

SUNY POTSDAM

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK COLLEGE AT POTSDAM

COLLABORATIONS

Learning Communities at SUNY Potsdam

Issue 5

Spring 2011

From the Director's Desk

Welcome to the fifth issue of Collaborations, the official newsletter of the Learning Communities program at SUNY Potsdam. Not surprisingly, with the steady support from colleagues from many disciplines, our program continues thriving at the college. In addition to offering the clusters that we have put in place in the past, we regularly develop and offer new FIGs and LCs. Our program aims at fostering productive and effective collaborations at all levels through curricular and co-curricular activities to aid in the creation of as many fresh communities of learning as possible. We believe in bringing together all our talents, interests and skills to produce a caring and reflective academic community at SUNY Potsdam. The Title III grant currently offers an opportunity to infuse lower or upper division clusters with interdisciplinary undergraduate research projects, and also offers funding support for class supplies. We invite you to take advantage of these splendid opportunities to link Title III to learning community endeavors at SUNY Potsdam.

Spring 2011 Workshop

This semester the Learning Communities Workshop will take place on Thursday, May 5, from 3:00 to 5:00 pm at the LTEC. If you are interested in developing First Year Interest Groups (FIGs) and/or upper Learning Communities do attend the program workshop. This event will be of special interest to faculty teaching in FIGs and Learning Communities in fall of 2011. FIG teams and LC teams are encouraged to attend and bring copies of course syllabi to share with colleagues at the workshop. We will also provide information and will explore the Title III connection to Learning Communities — an exciting new opportunity to strengthen our learning communities at SUNY Potsdam. Refreshments will be served. Space is limited, and we appreciate your RSVP to Ricky Bonner-Murray (bonnerrl), the secretary of the program.



Advisory Board

The following colleagues are the current members of the Learning Communities Advisory Board; Kimberly Bouchard (Drama), Marion Bradish (Registrar), Timothy Fossum (Computer Sciences), Lisa Stewart (Education), Shelly Tramposh (Music), and Louise Tyo (First Year Transitions). We thank them for all their dedication to the program.

Fall 2009 First Year Interest Groups (FIGS)

Last fall we offered thirty-one First Year Interest Groups. New additions were “Culture and Thought,” “Economics for Life,” “Talking World Cultures,” “Talking Biology,” and three additional options of Childhood/Early Childhood Education clusters. Three hundred Arts and Sciences students and eighty students from Education participated in FIGs. No FIGS were offered to CRANE students. Five FIGs were residential and participated in the First Year Experience program in Bowman South: “Archeology,” “Exploring Business and Economics,” “Childhood/Early Childhood Education -Perennialism,” “Get Psyched,” and “Natural Science and Pre Med.” We had four “Childhood/Early Childhood Education” clusters serving Childhood Education majors.

ACLC Learning Communities Retreat: Learning Communities and the First-year Student. October 19-21, West Hartford, CT.

Let us know if you are interested in attending the annual ACLC Retreat. We have participated in this important event in the past and have shared our SUNY Potsdam perspective with colleagues from New York and other states across the country.

The theme this year will be Learning Communities and the First-year Student. Research shows that students who participate in first-semester learning communities achieve greater success in their first year of college and beyond. Creating a strong and sustainable learning community experience is critical to integrating all students into college life. How are these positive results achieved? How can we further enrich the first year experience for our students and for ourselves? What new directions can we take in practice and research? Workshops will focus on exploring and characterizing the first-year learning community experience for entering students at all levels. Topics will include diversity issues, the integration of a student success component, experiential learning and reflection, reading as a foundation, and celebrating the achievements of first year students.

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Betsy Barefoot. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from Duke University and Master's and Doctoral Degrees in Higher Education from the College of William and Mary. Dr. Barefoot is directly involved in the development of instruments and strategies to assess the first college year. In addition, she conducts seminars on the first-year experience across the United States and in other countries and assists other colleges and universities in implementing and evaluating first-year programs.

Title III and Learning Communities at SUNY Potsdam Fall 2011 Workshop

On September 22, from 2 to 4 PM at the LTEC, Dr. Carlos Huerta, Professor of Political Science and Co-Director of the University Core Curriculum Programs at Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi, will lead a workshop entitled: "Leveraging Learning Communities for Integrative Undergraduate Research." According to Dr. Huerta, "Learning communities are particularly well suited to helping students achieve an interdisciplinary understanding about issues facing society. To achieve an interdisciplinary understanding students must first have a disciplinary understanding. One form of disciplinary understanding is to learn the methods of inquiry of a particular discipline. A successful learning community can have students engage in research about contemporary issues using the methods of inquiry from the disciplines in the community and then integrate the research to achieve an integrative understanding of the issue that they could not achieve by using the methods of inquiry of just one of the disciplines." His workshop will address how one can go about developing learning communities that lend themselves to integrative undergraduate research. Dr. Huerta also will share experiences in designing integrative assignments and research in upper division courses.

Transforming the Academy

The Title III initiative "Transforming the Academy: Integrating Undergraduate Research in Learning Communities 2011-2013" provides tenure-track and tenured faculty with opportunities to infuse learning community clusters with undergraduate research projects. Applications are sought for, a) Integrating Undergraduate Research Components in First-Year Interest Groups, b) Integrating Undergraduate Research Components in General Education Learning Communities, and c) Integrating Undergraduate Research Components in Upper Division Learning Communities. Title III also provides funding for instructional equipment and supplies for FIGs and Upper Division Learning Communities.

For more detailed information, interested faculty are encouraged to contact the Title III Project Director, Dr. Gerald Ratliff.

A Glance at The Environmental Studies FIG – A Coordinated Studies Cluster

Faculty teaching in this FIG take students on all-day field trips most Fridays during fall semester. The field trips are interdisciplinary and involve Adirondack history & ecology, journal writing, and drawing. Each field trip includes a variety of interdisciplinary activities. For example: on a trip to Whiteface they went over Adirondack history & the building of the road up Whiteface; they went on an alpine ecology walk; and students wrote and made drawings in their journal. Later in the day they drove to Ampersand and walked through an old growth forest discussing Adirondack timber harvests and local ecology.

The faculty in this FIG meet every other week to coordinate activities, plan for field trips, talk about academic success, discuss class projects and activities, and review student responses to the previous week's field trip. Faculty also meet during the summer to coordinate field trip scheduling and course exam dates (to ensure that the student workload is not too heavy during any week). Students and faculty also meet at the Birchbark Bookstore at the end of fall term to celebrate the work they have done over the semester. Students bring their favorite journal writings and drawings, and discuss what they liked best about the FIG. It is a great way to end the semester and celebrate the creative work of the students.



Thanks to Ed Clark for the Environmental Studies FIG pictures.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES – FALL 2011 COURSES

15 credits for 18 students. Coordinator: Stacy Rosenberg.
COMP 101 Writing & Critical Thinking: 4 Cr. TUTH at 2:00-3:40pm McNutt, D.
ENVR 110 Intro to Environmental Studies: 3 Cr. MW 11:00-12:15pm Rosenberg, S.
BIOL 111 - Adirondack Ecology: 3 Cr. TUTH 9:30-10:45am Brown, W.
ARTS 110 – Foundations of Drawing I: 4 Cr. MW 2-4:50pm Clark, E.
FY 100 First Year Success Seminar: 1 Cr. TH 11-11:50AM Mat-timore, R.J. and Rapczynski, J.

Instructional Grants – Fall 2010

The total amount of funding awarded for FIG activities during the 2010-2011 academic year was: \$ 3,198.95.

Fall 2010

Last fall semester the Learning Communities board awarded eleven instructional grants to faculty teaching in First Year Interest Groups (FIGS).

The following is a list of the instructional grants awarded:

1 FIG: Invitation to Health; Activity Funded: Stone Valley Hiking Trip and dinner. Faculty person who requested the grant: Kathleen O'Rourke; Amount Awarded: \$90.00

2 FIG: Exploring Business and Economics; Activity Funded: Pizza Party for Faculty and Students; Faculty person who requested the grant: Toby White; Amount awarded: \$216.00

3 FIG: Environmental Studies; Activity Funded: Fieldtrip to Wild Center, visit to Sagamore, visit to Adirondack Museum, transportation to sites. Faculty person who requested the grant: Stacy Rosenberg; Amount awarded: \$1,242.95



4 FIG: Gender, Go Figure!; Activity Funded: 2 Pizza mixers/meetings to develop effective learning experiences to meet FIG objectives; Faculty person who requested the grant: Liliana Trevizan; Amount awarded: \$200.00

5 FIG: Bridging Cultures; Activity Funded: Coffee house conversation, Poetry Reading, French and Latin American Authentic cuisine dinner plus poetry reading; Person who requested the grant: Oscar Sarmiento; Amount awarded \$300.00

6 FIG: Exploring Your Options; Activity Funded: 2 events with participation of all FIG faculty and students; Faculty person who requested this grant: George Gonos; Amount awarded: \$160.00

7 FIG: Childhood/Early Childhood FIG 2; Activity Funded: Bonding barbeque get-together between faculty and students outside of classroom; Faculty person who requested the grant: Lisa Stewart; Amount awarded: \$80.00

8 FIG: English FIG; Activity Funded: Poet Jericho Brown visited FIG Classes and did a public poetry reading; Faculty Person who requested this grant: James Hall; Amount Awarded: \$300.00

9 FIG: Talking Biology; Activity Funded: informal conversation including food at seminar scheduled time; Faculty person who requested the grant: Shaili Singh; Amount awarded: 75.00

10 FIG: Talking World Cultures; Activity Funded: informal conversation including food at seminar scheduled time; Faculty person who requested the grant: Shaili Singh; Amount awarded: \$75.00

11 FIG: Get Psyched; Activity Funded: Faculty Student Thanksgiving Dinner; Faculty Person who requested the grant: Heather Beauchamp; Amount awarded: \$60.00



Spring 2011

This spring semester the Learning Communities board awarded two instructional grants to faculty teaching in First Year Interest Groups (FIGS).

1 FIG: Hispanic Communities; Activity Funded: roundtable discussions including Mexican and German food, featuring pizza and wings; Faculty person who requested the grant: Shaili Singh; Amount awarded: 200.00

2 FIG: International Communities; Activity Funded: roundtable discussions including Mexican and German food; Faculty person who requested the grant: Shaili Singh; Amount awarded: \$200.00

First Year Interest Groups Offerings for Fall 2011

1 ARCHAEOLOGY I

11 credits for 20 students. Coordinator: Hadley Kruczek-Aaron
**Resides in First-Year Experience, Bowman West.

2 CSI POTSDAM

10 credits for 15 students. Coordinator: David Bugg.
**Resides in First-Year Experience, Bowman West.

3 EXPLORING BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

10 credits for 15 students. Coordinator: Florence Shu.
**Resides in First-Year Experience, Bowman East.

4 GET PSYCHED

8 credits for 20 students. Coordinator: Heather Beauchamp.
**Resides in First-Year Experience, Bowman East.

5 NATURAL SCIENCE AND PRE-MED

9 credits for 20 students. Coordinator: Jan Trybula.
**Resides in First-Year Experience, Bowman West.

6 BRIDGING CULTURES

8 credits for 20 students. Coordinator: Oscar Sarmiento.

7 ENGLISH FIG: LANGUAGE AND PERFORMANCE

10 credits for 25 students. Coordinator: James Donahue.

8 GENDER: GO FIGURE

11 credits for 15 students. Coordinator: Liliana Trevizan.

9 INVITATION TO HEALTH

11 credits for 15 students. Coordinator: Kathleen O'Rourke.

10 MATH COUNTS!

8 credits for 15 students. Coordinator: Victoria Klawitter.

11 POWER AND MONEY

11 credits for 15 students. Coordinator: Martha Campbell.

12 TALKING EVOLUTION

8 credits for 15 students. Coordinator: Shaili Singh.

13 TALKING POLITICS

9 credits for 10 students. Coordinator: Shaili Singh.

14 CHILDHOOD/ EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FIG

14 credits for 24 students. Coordinator: Lisa Stewart.

15 ART STUDIO FIG 1

14 credits for 25 students. Coordinator: Mark Huff.



16 ART STUDIO FIG 2

14 credits for 25 students. Coordinator: Mark Huff.

17 ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

15 credits for 18 students. Coordinator: Stacy Rosenberg.

18 THEATRE PERFORMANCE/SPEAKING

9 credits for 8 students. Coordinator: Kim Bouchard.

19 THEATRE PERFORMANCE/WRITING

9 credits for 8 students. Coordinator: Kim Bouchard.

20 THEATRE PRODUCTION

11 credits for 12 students. Coordinator: Todd Canedy.

21 DANCE PERFORMANCE

10 credits for 10 students. Coordinator: Don Borsh.

22 DANCE, ART, AND CULTURE FIG

10 credits for 5 students. Coordinator: A'Keitha Carey.



23 DANCE ANTHROPOLOGY FIG

10 credits for 5 students. Coordinator: A'Keitha Carey.

24 TALES, TOOLS AND TIMES: LANGUAGE MATTERS

13 credits for 10 students. Coordinator: Lora Lunt.

25 COMMUNICATING COMMUNITIES

7 credits for 16 students. Coordinator: George Gonos.

26 GOING HUMAN, GOING PRIMATES

8 credits for 24 students. Coordinator: Robert Ewy.

27 FIG NEWTON

11 credits for 8 students. Coordinator: Biman Das.

28 PRE LAW

10 credits for 20 students. Coordinator: Tim Gordinier.

UPPER DIVISION LEARNING COMMUNITY

1. ART AND CULTURE OF THE MIDDLE SEA

6 credits for 6 students. Coordinator: Lora Lunt.

The Learning Communities Website Pages

Find updated information on our program, types of learning communities, instructional grants and more on our website pages. First year students are at this time signing up for the 2011 FIGS based on the updated information placed on our pages. We are at: <http://www.potsdam.edu/academics/specialprograms/learningcommunities/index.cfm>.

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