, economy, and global warming.

DR. KIMBERLY SHERMAN

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

**Using a multi-modal approach to teaching negotiations –
MOBTS, Maynooth University, Maynooth, Ireland**

Many students do not feel comfortable negotiating. Some feel that it creates conflict and can result in hard feelings (“I win and you lose”). Others simply do not feel they will be any “good” at it. Bargaining and negotiating are part of everyday life. We all negotiate in both our personal and professional lives on a regular basis. By using a multi-modal experiential approach to teaching the concepts and skills involved in negotiations, students can begin to understand the value in negotiating and also the skills that can be learned to become a competent negotiator. The overarching goals of this negotiation class module are to a) introduce students to the idea of the integrative-approach to negotiation. This approach suggests that there are often ways for both parties to integrate their goals under a large umbrella and b) increase students’ understanding of the negotiation process and the steps that will help put them in a strong negotiating position, and c) give students the chance to actually practice negotiating. At the completion of the negotiation activity they are given the opportunity to reflect on their experience, including ways in which culture, context, and individual attributes may impact the negotiation process.

DR. JESSICA HOLDEN

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, NURSING

Improving Inter-professional Collaboration through Experiential Learning

Healthcare today is challenged with developing effective methods to increase inter-professional collaboration. Individual disciplines have been referred to be working in independent silos where evidence has indicated that a collaborative effort, including patient contribution, results in better individual and population health outcomes. Also relevant is the current poverty rates in our local geographical area. Hampden county is currently reported to have 16.5% of its population living in poverty with cities such as Ware (19.4%), Holyoke (28.6%) and Springfield (29.7%) having much higher percentages.

For the purpose of this project we engaged student participation in experiential learning using an existing toolkit that incorporates the patient perspective through simulation of the experience of living in poverty. The Community Action Poverty Simulation is an experiential learning toolkit that has been developed for the purpose of providing an interactive immersion experience. It has successfully been used with healthcare professional students in sensitizing participants to the realities of poverty. The simulated “community” is a large room. Participants and their neighbors’ “homes” are chairs in the center. Community services needed such as banks, schools and grocery stores, and healthcare providers are tables that line the perimeter of the room. Students are assigned to a case study ‘family’ and play roles such as a single parent with limited resources and no transportation must who find a way to get to work and get their child to daycare or an elderly person who must find a way to pay for both utilities and medication.

To conduct this simulation requires much coordination. Event planners were responsible for engaging community volunteers including healthcare providers, bank personnel, clergy, police, utility company, department of social services and employers. In addition, counseling representatives are recommended to be on standby for participants who may become overwhelmed by the experience. In addition, other schools including Bay Path University and Western New England University were invited to collaborate in the event. A total of 80 students from multiple healthcare disciplines including Nursing, Social Work, Psychology, Pharmacy, Physician's Assistant, Movement Science, and Occupational Therapy participated as well as several community members.

The goal of the project was to provide an opportunity for students to gain understanding of inter-professional behaviors and attitudes associated with caring for persons experiencing poverty. In healthcare, improving inter-professional collaboration has become a major focus. These learning goals are relevant across multiple healthcare disciplines at Westfield State University. In addition, disciplines such as Urban and Social Justice, Environmental Planning, Public Administration and Management may also benefit from these experiences.

DR. ROBIN WHITE **ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, BIOLOGY**

BV2 microglia are unable to use the ketone body beta-hydroxybutyrate as an energy source

Ketone bodies are created during the process of fat metabolism. High ketone levels are present when someone goes on a high fat, low carbohydrate diet or during intermittent fasting. While these diets have shown great potential for weight loss and therapeutic relief in diseases such as epilepsy, it is unknown as to how ketone bodies affect cells such as microglia, the immune cells of the brain. I received a University Research Grant to obtain funds to determine how substitution of glucose with beta hydroxybutyrate (β HB), a ketone body able to cross the blood brain barrier, affects BV2 microglia and whether or not the cells could use it as an energy source. Incubation of BV2 cells with physiologically relevant concentrations of β HB significantly increased cell death and did not rescue cells from glucose deprivation-derived impairment of phagocytosis. A WST-1 assay revealed that β HB does not increase mitochondrial dehydrogenases, suggesting that BV2 microglia are unable to use β HB as a viable energy substitute for glucose.

DR. PHILIP DEORSEY **ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, MATHEMATICS**

Developing Open Educational Resources for a flipped pre-calculus classroom

Pre-calculus is a course that is notorious for having textbooks and other resources that are too expensive. In order to fight against these issues I wrote a pre-calculus book and made it free for everyone to use. Over the past few years I created a workbook titled “Guided Activities for Pre-calculus,” and paired the content with coordinated YouTube videos to allow for more active learning time in the classroom. I will talk about my choices for content, my creation of coordinated YouTube videos, and my use of the free resources Desmos and WeBWork. I will use this course as an example of how instructors can have a direct financial impact on students through the resources they choose for their courses.

DR. ALEX DANIEL **ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, PSYCHOLOGY**

Studying cognitive mechanisms of memory and attention

This semester, I have used the STARS program to work on my research program, studying cognitive mechanisms of memory and attention. I will focus on two specific projects that are nearing completion: how our memory for tastes compares to memory for visual and auditory objects, and how differences in short-term memory can help or hinder students’ test-taking performance. In the first set of experiments, we tested how well people are able to remember things they have tasted, seen, or heard across an increasingly difficult cognitive task. In the second set of experiments, we show how students’ short-term memory affects their ability to solve a logic-based test while they are under pressure. I will share these results while explaining how these opportunities (publications, conferences, data collection) would not have been possible without STARS support this semester.

DR. MARK ABATE **ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, HISTORY**

Florence: Archival research at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze (BNCF)

At the BNCF I worked with the codex Bib. Naz. Pal. 887, a miscellany of Medieval and Renaissance alchemical works. The codex contains a work ascribed to Roger Bacon entitled *De mirabili potestate artis et naturae* (On the Miraculous Power or Art and Nature), which has been listed as being one of the few surviving copies of Roger Bacon’s *Epistula de secretis operibus artis et naturae et de nullitate magia* (Letter on the Secret Works of Art and Nature and the Nullification of Magic). I discovered that it is a misattribution. It is in fact a very different work on alchemy, one that must have been mislabeled by a scribe in the 15th or 16th century.

Paper presentation at the conference “Rare and Universal: Leonardo’s Humanism across Time and Space”

At the 10th Annual Florence University of the Arts/SUNY Stony Brook Conference I presented a paper entitled “Polymaths in ‘Perspective’: Roger Bacon, Leonardo da Vinci, and the Secrets of Nature.” It is a comparative treatment of these two polymaths that focuses on their approaches to optics, experiential knowledge, and the subsequent mythologizing of each into the possessors of secret knowledge and as “scientists” who were ahead of their times.

DR. MELISSA ROTI

PROFESSOR, MOVEMENT SCIENCE, SPORT AND LEISURE STUDIES

International health Fitness Summit

An IPI grant supported travel for first time attendance at the International Health Fitness Summit in Washington, DC in the spring of 2018. This was an opportunity to attend a new conference for my own knowledge acquisition as well as determine whether it would be appropriate conference option for students. I was able to incorporate new information from this conference into several courses as well as get an idea of what the program committee is looking for in terms of speakers. I submitted a proposal for this year’s conference which was accepted. I just returned from presenting “ActivEarth: Encouraging Active Transportation to Promote Physical Activity ‘Outside the Box”” at the 2019 International Health Fitness Summit and hope to bring students to this conference in the future.

DR. ROBERT CHATT

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, FINANCE

Innovative Teaching Techniques for Introductory Finance Courses

Student engagement is a significant challenge for many courses, and is especially so for the Finance course that is part of the Business Core (Financial Management) because of its technical nature. New and inventive ideas for increasing student engagement are required so that students are able to keep pace with the course material. The funds from this grant served to support attendance at the Financial Management Association’s annual conference. The conference hosts a variety of sessions for academics to present their research and discuss teaching techniques. One key session this past year revolved around innovative teaching techniques, specifically in introductory level Finance courses. Various essential elements from this session have been implemented in my own coursework to improve student learning outcomes, and the contacts made in discussing my own innovative pedagogical techniques have been invaluable.

DR. CHRISTOPHER GULLEN
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, COMMUNICATION

The Lit-TV Symposium, held at Edinburgh Napier University, Edinburgh UK

The Lit-TV Symposium, held at Edinburgh Napier University in Edinburgh UK, was held to explore contemporary US television and “the Literary,” specifically focusing on the role of adaptations of classic or modern literary works in television. Adaptation studies and television studies have been gaining much interest amongst American and international scholars due to the plethora of adaptations created, as well as television’s experience of a “new golden age.” My own paper focused on the adapted works of Doyle’s “Sherlock Holmes” novels and how they have been adapted in a variety of American media, especially radio and television. In addition to sharing our research and bringing that back into the classroom here (as I teach adaptation studies), I moderated a roundtable teaching panel on “Teaching Literate Television” where we shared ideas on styles of narrative, different iterations of adaptations, and the difficulty of getting DRM-free content to use in classes.

The 2018 Conference, “Rare and Universal: Leonardo’s Humanism across Time and Space” was hosted by Florence University of the Arts and was an interdisciplinary event examining the influence of Leonardo’s humanistic ideals across the humanities and sciences. The conference was invaluable as I discussed an approach to film history and production that I regularly teach (the intersection of technology and art) in cinema as well as the work of Italian director/actor Roberto Benigni. In addition to the conference, I participated in an official visit to the University to deepen the study-abroad relationship with FUA as part of upcoming proposed changes to the Liberal Studies program.

DR. CARSTEN BRAUN
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, GEOGRAPHY AND REGIONAL PLANNING

Earth Educators’ Rendezvous

The annual Earth Educators’ Rendezvous brings together researchers and practitioners across all dimensions and disciplines of undergraduate Earth science education to improve teaching, learning, and student success with a special emphasis on active, student centered learning and field-based learning.

The 5-day program is structured around multi-day intensive morning workshops that are complemented by mini-workshops, round-table discussions, teaching demonstrations, poster sessions, and invited plenary talks in the afternoon and evening. This interactive format allows for synthesis and development of institutional context of the information and emerging ideas.

Please see westfield.ma.edu/EER-Program for details on the following workshops:

Connecting Science to Issues of Sustainability and Environmental Justice using the InTeGrate module on Environmental Justice and Freshwater Resources
(see westfield.ma.edu/EER-Freshwater).

Building Pathways for Success: Supporting Student Transfer from Two-Year Colleges to Four-Year Colleges and Universities (see westfield.ma.edu/EER-Workshop)

One unique feature of the Earth Educators' Rendezvous is that every participant can also serve as a contributor as part of the Active Teaching Demonstrations sessions and I presented my activity Library Research

Lab: Does the Ozone Hole cause Global Warming?
(see westfield.ma.edu/EER-Demos)

DR. SHIRLEY WONG **ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, ENGLISH**

Teaching Irish Studies in a Time of White Supremacy

I participated and presented at the American Conference of Irish Studies (ACIS) at the University of Cork in Ireland, June 18-22, 2018. In my seminar, I discussed the pedagogical responsibilities of Irish studies scholars teaching today—particularly those in the U.S., where the question of white supremacy has been brought back to the center stage and has often been fought on the site of the university. This discussion is all the more pressing given the alt-right's troubling co-opting of Irish-American history and culture, such as in the form of recently circulated Internet memes around the myth of "Irish slavery" and of Celtic iconography that is popular among white supremacists. In my presentation, I analyzed a cluster of contemporary texts centered around the Irish-American diaspora: the recent memes and "fake news" articles that perpetuate the myth of "Irish slavery," Barack Obama's speech in Dublin during his 2011 visit to Ireland, and the film *Brooklyn* (2015). By analyzing these texts, I hope to open new avenues of teaching Irish studies from an anti-racist perspective.

DR. CAROL BAILEY **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, ENGLISH**

Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) Conference, Havana Cuba

I received an International Travel grant to attend and present at the Caribbean Studies Association Conference in Havana Cuba. I organized a panel entitled "Literacy, Social Justice Pedagogy, and the Transformative Power of Education." I chaired this panel, and presented a paper entitled, "Literary Studies as the Starting Points for Community Engagement." The main question I addressed in this presentation were, how has, and can the Humanities address these concerns, and make more visible to inherent connections between fields such as postcolonial, Caribbean, gender studies and social justice? How do we define social justice in a Caribbean context? The presentation and panel sparked a meaningful and invigorating conversation about the role that the Humanities continues to play in shaping conversations about social justice as well as how we can make the work we already do more visible. This was my first conference paper that focused specifically on pedagogy; therefore, this I was necessarily more reflective about my own practice. Additionally, the presentation reignited my efforts to structure my classes in ways that help my students, especially those in my core classes to understand more clearly the "real world" value of the Humanities in general and literary studies in particular.

DR. JASON RAMSAY

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, BIOLOGY AND CHAIR OF IACUC

Mentoring Summer Undergraduate Research: Dispelling student stigmas associated with contributing to a professional discipline

Hands-on learning is a powerful method of illustrating the application and utility of the material learned in college courses. When in the form of a well mentored research project, hands on learning also gives students the potential to contribute to the content of their study discipline in a manner that they would during their graduate careers. Here I will discuss how the CURCA Student Summer Research Fellowship (SSuRF), GSMARTS travel grant and a grant from Student Affairs and CURCA facilitated such an experience.

DR. EROLD BAILEY

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, EDUCATION

Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) Conference, Havana Cuba

I received the International Travel grant which facilitated my trip to present a paper at the annual Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) conference which was held in Havana, Cuba June 4-8, 2018. My paper, “Constructivist Pedagogy for Learner Empowerment in the Postcolonial Context of the Caribbean”, challenged Caribbean educators to employ instructional practices that advance the ongoing process of decolonization in the region. This paper was inspired by the constructivist approach that I have come to embrace here in the United States, and which informs my work as a teacher educator. The constructivist approach counters hegemonic classroom practices, respects student agency, and privileges multiple perspectives. The feedback and my overall experience from the conference have reinforced my thinking that it would be beneficial for my students to also understand the importance of constructivist pedagogy in a global sense, as they are likely to teach students from the Caribbean and other formerly colonized countries. I am therefore making significant adjustment to my teaching, as my focus was more local and national prior to this conference. Noteworthy here too, is that since the conference, my paper which was accepted as a chapter in the forthcoming book: *Achieving inclusive education in the Caribbean and beyond: From philosophy to praxis*.

DR. MICHAEL FILAS

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, ENGLISH

Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) Conference, Havana Cuba

In summer 2018, I supervised a student in the first run of the CURCA Student Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SSuRF) program in which I directed my student’s research, writing, and submission of a publishable research article in literary criticism. I have directed many year-long projects of similar scope before as Senior Honors Projects, or Graduate Capstones, but this project was condensed into 10 weeks, and some of the work happened on the front-end during the application process. I will discuss the process of recruiting undergraduates to engage with grant opportunities, and the experience and education I personally gained through my involvement.

DR. LIAM HARTE
PROFESSOR AND CHAIR, PHILOSOPHY

AASCU-CEAIE China Studies Fellowship/Zhi-Xing China Academic Impact Fellowship

In June, 2017, I became one of fourteen fellows, all from state institutions in the United States, in the abovenamed program. Over the course of nearly three weeks in the People's Republic of China, we travelled to Shanghai, Xi'an and Beijing, engaging in two major kinds of activities, namely: visits to several kinds of educational institutions and various cultural events. I shall give a very brief account of these and reflect on how the experience has influenced my professional activities.

DR. HUGH JO
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, POLITICAL SCIENCE

China Studies Institute (CSI)

My presentation introduces my experience as a China Studies Institute (CSI) fellow and plan to incorporate my learning into teaching at Westfield State. The international grant offered me an opportunity to experience China first-hand and learn about the country's perspectives by interacting with leaders in government, business and academia. I intend to focus on how China's military policy in the Pacific and Indian Oceans is closely related to its investments in raw materials in South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa.

DR. HEIDI BOHLER
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, PHYSICAL EDUCATION PEDAGOGY AND MOVEMENT SCIENCE, SPORT AND LEISURE STUDIES

DR. HOLLY NOUN, PROFESSOR
MOVEMENT SCIENCE, SPORT AND LEISURE STUDIES

iPad Technology in Movement Science Classrooms

The purpose of this project was to examine the use of iPads as a means to integrate more current technology with Movement Science pedagogies. In this presentation, we will share ways in which the iPad and applications were used in several courses, and we will share student reflections of their technology use. Professors' reflections on the use of the technologies, pedagogies, and future ideas will also be shared.

ERIC PARNES, MFA
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, THEATRE ARTS

Theatre Arts Program HB Studio's "Hagen Teacher's Lab" Approach to Actor Training (International)

The presentation will report on my experience attending a teacher training workshop at New York's prestigious acting studio, HB Studios. The workshop was called the "Hagen Teacher's Lab," named after legendary performer, writer, and teacher Uta Hagen, one of the founders of HB Studios. First held in January 2014, The Uta Hagen Institute's Hagen Teacher's Lab is an intensive, six-day program where artists and educators from around the world come to continue their professional development by exploring and expanding their understanding and experience of Uta Hagen's approach to acting and teaching.

Developing the Musical Theatre piece "Houdini among the Spirits" (URGP)

There are many steps involved with the creation of a theatrical performance piece that precede actual production. One of the most critical phases of this process, specifically in terms of musical theatre, is the development and promotion of a script and score in collaboration with performers and other artistic colleagues. The presentation summarizes the process of a developmental workshop in New York City of a new, Broadway-style, historical musical called "Houdini Among the Spirits," which was partially funded by the

DR. TARIN H. WEISS
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, CHEMICAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES

New England section of the Geological Society Meeting of America, Burlington, VT

This presentation is focused on a SMARTs grant used to take students to the annual meeting of the NE section of the Geological Society Meeting of America, in Burlington, VT (March 2018). The students' presentation at the conference was based on the following abstract:

Stream ecology is a natural dynamic process, and human activity can vastly change the morphology of a stream over time. The installation and removal of dams on rivers and streams interferes with natural flow and changes characteristics and morphology. In 2013, MA Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Conservation and Recreation, along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Trout Unlimited, supported the removal of a small private dam on a section of Kinne Brook, a high-quality second order stream in western MA. The stream has been monitored annually since 2013 for changes in morphology that potentially impact fish and macroinvertebrate populations. Monitoring data reported on in this study was acquired through standard field techniques including longitudinal profile surveys, Wolman pebble counts, and assessments of macroinvertebrate populations using kick-net methods followed by microscopic identification. Cumulative results show a significant change in substrate data, some change in stream morphology, and fluctuating organism populations as the stream adjusts to its renewed connectivity. Continued monitoring is recommended to capture the long-term recovery stages of this important Wild and Scenic waterway.

DR. EDWARD ORGILL **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, MUSIC**

Improvising Improvisation

Many among those who have learned music primarily by reading it see musical improvisation as abstract and mysterious. They might observe experienced jazz musicians or those from another improvising musical tradition of the world and imagine them conjuring cogent musical phrases on the spot from nothing and fail to recognize that improvisation is an extension of what most humans do every day naturally. Humans improvise all the time. A great example is when we talk with each other.

Experienced jazz musicians converse too. They listen intently to each other and respond exploring their mind's ear guided by parameters defined by what they hear and other things like the tune, texture, harmony, tempo, and rhythmic feel.

It is useful to encourage a “conversational” approach to improvisation at all levels of study, but this aspect of improvisation may be overlooked or passed over in educational settings that favor a skills-based approach. Experienced jazz musicians benefit from a fluency in music that comes mostly through practice and repetition for sure. Moreover, scale and chord patterns are helpful in building vocabulary, but focusing on them alone can lead to uninteresting improvisations void of expressivity and meaning. It can also result in a hyper competitive environment that excludes and alienates, and discourages the inexperienced.

Just as people who speak different languages find ways to communicate, so too can musicians with little or no jazz vocabulary improvise confidently. It's just a matter of lowering inhibitions and working within a few limited and manageable variables. Improvising Improvisation demonstrates exercises, games really, that seek to illuminate the conversational aspect of improvisation. These games simplify and shorten the variable parameters in an improvisational setting allowing those who are less familiar with the jazz language to enter the conversation and experience what it feels like to improvise.

These games can be used to introduce beginners or to inspire more experienced improvisers to be more creative. They can be modified, or varied to focus attention on specific rhythms, tempos, tonalities or anything that might need attention. One can improvise and tailor them to each student or group of students and find new ways to inspire more meaningful improvisational experiences.

GRANTS SHARING DAY

WHO WE ARE

The vision of this campus collaborative sharing day was inspired by the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs, The Faculty Center, International Travel Grants, Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, The Westfield State Experience, and The Center for Undergraduate Research & Creative Activity (CURCA).

It is our hope that you are able to learn about exciting research your colleagues are doing on campus and to find additional connections that will grow your research to make a lasting impact on the students at Westfield State University.

CONTACT US

westfield.ma.edu/offices/office-of-grants-and-sponsored-programs

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