"*The faculty role will – must – expand with the university. Optimism must be tempered by reality: the transition from excess to diversity involves dislocation and hard work. But the health of the university and its effectiveness with students is at stake, and that goal is worth any amount of effort.*"

James W. Hall, The Faculty and the Future
Alternative Higher Education, 1*(2), 1976, p.*
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The Need for Practice

Photo credit: Lawrence Henderson

"And you've just gotta keep on keeping on"

– Söderberg and Söderberg of First Aid Kit, "My Silver Lining" (2014)

We've spent years wrangling over the definition of "mentoring." And, we're not alone at all: Although the word is everywhere these days – as so many have noticed, it's used in K-12 settings, in community-based programs, in organizations and corporations big and small, as well as in academia – what it actually means is quite another matter and open to a great deal of discussion. Still, in most contexts, mentoring not only assumes but seeks to prop up institutional hierarchies, particularly between those who are in-the-know and those who need-to-learn the ropes. It's probably rarer that mentoring is indelibly tied to dialogue and to the creation of opportunities for reciprocity among learners.

I've always believed that one of the distinctive features of SUNY Empire State College (of course, not singular, but still distinctive) has been its embrace of this second, more egalitarian understanding of mentoring. This means that while a faculty or academic professional might, in some important respects, "know more" than a student, at almost every turn – if we give it a shot – we can see what a student brings to the table and thus be confronted with what we, the knowers, do *not* know. Of course, yes, we are employees of an institution that claims to impart something

to our students and whose legitimacy is based on something beyond the power to guard the doors and hand out credentials. But pausing for just a moment to think about what each of us has learned from our students is a pretty amazing exercise. Put in another way, ignoring what is offered to us by students almost every single day is another way in which mentoring-as-hierarchy-building is perpetuated. When we stop listening, think about all that we lose!

So here is a connection that has been on my mind:

If mentoring has something to do with mutuality and dialogue; if it is about recognizing that students do not come to us as blank slates and that professing is not at the core of our trade, then what mentoring provides is a living laboratory devoted to thinking about learning. That is, mentoring is not some holy form that we need to defend at all costs. Mentoring as democratic dialogue, as the opportunity to think deeply about knowledge (its creation, its communication and its legitimacy), has value because it pushes us to confront the most basic questions about learning: What do we want to know? Who knows what? Can we ever judge one idea as better than another? What is the relationship between knowledge and power? How terrific it is that mentoring opens up these kinds of questions for us to see. Mentoring is learning about learning.

At Empire State College, it was a quite deliberate move to call upon a "learning contract" as the form in which opportunities

for new learning were to be sketched out. As Malcolm Knowles and Arthur Chickering and others have argued, the learning contract reflects the spirit of mentoring: the need for a student to identify purposes and for a mentor and student to name possible activities; the responsibility of the student to keep track of what is going on and of the mentor to describe how any work will be evaluated; and the mutual obligation of both parties to engage along the way. The ideal is a kind of living/breathing document created together so that student and mentor can see what's up, what a possible path might look like and what comes out at the end: The path to learning and the learning outcomes themselves are right out there for all to see.

Of course, no practice matches the ideal; that's silly to imagine, let alone to claim. But the contract as a model, as a way of thinking and acting, brought into life through mentors and students working together, offers a kind of transparency from which everyone can learn. That's what it's all about.

And here's the other dimension:

Just as the learning contract is an intentional creation to make *new* learning more possible, more reciprocal, more attuned to a student's interests and directions, and more demanding of a mentor's skills in guiding and asking questions (that *is* our trade), the engagement with prior learning assessment (PLA) reflects another dimension of mentoring: the need for mentors to encourage and help students explore their past activities in order to excavate,

describe and then make sense out of what they have done and the skills and insights they already have gained. It's in this sense that the prior learning portfolio does for prior experiences – the old – what the learning contract does for what is new. The creation and evaluation of the portfolio can be seen as introducing a safe and open-ended academic space in which foundational questions about learning are put right out there before us.

Of course, we've been told on countless occasions that through portfolio evaluation, students earn degree credit for "learning" and not for "experience," and, too, we all at least acknowledge that there's just got to be agreement on what "college-level" refers to, but the very presence of both of these reminders begs the bigger questions: What really is learning? Can its very form and content as expressed in the portfolio differ from what we expect it to be? Can the learning be a surprise?

So here it is:

In the same way that the learning contract can take up problems and include activities that we've never seen in a syllabus, the portfolio can include experiences, insights and connections that have not yet made it into a college catalogue. The learning contract and the portfolio are quite friendly bedfellows. They're speaking the same language; they need each other; together, they pull us back to learning.

And here's a final thought about the-learning-of-mentoring or, perhaps, mentoring-as-learning.

All of this attention to learning demands practice. Most of us did not come to our current roles with a deep understanding of this kind of work, either as a result of our own experiences as students or as teachers; and, in a quite parallel way, most of our students have never been invited to develop their own study nor to help someone understand the learning they have gained on the job, in the community or right at home. All of us need to work at it; all of us need to start somewhere. Mentors need to be encouraged, at least as part of their work, to gain experience starting a learning contract from scratch, and, with a student, seeing what emerges; and students need to be encouraged, at least as part of their work, to try to shape a study based on the questions they have and on the materials they have uncovered.

We are learners together. If mentors don't practice learning-contract-creation, we'll get stale or won't take the leap at all; and if mentors don't practice helping students think about their past learning or evaluating a student's portfolio, we'll too quickly assume that all knowledge is neatly packaged based on titles we have in our back pockets.

What a loss it would be if all of us didn't have the time, the desire, and the ongoing and genuine encouragement to keep at it and to be acknowledged for all of that practice. That's one big loss of our chance to "keep on" learning.

Alan M. Mandell

Letter to the Editor

Dear Alan,

I want to thank Ed Warzala and Jim [Hall] for the "Remaking the University" conversation in your last issue (Part I, #46, p. 69-76). Those early years are deeply scratched on my mind. As I wrote in Cool Passion: Challenging Higher Education *(2014: NASPA), I remember well that external advisory committee meeting Jim mentions and when he called me about the academic vice presidency during a consultation conference in Estes, Colorado. When I met with Ernie [Boyer] in Albany to discuss the appointment and his aspirations, the presidency never came up.*

I was delighted to accept and I did participate in an interview with the then-president of SUNY Brockport who was innovative and forward-looking. But his idea was that the new institution should be a "holding company" for a variety of alternatives. Neither Ernie nor I thought that was a good idea. And of course I had my own clear ideas about the kind of institution that could serve the diverse educational needs of adults throughout the state.

I also remember clearly our meeting with Ernie when he turned down my proposal that we not have tenured faculty members. I had come from Goddard [College] where we had two one-year appointments, a three-year, and then successive five-year appointments. This system provided for meaningful, periodic evaluation that offered useful feedback and an "out" for faculty members who had become ineffective. I was not surprised when he said "no."

Jim is certainly right that I was wary about the SUNY system. I knew from experience how inexorable and systemic all the varied policies and practices built into the status quo could be, at both the federal and state levels. ESC's history, and current battles being fought not only within ESC but in other innovative institutions as well, document how irresistible those forces can be.

I doubt that I deserve Jim's complimentary comments about my wisdom and ability. But I did – and still do – have some very clear ideas about what makes for an educationally powerful institution that challenges persons to become the best they can be to pursue their own particular purposes and social values. ESC was a wonderful opportunity to express those in practice and I am ever grateful to Ernie for giving me the chance.

Warm best wishes to you and to other surviving colleagues from those first years.

Chick

July 19, 2015

Arthur Chickering ("Chick") was the founding academic vice president for SUNY Empire State College. Part II of the Warzala – Hall conversation appeared in *All About Mentoring #47*.

(l-r) Arthur Chickering and James Hall, July 1981

The New Cuban Diaspora: Cubans in Scandinavia

Nadine T. Fernandez, Central New York Region

Nadine Fernandez is the recipient of the 2014 Susan H. Turben Award for Excellence in Scholarship. The following was adapted from Nadine's SUNY Empire State College Faculty Lecture, delivered to the college community at the All College Conference in March 2015.

Nadine Fernandez

Introduction

After more than 50 years of political tensions between Cuba and the U.S., a devastating economic embargo and a travel ban that has kept the vast majority of American citizens from visiting the island, President Barack Obama is forging a new relationship with Cuba. In August 2015, the U.S. and Cuban governments re-opened embassies in each other's countries. Many other changes are still yet to unfold in this warming relationship between the U.S. and Cuba. However, with all these moves toward "normalization," we are still not completely clear about what the new "normal" will look like. How will Cubans living abroad relate to the island? How will immigration from Cuba be handled?

The answer to some of those questions may be found by turning our attention to a rather unlikely place to look for Cubans … Scandinavia. I believe this small group of Cubans in this implausible location can give us a glimpse of what the "new normal" with Cuba might entail, at least from the perspective of Cubans living abroad and how they relate to their homeland.

After a brief overview of Cuban emigration and changes on the island since the fall of the socialist bloc in 1989, I will discuss the latest type of emigration – one tied to tourism – that is creating small pockets of Cubans throughout Europe. These migrants are able to retain a rather unique connection to the island that shatters the mold of "exile," which has long characterized Cuban emigration.

Emigration from Cuba to the United States

While there have been earlier periods of politically-related out-migration from Cuba, the vast majority of Cubans arrived in the U.S. after the 1959 Cuban Revolution. The Cubans fleeing Fidel Castro's government came in several waves (Grenier & Perez, 2003; Eckstein, 2009). The first one (120,000 migrants) began with the triumph of the revolution in January 1959. The second came in 1980 with Mariel boat-lift when 125,000 Cubans entered the U.S., and then the *Balsero* (rafter) crisis of 1994 brought 35,000 Cubans to American shores. In addition to these massive migrations, the Cuban Adjustment Act allows for 20,000 Cubans to enter the U.S. legally each year through a visa lottery system. Other immigrants come legally through family reunification, and illegally on rafts, across the Mexican border, or by overstaying visas. Roughly half of the 1.2 million Cuban-born people in U.S. arrived after 1990.

Born at the height of the Cold War, the U.S. government's anti-communist stance classified all Cubans leaving the island as political refugees, a privileged immigration status for those arriving in the U.S. From the Cuban perspective, this same Cold War climate made those leaving traitors of the revolution and exiled them from their homeland. As exiles, the Cubans lost their rights to property, residency and inheritance on the island. With a political standoff between the two nations, both countries made mobility difficult for the Cubans. The Cuban government made it hard to leave Cuba, and difficult to visit once the exile did leave. The U.S. government added to these obstacles by restricting the number of family visits per year, the amount of remittances that could be sent annually, etc. These U.S. restrictions varied with the political climate, sometimes easing a bit, but more often tightening as Congress and presidential administrations changed. The lack of diplomatic relations also meant that there was a poorly developed infrastructure for travel and communication between the two countries. Travel, telephone and mail services between the U.S. and Cuba were barely functional. These were the conditions for the "old diaspora" – the political exiles who arrived in the U.S. before 1990. Most had severed their ties with Cuba once they left, and the few that might have wanted to stay connected faced insurmountable obstacles on both sides of the Florida Straits. These conditions started to change in the 1990s after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Cuba in the 1990s and the Rebirth of Tourism

The collapse of the socialist bloc in 1989 plunged Cuba into a severe economic crisis called the "Special Period in Time of Peace," which resulted in wartime scarcities and hardships. The generous Soviet subsidies evaporated and Cuba was left without the fuel, raw materials and food imports on which it had relied for decades. There was a 33 percent drop in caloric intake, rotating blackouts and a paralyzed economy. The economic stagnation and deprivations led to the 1994 *Balsero* crisis when 35,000 rafters came to the U.S. These migrants were largely a generation that had grown up entirely under the Cuban revolution and were seen by many as economic, not political, migrants, though they still qualified as political refugees in the U.S. As Eckstein (2009) noted, the Cubans who left in the

1990s had a dramatically different relationship with the island. Many still had family there and wanted to stay connected, send money and travel to visit relatives back home. These Cubans maneuvered around (and under) the U.S. embargo to help their families in Cuba. The Cubans on the island joked that the economic crisis had turned these *traidores* (traitors) into *"trae dolares"* (dollar bearers), as remittance money kept Cuban households, fortunate enough to receive it, supplied with basic foodstuffs and clothing.

The Cuban economy started to recover in the mid-1990s largely by reviving a virtually moribund tourism industry (Babb, 2011). With help from foreign investors (mostly in Spain), the Cuban government rebuilt tourist installations and infrastructure. Tourist arrivals grew exponentially from around 1 million in 1995 to 2.8 million in 2013. Tourism is currently the largest source of hard currency on the island. Cuba's economy now resembles the rest of the Caribbean (with a shift from sugar production to tourism as the primary industry) (Cabezas, 2009). Tourists come mainly from Canada, England, Italy, Spain, Mexico and other European, Latin America countries.

Tourism has affected everything on the island from the job structure and prestige hierarchy, to infrastructure and hotel development. It has had a tremendous social impact – particularly in areas of the country that host these nearly 3 million visitors annually – such as Havana. Tourism has not only left an altered economic and social footprint; it has also affected emigration patterns. Since the mid-1990s,

marrying a foreign tourist became a new avenue for migration. This trickle of Cubans leaving under very different circumstances gives us a glimpse of the relationship Cuban migrants might have with the island after normalization. These marriage migrants constitute part of what I call the new Cuban diaspora.

Tourism-Migration Connection

The growth of tourism affects Cuban emigration in two key ways: first, it changes *how* Cubans leave the island; and second, it changes *where* they settle. How they leave and where they settle are key factors in shaping their relationship with the island after they leave. For example, the Cold War dynamics with the U.S. made maintaining a relationship with the island difficult at best. Cubans not leaving under the "exile" label and settling in politically friendly countries have dramatically different experiences and opportunities as migrants. Since the mid-1990s, tourism is paving these new migration routes.

Tourism has opened several avenues for migration for Cubans. Those involved in the culture industry (primarily music and dance) have negotiated contracts to work abroad, adding authenticity to the Cuban-themed nightclubs, restaurants and dance studios that dot the landscape of major European cities. For some, these more temporary moves become permanent ones. My research[1] has focused on another stream of tourism-related migrants, namely those who leave Cuba by marrying a foreigner. While the number of Cubans leaving

by this route is relatively small compared to the tens of thousands who arrive in the U.S. via the visa lottery, family reunification or illegally, it is a trend that is increasing exponentially with the growth of tourism. In 1990, for example, 340,000 tourists visited Cuba and 15 Cubans married Spaniards. Just six years later, 1 million tourists visited Cuba (117,000 from Spain) and over 1,000 Cubans married Spaniards. Similarly, in 1990, there were only 31 Cubans in Denmark. In 2013, there were about 500, and 10,000 Danish tourists visit Cuba each year. Largely through bi-national marriages, pockets of Cubans are emerging in many European countries.[2]

The significance of leaving via marriage to a non-U.S. citizen cannot be overstated. These Cubans leave the island, not as exiles, but legally as migrants.[3] They belong to a small group of Cubans who are eligible for a PRE *(Permiso de Residencia en el Exterior)*, a permission to reside abroad legally. The PRE was first introduced in 1984 and was designed for Cubans who married foreigners (who were *not* U.S. citizens), and for certain high-level artists and professionals who were living and working abroad (in countries other than the U.S.), but had not technically emigrated. Tourism has put the PRE within reach of the average person – democratizing this ability to have a "normal" relationship with the island while living abroad.

With a PRE, Cubans begin to look much more like other immigrants; they can easily send money to family, visit the island regularly (some go annually), buy and own property,

and invest in small businesses. Leaving Cuba with a PRE allows Cubans to retain property, residency and inheritance rights on the island. In November 2011, the Cuban state approved Law 288, legalizing residential real estate sales.[4] Leaving with a PRE allows them to keep their house or to buy one if they didn't already own a home. They can reside in Cuba for up to one year without losing the PRE and do not need *"habilitacion"* – the permission to visit the island. It is easier for them to send money, as they can transfer money directly from their foreign bank accounts to accounts in Cuba, and (though still expensive) they can maintain communications with family on the island though cell phones[5] and email.

Cubans in the U.S. also do many of these same things,[6] but for the most part, they do so by maneuvering around restrictions from both the U.S. and Cuban governments. Moreover, Cubans in the U.S. are still prohibited from owning property on the island, though some may be financing house purchases in the name of relatives still in Cuba. Cubans with a PRE, by contrast, can engage in these activities legally – showing us the kind of relationships and possibilities that may emerge with normalization between the U.S. and Cuba. These marriage migrants, unlike their exile counterparts in the U.S. or even those who leave on work contracts to Spain or Latin American countries, can lead much more transnational lives. Let's look at a typical example of one such couple, Dariel and Ingrid.[7]

Dariel and Ingrid: A Cuban-Danish Love Story

In 2004, Ingrid was 23 years old and working full time as a teacher in an after-school program. She and a girlfriend decided to travel to Cuba for a three-week vacation. The young women spoke only a few words of Spanish. As single white women (clearly tourists) in Havana, they were approached by many men on the street offering them black market goods, guided tours, restaurant recommendations, etc. While in Havana at a popular outdoor art space where local rumba bands perform, Ingrid met Dariel, a 25-year-old *mulato* man, who was hanging out there with some of his friends. Unlike other Cuban men who had approached them, Dariel did not shower them

with sexually suggestive compliments, and only seemed interested in talking. He was curious to hear about life outside of Cuba. Dariel had completed a vocational level *(technico-medio)* education and was working at a state-owned agricultural warehouse/distribution center. Despite the lack of a common language (Dariel spoke limited English), they worked hard to communicate and were clearly attracted to each other. Thus began the holiday romance. Though both assert that neither had intentions of a long-term relationship, they spent the remainder of Ingrid's vacation together and continued to communicate via letters, calls and emails after she returned to Denmark.

After several months back at work, Ingrid decided to return to Cuba for a longer stay to be with Dariel. She enrolled in a Spanish course in Havana and spent three months living with Dariel in a sublet apartment he had found for them. Their relationship continued to develop, and she quickly learned basic Spanish so communication improved. The long distance romance resumed after Ingrid returned to Denmark. The couple had known each other for less than a year when the distance proved to be too emotionally draining and too expensive to maintain. Ingrid had neither the time nor money to continue traveling regularly to Cuba, and phone calls and Internet access (in Cuba) were expensive, but she did not want to end the relationship. Calculating their options, including the costs and risk of applying for a tourist visa for Dariel to visit Denmark, marriage seems like the only reasonable solution for them to be able to continue their relationship.[8] So after having spent less than six months physically in the same location, Ingrid returned to Cuba again for a month-long visit and married Dariel. After they married, Dariel applied for and was granted a PRE before he moved to Denmark.

Ingrid and Dariel are typical of the Danish-Cuban couples I met. The couples were close in age; generally both partners were in their early 20s to 30s. The Cuban men were mostly black or *mulato* and had at least a technical or some university education. All the men had previous relationships with other foreign women before marrying their Danish spouse. The women had a similar (or slightly higher) education background to their husbands. The Danes made multiple trips to Cuba, but usually

married one to two years after first meeting their partners. All the couples met in Cuba, usually in a tourist setting, and nearly all of the Cuban partners obtained a PRE. The PRE is a much sought-after status by the migrants I interviewed in Scandinavia.

Dariel's parents and younger brother still live in Havana. As soon as he and Ingrid were able, they began sending monthly remittances to his family. They visit Cuba every 12-18 months, and are in frequent contact with his family by messaging on cell phones and when possible through Skype. Dariel was able to take advantage of the change in Cuban housing policy, and in 2012 he purchased an apartment near his family's home in Havana. Ingrid and her family helped with financing this purchase. From the initial idea of a small *pied-a-terre* for Ingrid and him during their visits to Havana, the house transformed into a family project, or really, a family business. It took the better part of a year to do renovations on the unit and get it ready for renters. Now the apartment operates as a bed and breakfast *(casa particular)*. It is listed on AirBnB, has a Facebook page and a listing in the online travel service Trip Advisor. On average, they earn the equivalent of about $400 per month, after taxes and salaries to his family are paid. The profits stay in Cuba for maintenance on the apartment. The small monthly salaries his relatives receive help to make their lives more comfortable and stable. The recent changes in Cuban housing laws give these PRE-holding Cubans another foothold for a transnational life – the ability to buy and own property on the island while continuing to live abroad.

Conclusion

The rights granted with the PRE and recent changes in Cuba may seem incremental and minimal compared to other countries that grant emigrants the right to vote and actively encourage investments back home. But they are a major shift in Cuban policy. Cuba will most likely continue to ease restrictions on Cubans currently living abroad. Strengthening connections with Cubans off the island and the increasing flexibility in the migration policy evinces the shift from a territorial idea of the nation rooted in a political and moral community (socialism), to the idea of the nation based on culture that can encompass

diasporic Cubans, as well. The "new normal" with the U.S. will bring even greater circular flows of people, goods and capital. With the increasing ease of movement for Cubans living abroad, we may see Cuba become a receiving, as well as a sending, nation for migrants. The marriage migrants, though small in number compared to the thousands of Cubans arriving annually in the U.S., are the group best positioned to take advantage of these changes. They are able to do many of the things we have long observed with migrants in other parts of the world. Their experiences give us a glimpse of what "normalization" might look like.

Notes

1 My most recent research studies Cubans who have moved to Scandinavia by marrying a foreigner. I conducted over 40 in-depth interviews during 2011-2012 with couples living in Copenhagen and southern Sweden. Most were in their mid-20s to 30s, though I did meet several middle-aged couples and one pair of retirees. Roughly half of the couples were Cuban men married to (or separated from) white ethnically Danish women. All but one of the couples were heterosexual; I did interview one Cuban man who emigrated by marriage to a Swedish man. My research explores the gender and racial dynamics of this migration tied to tourism. I am interested in how these couples form, their legal/bureaucratic experiences of migration, their integration into Scandinavia and their continued ties to Cuba.

2 There is a significant number of Cuban women in the sex and marriage markets in Italy and Spain. Roughly 85 percent of all Cubans in Italy are women. There is more equal gender balance among Cubans in other European countries. Many Cubans also migrate to Latin America, but that region was not part of my research.

3 Cuban migration laws have also changed recently, extending the time Cubans can be out of the country from 11 months to two years with the PVE *(Permiso de Viaje al Exterior* – Permission to Travel Abroad) (Burnett, 2013). This allows them to keep their residency rights in Cuba, while giving those coming to the U.S. time to establish U.S. residency as well under the Cuban Adjustment Act. Recent changes in Cuban migration policy also now allow for Cubans to more easily repatriate and regain residency on the island by filing a request at the Cuban consulate in the country where they currently reside. If granted residency, they will regain all rights including the new ability to purchase property. They will also be allowed to travel abroad, providing they do not stay abroad longer than 24 months without returning to Cuba (Cuban Consulate U.S., n.d.).

4 See the Brookings Institute working paper for details on additional provisions of the law and the processes, marketing and pricing of home sales (Peters, 2014).

5 Earlier in 2015, the Cuban phone monopoly ETECSA *(Empresa de Telecomunicaciones de Cuba S.A.)* allowed online payments from abroad for phone services in Cuba to tap the diaspora's potential as a source of income for the island. Most recently, relatives abroad can pay for meals at restaurants for family on the island (Benitez, 2014).

6 Cubans in the U.S. with close ties to family on the island have also been involved in sending often substantial resources to their families – and through family members could purchase or repair homes on the island, but legally the homes remain in the ownership of the local family member (not the migrant). These Cubans, Eckstein (2009) argued, are spurring more changes on the island than their earlier isolationist compatriots, precisely because of their continued engagement with the island. Cubans abroad have managed to send over $2.6 billion annually in family remittances, often working around whatever obstacles put in place by governments on both sides of the Florida Straits.

7 I have changed names and details to protect anonymity.

8 Government migration regulations play a large role in shaping these marriages (see Fernandez 2013; Fernandez & Jensen, 2014).

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Writing Local Church History:
An Academic's Perspective

Anna Louise Bates, Hudson Valley Region

My introduction to the discipline of writing local church history began with my appointment, last year, as church historian for the New Paltz United Methodist Church (NPUMC). I would replace recently deceased Dr. Carleton Mabee, a prolific scholar and writer who preceded me in that post.

Mabee, a Pulitzer Prize winner and widely published local historian, left big shoes to fill. I knew him well. When I moved to the Hudson Valley more than a decade ago, he drove me around the area and showed me many historical sites. His published works include a biography of Sojourner Truth, and a book about the utopian religious communities of Father Divine. He showed me how he used local sources to write both books. He introduced me to the Gardiner Historical Society, where I attended meetings and participated in various projects for several years. But most importantly, he was a fellow member of the New Paltz UMC, and as such, he urged me to write its history.

I admired Dr. Mabee as a scholar and as a friend, and I tucked his suggestion away for a possible project after I retire from SUNY Empire State College. For professional scholarship, I focused on writing popular culture history articles that I present annually at the Far West Popular Culture Association's meetings. Church history would be a nice thing to do later on, I thought. It would be a way for me to apply my research and writing skills to an institution I belonged to and supported. However, because I perceived this as part of my spiritual, rather than my academic, life, I did not anticipate the impact this position as church historian would have on my professional work. It would have been hard for me to imagine being so deeply involved – as

I am now – writing a *scholarly* history of this local institution with a history almost as long as that of the United States.

This year, I was given an eight-week reassignment at ESC, during which time I planned to write an article about marriage equality in the United Methodist Church. The UMC has lagged behind other Protestant denominations that sanction same-sex marriage and the ordination of LGBT persons. The church's guiding constitution, *The Book of Discipline,* interprets homosexuality as "inconsistent with Christian teaching" (United Methodist Publishing House, 2012, p. 220). I did, in fact, spend much time gathering information about that topic, and in the process found the materials, and the inspiration, to do much more.

Enter The Reverend Bette Sohm, current pastor at NPUMC. I requested access to the church's records to research this church's views about same-sex relationships. Our church has a history of support for the LGBT community, and several of its members, including The Rev. Sohm, signed a "Covenant of Conscience" challenging the church's official position on same-sex relationships. The notorious Rev. Fred Phelps, and his vociferous anti-gay congregation from the Westboro Baptist Church in Kansas, visited New Paltz in 2004 to protest its mayor's decision to allow same-sex weddings. The United Methodist Church was one of his targets. Phelps brought his gay-hating protesters, but was outperformed by the church's congregation. Organist Lee Pritchard cranked up the vintage Moeller organ, and the congregation sang hymns so loudly they drowned out Phelps' anti-gay slogans (Horrigan, 2004).

So began my work. Then, The Rev. Sohm asked whether I would assist with a planned church anniversary celebration. Our church, one of the oldest in the area, has a history

dating back to 1786, when Methodist Circuit Riders began preaching in the area. I agreed to help with the celebration. To that end, I started looking for old church records. I found a gold mine in the attic. File boxes stuffed with books dating back to the 19th century, aging attendance, baptismal and marriage registers, scores of financial records, building plans and many other things, including a fruit jar containing the ashes of the mortgage on the church's building. Most of the items are in sad repair, deteriorating and crumbling from years of improper storage. Rev. Sohm, a church archivist for several years, asked whether I would help preserve the church's documents. Thus began phase two of my work.

A source of particular interest was a handwritten history of the church written during the late 19th century. The Rev. Sohm suggested that we have this valuable resource photographed and properly stored. Together,

she and I traveled to Madison, New Jersey to visit the General Commission on Archives and History, located at Drew Theological Seminary. There, we persuaded L. Dale Patterson, (pictured below, with me) archivist-records administrator, to copy our book using their sophisticated machinery.

Meanwhile, I had access to all of my church's historical records for one day each week. I

L. Dale Patterson and Anna Bates holding the book of handwritten history of the church.

spent eight Wednesdays sorting, reading and writing notes. I found, among other things, a gem of a resource worth at least one academic article. It is the "Secretary's Book of the Halmshaw Fellowship Club." This club was formed in 1934 by women students of the state Normal School, now SUNY New Paltz. They named their club after a beloved pastor, and held meetings for four years, entertaining lecturers and presenters on topics ranging from Buddhist art to archaeology. This club, unique to New Paltz, demonstrates the close connection between the church and the college during the 1930s.

Besides these things, I joined the United Methodist Church's local Commission on Archives and History as a representative for the Catskill-Hudson District. This charge involved a meeting where we discussed yet another celebration – this one of the New York Annual Conference's 250th anniversary. For this project, I agreed to research the lives and

contributions of five prominent Methodists, and write short articles that will be printed and distributed during the celebration in 2016.

As my reassignment draws to a close, I am more excited than ever about writing local history. I am sitting on a goldmine of great resources. I look forward to helping catalog my church's archival materials. I am also considering developing a course, and possibly an internship, for students interested in this kind of history. And from the materials I have perused to date, I anticipate at least two scholarly articles and possibly a book.

I strongly encourage others to do this kind of work. Are you a historian? Do you love history, regardless of your degree in another area? Are you a sociologist, psychologist, social scientist or cultural studies specialist? If you can examine historical sources and think, you can write history. Consider, too, that every school, church or other public institution has a history. There are file boxes and fruit jars full of evidence waiting to be explored. Consider this the next time you need an exciting, fulfilling and absolutely academic project.

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Imminent Demise or Vigorous Recovery? Reflections at the Bedside of International Education

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"As the international dimension of higher education gains more attention and recognition, people tend to use it in the way that best suits their purpose" (de Wit, 2002, p. 14).

Over the past several months, I have been working on a project related to the internationalization of higher education. The specific focus of the project was actually rather narrow: the study abroad experience. Although some question the social, cultural and education value of study abroad, many more see it as an engagement in "transformative learning, educative experiences, and critical reflection [that] are about opening a learner's metaphoric eyes and enlightening their perspectives through thought provoking scenarios, self-reflection, and dialogue" (Perry, Stoner, & Tarrant, 2012, p. 683). That certainly resonates with my own experience and with the experiences of many of my students.

My project was to explore how students might be more effectively prepared for the study abroad experience, how they might gain greater value for themselves and for their institutions, and how such experiences and transformations might be integrated into a broader and more comprehensive process of internationalization within the college. The project resulted in the publication of a set of three chapters in edited books (Starr-Glass, 2015; Starr-Glass, in press a, b).

But more than that, the project provided an opportunity to reflect on a cluster of constructs: globalization, the internationalization of higher education and international education. These three perspectives are quite different, but they are often confused – with good reason. Globalization is robust and flourishing. Internationalization has become increasingly contentious; it may simply be evolving in complexity, or it may be suffering from a crisis of identity. The third construct, international education, is in poor shape and is often viewed

as passé, irrelevant and in decline – some might say in terminal decline; some that its obituary has already been written. However, I believe that international education – in some contexts and in some institutions – might make a vigorous and timely recovery.

This paper reflects on the various meanings that have been ascribed to globalization, internationalization in higher education and international education. In part, it is a consideration of the evolutionary trajectories that have been reshaped by changing contexts and conditions. In part, it is a consideration of the history – which is quite different from the evolution – of the values, assumptions and goals associated with higher education in an expanded world.

The first section considers globalization, which is perhaps the most important and least disputed. The second section explores the shifting meanings, emerging contradictions and developing tensions of internationalization in the context of higher education. The third section questions the fate of international education and attempts to provide some answers that are more rooted in optimism than in nostalgia. The final section reflects on the challenges and opportunities that exist for any community of teaching and learning – and certainly for SUNY Empire State College – as it tries to engage in more relevant ways with a globalized world.

Globalization of the Lifeworld

There is no need to belabor the point: the world is spectacularly interconnected. This interconnectedness is readily apparent, but in actuality, the degree of connection is probably greater than we realize. We usually think of globalization in economic and financial terms, and certainly the trillions of borderless U.S. dollars that surge around the globe on a daily basis could lead to such a conclusion, as could the burgeoning trade deficit. But globalization

Photo credit: Prof. Jerry Koller

David Starr-Glass

has impacted more than economies and marketplaces: it has reshaped our political, social and knowledge worlds. We have moved from a map where bold colors clearly defined nation states, to one in which the colors have blurred and mingled – just like the borders, and just like national power and influence. In this increasingly interconnected and entwined world, it is difficult to isolate simple cause-and-effect relationships in our social, political and economic engagement. It is equally difficult to ignore, or to remain aloof from, the fluidity and pervasive encroachment of an altered world on our production, co-creation and sharing of knowledge. This is the reality of globalization.

Those generalities notwithstanding, globalization has assumed different meanings for different people and multiple definitions have emerged, particularly in the context of higher education. Despite the variations in scope, there is a clear and discernable center around which these definitions cluster (de Wit, 2011).

- Knight and de Wit (1997) defined globalization as "the flow of technology,

economy, knowledge, people, values, [and] ideas … across borders. … [it] affects each country in a different way due to a nation's individual history, traditions, culture and priorities" (p. 6).

- Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley (2009), defining globalization in higher education contexts, saw it as a disruptive and revolutionary: "reality shaped by an increasingly integrated world economy, new information and communications technology, the emergence of an international knowledge network, the role of the English language, and other forces beyond the control of academic institutions" (p. 7).

- Hudzik (2011), again with higher education in mind, characterized globalization as "the rise of factors and forces that transcend borders and sovereign states. … alters and weakens political and economic boundaries, and intensifies the cross-border flow of nearly everything – but especially knowledge, ideas, and learning" (p. 15).

Globalization is not an external force operating in a distant vacuum: it has permeated our lifeworld and has changed them irrevocably. It has a profound impact on our knowledge production and sharing – on what we know, what we need to teach and what our students need to learn. In the academy, globalization has necessitated change at the level of curriculum, discipline and institution. It is impossible to ignore the change imperative brought about by globalization; indeed, any reluctance, or hesitation, to acknowledge it only decreases the credibility of our educational promise to students, faculties and to those other stakeholders who place trust in the vision and relevancy of higher education.

Jane Knight (1999) suggested that "globalisation can be thought of as the catalyst while internationalisation is the response, albeit a response in a proactive way" (p. 14). In this consideration, globalization comes first and triggers internationalization in higher education; awareness of the fundamental changes required by globalization provides the impetus for the internationalization process within the academy. But in this sequence of recognition and consequences, it is peculiarly

difficult for responses to be considered "proactive" – they are more likely to be delayed and likely to be reactive.

But what is the internationalization response to globalization in the academy?

Internationalization of the Academy

The academy is embedded in a complex social, cultural and knowledge matrix. It also functions and expresses itself within a broader national context. Given the extent and pervasiveness of globalization, it is inevitable that the academy will have to respond to global shifts. There are three possible types of response: (a) those that can be considered internal and inward reorientations; (b) those that are essentially external and outward; and (c) those that attempt to thoughtfully integrate internal and external expressions into a comprehensive, balanced and potentially enhancing synergism.

Internationalization as an Internal Reconfiguration

This kind of reorientation is historically the one that higher education institutions first consider. It can also be seen as the first stage in an evolutionary process of institutional change. Knight (2004) presented a useful survey of the shifting definitions, approaches and rationales associated with the internationalization response in higher education. In charting the evolution of internationalization – and it does seem to have taken an evolutionary trajectory – she noted that in the later 1980s, the term "internationalization" started to be used more regularly in the higher education discourse. At that time, it was used to describe activities at the institutional level. In the last 30 years, however, definitions of "internationalization" have shifted to recognize that it is a more complex and multifaceted construct, and that it is connected with an institutional process that is more explicit, deliberate and integrated. For example:

- Arum and van de Water (1992) defined internationalization in a way that seems more descriptive of the parts, rather than of any overall goal or intent. Internationalization was seen as "the multiple activities, programs and services

that fall within international studies, international educational exchange and technical cooperation" (p. 202).

- Knight (2003) redefined internationalization in a more extensive manner, emphasizing an institutional process leading to integrated outcomes: "The process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (p. 2).

- Hudzik (2011), in a more recent definition, advanced the notion that internationalization in higher education is a strategic imperative, not simply a comprehensive process: "A commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education. It shapes institutional ethos and values and touches the entire higher education enterprise. It is essential that it be embraced by institutional leadership, governance, faculty, students, and all academic service and support units. It is an institutional imperative, not just a desirable possibility" (p. 10).

These definitions suggest an evolution of the internationalization construct. Over the last 30 years, the perceived need for internationalization has become more urgent, confident and comprehensive. Internationalization has been increasingly understood as an integral part of a responsive higher education system. It shapes not only what is taught but how it is taught, and it repositions the mission and intent of the higher education institutions that embrace it. As these evolving definitions demonstrate, the locus of change is within the institution: that is where a need for change is perceived, and that is where change is implemented. In that sense, many of those in the higher education community have come to view internationalization as an *internal or inward* process centered on the community of teaching and learning, academic departments and faculty changing what they do and how they do it.

But there is a conundrum that is not unraveled in these definitions. If internationalization is predicated on globalization, and if globalization is ubiquitous and pervasive, is it really possible to restrict internationalization to a single internal or inward focus?

Put another way, can globalization be contained by – or in a sense isolated within – an internationalization process that is centered on internal shifts and realignments within the academy?

Internationalization as an External Reconfiguration

In a world increasingly globalized, the institution itself is also confronted by a changed context and a new set of options – what might be regarded as *external or outward* possibilities and challenges. These include recognizing the economic value of education and extending the reach of the institution beyond its domestic boundaries in search of increased engagement and (of course) increased tuition. They also include increased competition in the higher education marketplaces and growing student mobility and migration. This has led to a second possible reconfiguration of the academy in response to the challenges and opportunities of globalization. This outward interest is picked up in many current definitions of the internationalization process within the academy.

- The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB, 2011) considers the developing global academy and the global business school – note the shift back from international to global – and stated that: "We use 'globalization' to refer to a process of change within educational institutions *extending the reach of educational engagement beyond one's home borders* and deepening the richness of understanding about the increasingly global foundation of business. The end results of the globalization of management education process should be (1) greater competence and confidence of graduates for doing business with global impact; (2) more research insights into the global complexity of the managers, enterprises, and markets studied; and (3) ultimately better service of the global management profession" (p. 7, emphasis added).

- The National Association of Foreign Student Advisers Task Force on Internationalization (NAFSA, 2008) also blurs the older definitional boundaries between internationalization and globalization and stresses an outward engagement. They defined internationalization as: "The conscious effort to integrate and infuse international, intercultural, and global dimensions into the ethos and outcomes of postsecondary education. To be fully successful, it must involve *active and responsible engagement of the academic community in global networks and partnerships*" (p. 1, emphasis added).

These definitions reflect an awareness of globalization as a force that aligns the academy with a broader and more connected world, with connections that extend beyond its domestic boundaries. Increasingly, higher education has come to see itself as an economic player in the global playing field. Increasingly, it has come to understand that education is a tradeable service – that knowledge has been progressively commercialized, commodified and monetized (Knight, 2008; Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005). Knight (1999) was one of the first to recognize the trend of higher education to appreciate "education in terms of an export product rather than a cultural agreement … [with a] strong interest on the part of large and small countries to make the export of education produces and services a major part of their foreign policy" (p. 18). It is inevitable that globalization should be understood as a commercial opportunity for the academy; an opportunity for extending its educational marketplace, for increasing its potential enrollment, and for enhancing its prestige and reputational value.

This is clearly understood by countries such as Australia, Canada and the U.K., where significant proportions of their gross domestic products are derived from higher education exports (Business, Innovation and Skills, 2013; Group of Eight, 2014; Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, 2012). (It might be useful to keep in mind that "exports" in higher education contexts are generally accomplished through attracting *inbound* migrant students, teaching them on domestic campuses and benefitting from the resultant *inflow* of tuition from abroad).

In its external response to globalization, higher education recognizes the economic benefits and often prioritizes these over educational or human capital value. This has led to a common scenario of global market entry. In *first wave* internationalization, institutions of higher education deliver educational services domestically to inbound foreign students. They might then progress to *second wave* internationalization, in which they use foreign partners, strategic alliances, or academic twinning arrangements to enroll foreign students on campuses abroad. *Third wave* international expansion brings the presence of the domestic college directly to the foreign-located student through the creation of a physical campus abroad, or through the creation of a virtual transnational presence through the use of online distance learning (British Council & DAAD, 2014; Knight, 2010).

These responses are centered not in the faculty, but in the administration. They have a profound impact on who is taught and perhaps on where the instruction takes place. They respond to changes in a world within which the academy is embedded, and require the development and implementation of strategies that address more distant institutional visions. Once implemented, these strategies will reveal patterns of engagement with those beyond the institution; they will communicate institutional values to a wider audience. In that sense, an institutional commitment to internationalization beyond its campus can be considered to be an *external or outward* process that will change what the institution does, where it does it, how it understands itself and how it is understood by others.

Internationalization as a Balanced and Comprehensive Reconfiguration

I have chosen to use the terms *internal* and *external* in approaching internationalization, but do so with some reservation. It would be disingenuous to set up a false dichotomy; it would be simplistic to suggest that communities of teaching and learning have to decide on – or have imposed upon them – one of two alternatives. Internationalization is best

viewed as a continuum of opportunities and possibilities, a continuum along which polar positions can be speculated even though they are unlikely. In initiating internationalization, institutions of higher education will inevitably position themselves on this continuum and seek to create a unique equilibrium that balances inward and outward pressures. Some might prefer *inward* and *outward* designations, with their directionality pointing to different possibilities of engagement and loci of action. Others might favor the older *at home* and *abroad* internationalization designations that focuses (perhaps too sharply) on place and location.

A balanced internationalization reconfiguration is not one that is explicitly considered in the literature, but it is one that each institution encounters and with which it must deal. However, the challenge of balancing is clearly inferred from the shifting meaning that has been given to globalization and internationalization in the higher education debate.

Teichler (2004) for example, reflecting on the European debate about internationalization in higher education, pointed out that globalization "initially seemed to be defined as the totality of substantial changes in the context and inner life of higher education, related to growing interrelationships between different parts of the world whereby national borders are blurred or even seem to vanish" (p. 23). However, in recent years, two things have happened: (a) the term "internationalization" has been increasingly replaced by "globalisation"; and (b) simultaneously, the meaning of "globalization" has itself shifted and come to mean "any supra-regional phenomenon related to higher education … and/or anything on a global scale related to higher education characterised by market and competition" (p. 23).

The fluidity and drift in meaning between internationalization and globalization in higher education cause confusion for all involved in the process. Presently, although defined specifically to meet the needs of certain groups, neither phenomenon has been defined in a comprehensive, restrictive, or particularly useful manner that has been agreed upon by all. Indeed, Scott (2006) argued that "the distinction between internationalisation and globalisation, although suggestive, cannot be regarded as categorical. They overlap, and are intertwined, in all kinds of ways" (p. 14).

At the Bedside of International Education

Originating in the 1960s, and persisting through to the early 1980s, the traditional term for an awareness of, concern about and educational engagement with national difference was "international education." There was a premise that real and understandable difference was inherent in national cultures and in nation states. This may be somewhat obvious – or it might be understandably overlooked – in the term "international education." *Inter-national* recognizes a connection and communication between distinct national, social and cultural entities; *education* recognizes a complex domain of learning, thinking and understanding that has both cognitive and experiential dimensions. In scope, international education is very broad, but in this paper, I consider a narrower focus – international higher education.

In passing, it is important to note that "internationalization" in higher education seems to have derived from "international education"; although, as has been noted, the "inter-*national*" in internationalization has steadily morphed to the more comprehensive – and questionably more homogenized – single entity, "global."

Historically, international higher education was often comingled or associated with disciplinary interests giving rise to "Comparative Studies in. …" Many also saw international education from a political and national policy perspective – similar to "International Co-operation" and "International Relations" – and as Knight (1997) noted "historically, international education was seen as a beneficial tool for foreign policy especially with respect to national security and peace among nations … still a consideration today, it does not have the importance it once did" (p. 9).

However, this aspect is still quite explicit in national policy statements such as "Succeeding Globally through International Education and Engagement," the "first-ever, fully articulated international strategy" that was belatedly issued by the U.S. Department of Education in 2012. This document identified two broad goals for international higher education: *"strengthening* U.S. education and *advancing* our nation's international priorities" (USDE, 2012, p. 1, emphasis added). These goals are to be advanced through five specific goals: (a) providing world-class education for all U.S. students; (b) ensuring that all U.S. students acquire global competencies; (c) introducing international standards and benchmarking; (d) applying globalization lessons learned from other countries; and (e) advancing U.S. education diplomacy and engagement with other countries.

In the complexity of globalization and internationalization of higher education, some scholars have considered that international education has been overtaken by events and by context. For some observers, international education is too fragmented to serve the global institutions of the 21st century. For others, there is a sense that it carries too much baggage from the past. Certainly, by understanding and classifying international education as a series of *activities,* it can be seen as limited and circumscribed by what it does. However, international education is more than a set of activities: it is a *process* – a process of recognition, sensitivity and engagement. Indeed, there are many who see the promise and potential of the process of international education as being particularly relevant as we move forward to a more globalized academy.

> *However, international education is more than a set of activities: it is a process – a process of recognition, sensitivity and engagement.*

Josef Mestenhauser (2015) has been perhaps the most eloquent, persistent and persuasive advocate for a reinvigorated expression of international education, which he defined as "a program of major educational reform designed to ensure that higher education produces globally thinking and knowing students able to work anywhere on short notice without

prior preparation." Also, he sees international education as consisting of "both formal and informal knowledge, cognitive, experiential, and implicit domains of learning, and it originates across multiple academic disciplines" (p. 5).

International education recognizes and accepts difference. It speculates on whether there is a convergence or divergence of national cultures in a rapidly globalized world, but these are only speculations: difference – whether diminishing or increasing – is recognized and explored. International education understands that the appreciation of difference is valuable in its own right, but it also claims that an understanding of difference can lead to contact, communication and cooperation that would otherwise be impossible. At its core, international education accepts and values *all* humanity, even though it also recognizes that as humans, we are differently situated, differently socialized and differently acculturated. At its best, involvement in international education replaces ignorance, prejudice and ethnocentrism with understanding, respect and humility. International education perspectives are challenged to negotiate a common human understanding without the imposition of a dominant narrative, or the favoring of a singular voice. Crucially, international education focuses on people, their experiences and their transformation – which brings us back to my work on the study abroad experience that lies at the heart of this reflection on internationalization. Study abroad is a perhaps *the* defining element of international education.

International education accepts that an awareness of difference is neither intuitive nor acquired by some vague process of cultural osmosis: difference has to be explored, recognized and communicated. In the communication process, there is a place for teaching and learning, just as there is a place for guiding and encouraging, just as there is a place for inspiring and changing. International education encounters difference in educational systems, recognizing that these differences lead to different assumptions, dynamics and outcomes from (say) the educational system of the U.S. It will compare and contrast these systems, but these comparisons are not

simply for intellectual purposes: they may suggest changes in perspective, or they may be communicated to learners so that they can better negotiate the systems in which they find themselves.

In summary, I suggest that international education seeks to pursue a trajectory that is somewhere between pragmatic and idealistic; somewhere between the existing realities and considerations of what might be better. But, despite all of these valuable attributes, today, international education is often regarded as somewhat irrelevant – especially in a world that is characterized as borderless and global, and especially in a world where learners are characterized as unfettered global citizens.

Toward an Internationally-Sensitive and Responsive Institution

In responding to internationalization, institutions of higher education are challenged to define themselves and to elaborate their visions of what education means in the 21st century. This they have to do against the context and consequences of globalization. If their responses seem to indicate the convergence of internationalization and globalization, this might either signal that constructs are merging, or that different institutional priorities have emerged in the ways in which education is understood. Whatever the underlying cause, as someone deeply involved with internationalization, I tend to agree with Brandenburg and de Wit (2011) when they wrote that "gradually, the *why and what* have been taken over by the *how* … instruments of internationalization have become the main objective: more exchange, more degree mobility, and more recruitment" (p. 16, emphasis added).

Whether we prefer to call it internationaliza-tion or globalization, we still have a personal, professional and institutional commitment to prepare our students for life and work in the global community of the 21st century. In doing so, we must be ready "to leave the old concepts of internationalization and globalization and move on to a fresh unbiased paradigm. … [and] to rethink and redefine the way we look at the internationalization of higher education in the present time" (Brandenburg & de Wit, 2011, p. 17). In that rethinking and redefining,

I believe that the values and potentials of international education have a significant place. Rather than fading into an obscure decline, international education possesses an enduring vitality that has served learners, instructors and institutions in the past, and can serve them usefully in the future.

So how might we move forward to create an institution that is both internationally sensitive and responsive?

- **Explore the possibilities and experiences of others.** Internationalization and globalization are complex constructs with an immense literature, changing meanings and eclectic positions. There are multiple possible expressions of institutional internationalization – not just one. Before an institution can develop its objectives and strategies, it must come to its unique and considered understanding of the issues through the literature and the shared experiences and research of others. In the first instance, any reconfiguration of the academy depends on the institution's constructions and understandings of globalization and internationalization.

- **Recognize the context and structures.** It needs to be kept in mind that all institutional strategies and enactments connected with internationalization and globalization are, as de Wit (2011) noted, "filtered and contextualised by the specific internal context of a university, by the type of university and how universities are embedded nationally … [and] shaped at the programme level by the different relationships these programmes have with the market and society" (p. 242). The institution has to appreciate what it is, what it wishes to do, and whether it is able to become what it intends.

- **Appreciate the imperative to change.** Internationalization is not an institutional possibility or a peripheral add-on: it is an imperative. The business of the academy is knowledge-creation and education, both of which are embedded in a rapidly changing world. This is not to say that the academy must dutifully reflect the lifeworld or slavishly pursue it. Indeed, part of the cultural and social value of the

academy lies in its ability to develop more nuanced, complex or variant appreciations. Nevertheless, to have any genuine value for its students and community, the academy must be part of the lifeworld – and that means part of globalization.

- **Recognize the ongoing nature of change.** Institutional expressions of internationalization will be dynamic and transient, moving as the institution reconsiders and adjusts to the implications of its previously-held strategy, and to the changes that occur in the task environment within which it operates. Change may be incremental, or it might be limited to one aspect of the institution; however, for a genuine reorientation of the institution, change needs to be comprehensive (not piecemeal), institutionwide and perpetual.

- **Remain true to core values.** Internal and external change may be an imperative, but so too is remaining true to core values that define the institution's vision. Core values are not necessarily immutable, nor are they sanctified by age and tradition. But if core values have been vital and continue to be credible and inspirational, then they do not have to be casually abandoned. In crafting a response to internationalization, the academy might come to see its core values somewhat differently, or might see them assuming a new and important meaning in a changed context. However, in arriving at a balanced reorientation, it is to be hoped that core values concerning people – learners, faculty, community and other stakeholders – are prioritized over financial or economic expediencies.

It is not simply coincidental that when Empire State College came into existence in 1971 it quickly implemented an international program. This might be understood as in keeping with the spirit of the times. Certainly, ESC was created in a time of ferment in the educational world, and it has pursued revolutionary and innovative approaches from its inception. But more than a transient fad, ESC was committed to the values associated with international education; values that resonated with its own *raison d'etre* and vision. The Center for International Programs was to become, as

it were, a living workshop for exploring and engaging in international education – for appreciating national culture difference and for providing benefit for thousands of discerning nondomestic students. With an early international presence, ESC was actually ahead of the internationalization curve. International Programs has functioned effectively and has been driven by the same set of core values that motivate and inform ESC operations in the state of New York.

In its remarkable history, International Programs has been a pioneer in what was known as "international education" and what is now understood as internationalization. The challenge for those of us working in International Programs has been to effectively communicate our experiences of difference to our broader community of learning. As ESC comes to terms with internationalization, it is hoped that the experience gained in International Programs will be of value and utility. It is also anticipated that International Programs will itself undergo reorientation, but hopefully that will take place within the existing rubric of international education. Sitting as I do at the bedside of international education, it is clear that this vision of learning is still vigorous and that claims of its demise are more than premature.

Certainly, ESC was created in a time of ferment in the educational world, and it has pursued revolutionary and innovative approaches from its inception. But more than a transient fad, ESC was committed to the values associated with international education; values that resonated with its own raison d'etre and vision.

This reflection began with an epigram taken from de Wit, who emphasized that as the international dimension of higher education gains more attention and recognition, people tend to use it in the way that best suits their purpose. Our purposes are best suited if our move is toward an internationalized institution that embodies, affirms and projects our core values. Globalization and internationalization are complex issues, and it is to be expected that our response toward them will also be complex. It may well be that the values inherent in international education provide clear guidance in our quest and in furthering our educational vision. It is, after all, the vision that is really important – for us and for our students: present and future.

> While globalisation offers the potential for growth through the development of ICTs [information and communication technologies], the liberation of markets and the enlargement of borders, it must be said that these aspects only reach a minority of people. Consequently, in order to train citizens that are critical, proactive and open to difference, the internationalisation of higher education should be considered in terms that encompass the differences among countries and their respective needs, and not just the demands of the market. (Ramirez, 2011, p. 323)

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"At Empire State College, as at a number of other institutions that emphasize individual education, a new faculty role has evolved – that of mentor. These faculty mentors carry out a complex role more characteristic of the undergraduate teacher of 40 years ago before education became compartmentalized into subdisciplinary specialists, counseling specialists, placement specialists, and student activities specialists. In the mentor role these functions are brought back together. The faculty mentors are responsible, both individually and collectively, for the design, approval, and implementation of each student's degree program and for each specific study plan (or contract) undertaken in fulfillment of that degree program. The faculty mentors advise and counsel their students, help them define their educational goals and interests, and encourage them in discovering new areas of inquiry. The overview of the student thus provided enables the mentor to suggest an integrated, coherent plan for the student's learning. The role is highly facilitative."

James W. Hall, The Faculty and the Future
Alternative Higher Education, 1*(2), 1976, p. 104*

Career and College Readiness Seminar: Developing and Sustaining Partnerships

Ann Becker, Samantha James and Mildred Van Bergen, Long Island Region

As a result of a partnership between the Eastern Suffolk BOCES (Boards of Cooperative Educational Services) and SUNY Empire State College that began in 2013, the Long Island Region was asked to develop and present a college and career readiness seminar for students in the community currently attending Eastern Suffolk BOCES' TASC (Test Assessing Secondary Completion, New York state's high school equivalency test; the TASC replaced the General Educational Development [GED] test in 2014) class, and former students who had recently earned their High School Equivalency Diploma. Mentor Ann Becker, with Mildred VanBergen, director of academic support, and Samantha James, coordinator of student services, collaborated with Eastern Suffolk BOCES' Riverhead Literacy Zone under the direction of Divisional Administrator Barbara Egloff, Program Administrator Donna Singer, Administrative Coordinator Audrey Gottlieb and teacher Sharon Goeller, to provide the seminar in May 2015. The expertise of all involved was invaluable in providing the resources needed to design and present the workshop and support this initiative, which is designed to enable at-risk populations to access higher education – a shared goal of Empire State College and the Riverhead Literacy Zone.

The objective of the seminar was to prepare these students for entering college, give them practical advice on succeeding in their academic endeavors, and prepare them for the job market. The seminar included a discussion of time management, how to listen and take notes in an academic setting, how to read and think critically, the three types of writing assignments typically required in college (opinion/argumentative, informative/explanatory and narrative) and how to construct strong thesis statements in argumentative essays. In addition, the seminar was designed to provide students with the knowledge and practical skills they need to prepare for an interview and develop a resume. Students also learned that ESC offers credit for

(l–r) Samantha James, Ann Becker and Mildred Van Bergen

prior college-level learning based on knowledge and skills gained through students' life experiences, licenses and trainings.

This goal of what follows is to demonstrate how to develop a similar seminar or program for use with various partners across the state and how to provide practical advice relevant to our target student population. We also hope to demonstrate our willingness to work with others in developing partnerships and in providing both educational leadership and support to underserved populations of students by offering ideas and encouragement as they consider their academic options. The goal of ESC's participation in this endeavor is to welcome an important opportunity for thoughtful, interactive discussions about ways to recruit and retain students. We would encourage others interested in developing such a partnership to reach out to local Literacy Zones, which have been established across New York state, and consider developing seminars or workshops designed to assist in the work being done with high-need communities, both urban and rural. Making connections with groups involved in these areas can provide additional exposure for ESC, enhance our recruitment efforts and help us provide access to those who need our services.

Riverhead Literacy Zone

Ann Becker, coordinator and mentor in Historical Studies at the Riverhead location of the Long Island Region, was invited to represent Empire State College on the advisory board of the newly-formed Eastern Suffolk BOCES Literacy Zone in January of 2013. According to the statewide Literacy Zone website, "[t]he Literacy Zone is a reform initiative to close the achievement gap in urban and rural communities of concentrated poverty and high concentrations of families and individuals with limited literacy or English language proficiency" (NYSED, n.d., para. 1). Riverhead is one of 51 Literacy Zones across the state.

Each Literacy Zone can provide pathways out of poverty for individuals and families, in the following areas:

- A continuum of literacy from early childhood through adult, including strong support for parents' involvement in their children's literacy development at home and engagement with the school system

- Assistance and support for out-of-school youth to enable them to complete high school and succeed in postsecondary education or advanced training

- Postsecondary transition that enable out-of-school youth and adults to obtain a high school equivalency diploma and succeed in postsecondary education

- Support services that enable out-of-school youth and adults who are receiving public assistance, or families with incomes of less than 200 percent of poverty, to obtain and retain employment

- Transition programs for youth and adults returning to the community from incarceration

- Pathways to citizenship and English language proficiency for limited English language adults

- Workforce development programs, including apprenticeship, career and technical education, and career pathways

- Support for mature workers and senior citizens to enable them to stay out of poverty

- Support for individuals with disabilities and their families

- Transition support for returning veterans and their families, including disabled veterans

A continuum of literacy services from early childhood through adult, including strong support for pathways out of poverty are tailored to meet the needs of individuals and families located within the Literacy Zone community. (NYSED, n.d., paras. 2-3)

Many local organizations are members of the Riverhead Literacy Zone, including the Long Island Head Start, Teacher's Federal Credit Union, SILO (Suffolk Independent Living Organization), the Riverhead Charter School, the Riverhead Free Library, CCE (Cornell Cooperative Extension) of Suffolk County, Suffolk County DOL LCA (Department of Labor, Licensing and Consumer Affairs), the North Fork Spanish Apostate and Catholic Charities. The role of ESC in this Literacy Zone is to facilitate the initiatives supporting local efforts to enable out-of-school youth and adults to succeed in postsecondary education, as well as contribute to workforce development programs including career and technical education. The level of interest in ESC's innovative educational model is high within

this group of community activists. Literacy Zones offer unique opportunities to highlight our affordable and flexible higher education programs, both for underserved populations and for employees of the various partners. As a result of the exposure to the work being done by these partners and the communication fostered by the Literacy Zone activities and meetings, we also have begun to develop ideas for other collaborative projects, including prison outreach and a literacy mentoring program.

College Readiness

Mildred Van Bergen co-developed and teaches the SUNY Empire study "Introduction to Independent Learning" designed to prepare new or returning students to be successful learners. In addition, she presents the workshop "Starting the Term Off Right" to ESC students at the beginning of each term at the Riverhead, Hauppauge and Old Westbury locations. When approached by Ann about the preparation and presentation for a career and college readiness workshop for Eastern BOCES students, she used content from each to create the college readiness portion of the BOCES workshop. Samantha James, coordinator of student services, then joined the project, as both professionals have collaborated on student-focused presentations connected to both college and career readiness. This was the first time they combined the two concepts in the same presentation, and for an external audience.

During the initial planning stages, Mildred and Samantha realized that the finished product could be used as an effective recruiting tool, as well as a source of academic and career support for current ESC students. In an effort to connect the ideas of learning with working, the presentation started by asking students such questions as, "What do you enjoy learning about?" and "What is your dream job and what qualifications might be needed for that job?" This led to a collaborative discussion about what college courses are necessary for different occupations. It then segued into focusing on a skill that is necessary for any occupation or college course: time management.

In order to connect how crucial time management is for successful independent learning, the presentation reviewed

organizational skills including how to prioritize assignments, ways to create blocks of study time that include motivating breaks, the roles of dedicated study spaces and finding productive time during busy days. Students were urged to communicate their needs to family and friends – to think about their support systems – regarding their studies and educational goals. The presentation then introduced strategies for using their managed time wisely, stressing the importance of learning to think critically about what they read and focusing on how to be an active reader.

Career Readiness

The remaining section of the presentation focused on resumes and job interviews: "Getting Ready for a Career." It was modified from a presentation designed for ESC students, originally used by Student Services, which regularly holds career-oriented workshops for students and alumni.

As with the ESC audience, the program participants had a variety of knowledge with regard to writing a resume and going on job interviews, so the presentation had to include the basics for those who had little to no knowledge.

The presentation focused on writing resumes and cover letters, appropriate attire for interviews, preparing for the interview (researching the company or organization), as well as a section where we asked the participants to play the role of job candidate and answer sample questions. They were then asked to think of questions they would ask the interviewer or search committee on an interview.

Some of the participants had earned their High School Equivalency [HSE] Diploma and others were still working on it, so college may or may not have been in their immediate plans. However, having their HSE diploma meant that new opportunities were open to them in the world of employment, so it was important that they understood how the job search and interview processes work, what is acceptable and what is not, how to represent themselves and how to handle the unexpected.

The need for the latter as part of the workshop became apparent when one participant asked something to the effect of: "If an interviewer asks me if I've done something, should I just say 'yes'?" Of course, he was told "No, you cannot lie in an interview," but that was a great opportunity for him to deal with the unexpected – maybe he did not anticipate being asked that question, but he was faced with it, so how does he turn that situation around to benefit him? He was told to tell the interviewer that while he had never done that particular task before, he is both a quick and eager learner and will learn whatever is necessary for the job.

Representatives of the Literacy Zone were very appreciative of our willingness to provide the seminar, and indicated that the students in attendance were very happy to receive a certificate of completion, as for most, it was the first tangible evidence they have ever been given to indicate educational achievement. They considered the seminar a great success, and believe that it served to provide encouragement and motivation to pursue higher education among this highly vulnerable population of students. According to Audrey Gottleib, the Literacy Zone administrative coordinator,

> The College and Career Readiness Seminar was successful because it allowed our students to feel the experience of attending a college seminar taught by college professors. Many of our students often do not think they are capable of attending college because the struggle to return to school to pass the arduous Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) exam (which replaced the former GED test) has been challenging. At the closure of this seminar, when our adult literacy students received a certificate of completion, this was their first taste of success at the college level. Not only are our students able and ready to attend college when they leave our program, but they have had opportunities that many traditional high school students often never experience: ESBOCES [Eastern Suffolk BOCES] students have had nutrition, health, debt management and/or computer literacy skill workshops. SUNY Empires State

College affirmed to many of our students that their life experiences would enable them to receive college credits. … This seminar enabled ESBOCES Adult Literacy students to see themselves as college bound students. (personal communication, November 16, 2015)

We have been asked to repeat the seminar, and will continue to present it every term. In addition, we hope to develop a similar workshop relevant to our own students, which will offer the ESC community similar benefits.

When working in higher education, especially in a nontraditional college, the inclination might be to try and recruit the participants right from their HSE program, but our approach was to help prepare them for whatever their next step was; thus, for example, some participants admitted they did not plan to go to college, as their goal was to get a better job. However, the presentation showed them that an affordable college degree was accessible and it is something for them to consider after they meet their immediate career goals. This presentation was able to build upon what the literacy program had accomplished by showing the participants that they can do more and achieve more-whatever their individual goals might be – a concept that is embedded in what we do every day at ESC.

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The City at Night

Terry Boddie, Metropolitan New York Region

Over the past three summer terms, I've scheduled a field trip as part of the structure of my photography group, The City at Night, at the Metropolitan New York Region. The field trip takes place over a period of roughly 10 hours, starting at dusk and ending at dawn the following day. We navigate a particular area of New York City, starting in upper Manhattan and culminating in Coney Island.

One of the primary goals of this study group is to cultivate in students an appreciation for the genre of street photography explored between the time period of dusk and dawn. Most photographs are made during the daylight hours; however from its beginnings in the 19th century, photographers have been fascinated by the image-making possibilities that the night offers. Throughout the term, students are exposed to the work of various photographers from Brassaï, who explored the interior and exterior life of the city of Paris in the 1930s and 40s, and Weegee's New York City crime photographs of the same period, to Lynn Saville's landscape studies of New York City's five boroughs today. The work of these three photographers and others provides inspiration for students by offering them a useful starting point for their own creative image-making.

The field trip this year was scheduled for July 27th. The trip began at Fort Tyron Park in upper Manhattan. The park also is the site of The Cloisters museum, which is a branch of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Students were allowed to bring friends and companions along with them; indeed, one student met two photographers who were visiting from Washington D.C. and invited them along. The field trip was also open to the Metropolitan New York Region community. We met outside of the 190th Street station on the A line at 8:00 p.m. Since sunset was at 8:31 that day, I hoped this time and location would provide us with an excellent opportunity to photograph the sun as it set over the Hudson River and

New Jersey in the distance. An itinerary was handed out prior to the trip so that any student who was delayed or joined us en route would know where we would be. The plan was to spend approximately 45 minutes at each location, making pictures as we made our way toward Coney Island by foot and by subway.

One of the rewards of making images in the context of the city is the almost infinite possibilities regarding the type of images you can get: the clash of angles and perspectives, the way that light describes objects and spaces, the energy of movement depicted as either frozen or blurred. The photographer is aware of all of these possibilities as he or she navigates the terrain. The time of day or night, of course, is a fundamental aspect of the type of images that come from this exploration. Weather is also a crucial factor. It rained heavily for the majority of the field trip. What is usually a hot, dry summer night turned out to be a wet, cold, dreary night. The unpredictability of the weather, however, is one of the things you accept as a street photographer. Rather than retreat, you adapt to the situation. This was true of the photographers who pioneered the tradition of street photography in the early 19th century. It was the same for us that night. We came prepared with umbrellas, raincoats and ponchos; cameras wrapped in transparent plastic or kept in camera cases to protect against the elements emerged only when absolutely necessary.

We began our journey. Each location yielded different experiences, different possibilities.

At 125th Street and Fredrick Douglass Blvd., the intersection was alive with activity. We made our way south to 110th Street, photographing as we went, pausing briefly for a coffee break. We did not stay long at Frederick Douglass Circle – the wind had picked up and it was a bit colder. We took the train to Columbus Circle. There, the human presence was confined mostly to the mall. The

Student Larry Henderson, "Prof Boddie in Action," 2015

fountain at the base of the Columbus statue caught the attention of some of the students. (It also was time for a bathroom break!) We walked to Times Square, which was also bubbling with activity. Family groups and couples taking selfies under umbrellas. The light from the advertising billboards reflecting off of wet surfaces provided some wonderful opportunities for images. Our next stop was Bryant Park. The park was closed by the time we arrived, so we photographed around its perimeter. The D train from 42nd Street took us to our next destination: Washington Square Park. The subway workers making track repairs on the station platform below at 42nd Street gave us additional opportunities for making images. We emerged from the subway at West 4th Street and walked to the park where some photographed the lit arch, while others captured the surrounding area. We made a pit stop a local diner on 6th Avenue on the way back to the subway. At the diner, I made the decision to go directly to Coney Island rather than crossing the Brooklyn Bridge into DUMBO (a neighborhood "Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass") on our way to downtown Brooklyn and the Barclay

Center. I was concerned that the wind gusts on the Brooklyn Bridge might pose some danger to the group. We boarded the train at around 4 a.m. and arrived in Coney Island at approximately 5 a.m. Sunrise that day was officially at 5:27 a.m. We began the journey with 12 participants despite the weather forecast. Four joined us along the way, and two left early because of the weather.

There was never any direct sunlight during our entire field trip. It was overcast and raining when we got to The Cloisters, and clear but overcast in Coney Island as dawn approached. However, there was light the entire time. There was minimal light from the overcast sun at the beginning and end of the fieldtrip, but also ambient light from buildings, car headlights, billboard ads and street lamps. Where there is light, there exists the possibility of making a photograph. The only challenge is the quality of that image relative to the intensity of the light. This challenge during this field trip yielded some wonderful examples of night photography by students within the context of the urban landscape.

Dusk to Dawn Field Trip
June 27th, 2015

Sunset: 8:31 p.m.

1. **The Cloisters Take the A train to 190th Street. We meet at the roundabout on the top level in front of the entrance at 8 p.m.**
(Take A train to next destination)

2. **110th and Frederick Douglass Blvd.**   **9:45 p.m.**
(Take A train to next destination)

3. **Columbus Circle**   **10:45 p.m.**
(Take 1 train to next destination)

4. **Times Square**   **11:45 p.m.**
(Walk to next destination)

5. **Bryant Park**   **12:30 a.m.**
(Take F train to next destination at W. 4th Street)

6. **Washington Square Park**   **1:30 a.m.**
(Take A train)

7. **DUMBO**   **2:30 a.m.**
(Take F train to next destination)

8. **Barclays Center**   **3:45 a.m.**
(Take F train to Coney Island)

9. **Coney Island Arrive about sunrise**

Sunrise: 5:27 a.m.

Times indicate approximate arrival times at each destination.

Student Aisling Murray, "Coney Island," 2015

Student Aisling Murray, "Sleeping Figure," 2015

Student Anita Sillery, "Color Wash," 2015

Student Eddie Shellman, "Washington Square Park," 2015

Student Eddie Shellman, "Times Square," 2015

Student Anita Sillery, "Standing Guard," 2015

Student Desiree Rogers, "Super Ashley," 2015

Student Larry Henderson, "Umbrella Man," 2015

Can We Do It? Yes, We Can! Improving College Student Writing

Robert Altobello, Tom Brady, Wendy Chabon, Renata Kochut, Susan McConnaughy and Jennifer Spitz, Hudson Valley Region

The sad truth is that while it is possible to get a liberal education without earning a degree, it is also possible to earn a degree without getting a liberal education (Keeling & Hersh, 2011, pp. 16-17).

For the last year and a half, we here at the Hudson Valley Region have had a significant decline in faculty development projects – at least the kind of collective projects that we used to share. Our time together has instead been consumed by the ongoing discussions about the restructuring of the college. When we (as the Retreat Planning Committee) were tasked with the project of planning our annual faculty development retreat, we really wanted our topic to focus on a shared academic concern. We requested that topics for the retreat be sent to the committee. We outright rejected all requests for time to discuss college-related business matters or the restructuring of the college, thus resisting the temptation to be drawn into current hot-button non-academic issues. When faculty are overwhelmed by teaching obligations coupled with all-consuming administrative matters, collective development projects become the "odd project out," given the limited amount of time available for professional development.

As ideas flowed in, we found the topic of student writing to be relevant and important to the great majority of faculty and professional staff. Since one of our goals was to create a retreat that drew significant participant interest, we felt positive about moving forward with a retreat that focused on student writing problems, and thus "student writing across the disciplines" seemed like an issue that provided a genuine opportunity for intellectual sharing that broke down disciplinary boundaries.

There was no question among us that the general quality of student writing was in need of some serious reflection by all of us together. Both in terms of numbers and their engagement in learning, our student population has substantially declined over the last few years. We therefore concluded that creating a sense of collective responsibility for addressing writing problems would animate our practice as educators. Our desired learning outcome for the retreat was to develop ways to address the most pressing writing issues. We all felt strongly that nothing more powerfully reflected the Keeling and Hersh judgment that opens this article than college graduates who do not possess college writing skills.

Our approach focused on two main threads through which we wanted to develop the issue. First, we would identify a cluster of core problems – problems that consistently appear in the written work of our students. This part of the project would be our morning session. In the afternoon, we wanted to discuss strategies designed to solve the identified problems. We also made sure that our lunch hour between sessions included the opportunity for anyone so inclined to explore some of the marvels of The Bear Mountain Inn, the venue for our event.

One of our planning committee members had recently attended a workshop series at the Metropolitan New York Region that focused on student writing. The workshop series had been led by Cathy Leaker, associate dean and Brett Sherman, director of academic support. Cathy and Brett would have a tremendous amount to offer us regarding student writing. We also felt that because all of our voices become a bit stale over time, hearing fresh voices would create a more attentive learning environment. Cathy and Brett accepted the invitation to join us. We had some discussions with them prior to the retreat to fine-tune our plan in order to make our collaboration fit the general direction of their approach to the issue.

We decided that prior to the retreat we would gather and then circulate to all participants some student papers (names and identifying information removed). These papers ran the gamut from totally unacceptable, to having more manageable problems like unclear and underdeveloped prior learning assessment writing and weak attempts at research papers. We asked all participants to read the four papers we collected prior to the retreat. As the retreat approached, we were inspired by our goal of really making a difference. Keeling and Hersh (2011) were useful here, too:

> Students do not develop the ability to think critically and solve problems, for example, as a result of any single course or experiential learning activity; mastering critical thinking and problem solving and learning to write accurately and well require much practice and feedback over time. To make that approach to learning possible, faculty members must reach consensus on desired cross-disciplinary learning goals and ensure that those goals are addressed in their courses through careful design of syllabi, communication with students about the learning to be achieved, the use of sound pedagogy, and diligent and frequent formative and summative assessment. (p. 32)

The Morning Session

In addition to the research paper and PLA essay, the committee also identified a rationale essay and a learning journal entry upon which to focus. Our goal for the morning session was to use these writings to identify the most common writing problems our students have.

We formed three groups and asked each group to list and discuss its observations about the writing problems existing in the student writing examples. (We should note that before we began, we pointed out to each other that we believed [see our later discussion!] all assignments were carefully explained by mentors in writing so that students should have been clear about what they were asked to do and the criteria by which these assignments would be evaluated.) Groups reported back to other attendees not only the particular problems with the writing examples, but identified a number of recurring problems in our students' writing, regardless of the type of the assignment.

First, we noticed that students sometimes lack the ability to create well-organized papers. The structure of assignments is often without coherent development, and writings frequently take the form of personal narratives rather than reflective analyses. Students very often do not recognize that each written assignment should include an introduction with a central claim, a main body that might include a literature review, a case study (if relevant) and discussion, and a conclusion. Students also do not always recognize the need for citations and tend not to follow proper citation format and style, nor do they indicate their use of original or legitimate resources. For example, in our students' papers, we frequently see secondary citations or citations taken from Wikipedia, blogs, self-authored websites, or materials that are no longer current and/or not vetted. Furthermore, students do not recognize citation styles, such as those of the Modern Language Association (MLA), the American Psychological Association (APA) or *The Chicago Manual of Style* (CMS). Some faculty noted that students often don't know format style and are not willing to look for resources and standards in books and online. Many times, students, knowing a paper has to have a specific number of pages, replace their observations and knowledge with long quotations. Sometimes we look with disbelief at Turnitin (a tool that checks the originality of submitted text) reports showing an over 50 percent "originality level," indicating that about half of the paper is made up of citations. Another extreme is when students submit research articles without any citations, which at the higher education level is a serious issue.

Some other writing problems pointed out by colleagues were weak sentence and paragraph design and punctuation errors. Paragraph design is often very poor and entire paragraphs either lack a main idea and or include insufficient exploration of an idea. Paragraphs lack connections between consecutive sentences that make them confusing. In addition, sentence construction is very often questionable. Here, problems start with a lack of a verb or a subject, sentences that are too short or too long, and some that have non-parallel structure. During the retreat, we discussed long sentences that are difficult to understand and follow. Students who use long sentences very often forget about proper use of the comma, semicolon, colon and dash. Because of these punctuation errors, sentences take an awkward form and can be misinterpreted by readers.

Another very common problem found in students' writing is the use of inappropriate voice. Mentors noticed that some students explain ideas vaguely or make logical errors in their sentences or paragraphs. Frequently, we noticed students writing using inappropriate jargon, statements that are too personal or too informal, or repetitious and redundant, as well as the use of rhetorical questions instead of reflection and analysis. We discussed what may be reasons for students not using the academic voice and why they don't seem to follow directions. Mentors claimed that, commonly, students do not address assignments or they misunderstand them; often assignments take a form of reporting and not analyzing, and they frequently reflect either a lack effort or insufficient attention to the details of the assignment. We concluded that some of our students lack appreciation and knowledge of good (college-level) writing, which leads to all the above mentioned problems.

Finally, we had an extensive discussion about one of the more common and correctable issues we find in student work that came up time and time again. Although one would assume that all college students either possess or develop critical writing/thinking skills, we all too often find that a significant portion of our student population lacks this basic competency. Many students are able to locate and identify the relevant issues and even find credible sources, but their writing about the problem all too often is framed in a report-style that lacks an analytical voice. This problem seems very common and represents an issue that needs more focus on all of our parts.

The Afternoon Session

Once we had identified the student writing problems, it was time to find some solutions. Cathy Leaker set the parameters that we would be addressing the average, expected student writing problems that make up 95 percent of our daily work, rather than talking about the truly exceptional ones – outliers that sometimes occupy much of our attention.

Acknowledging that many student written assignments may be problematic, we were asked to consider where we should begin our interventions. To that end, we watched the video "Beyond the Red Ink" (Sommers, 2012) about how students actually hear our feedback on their work. The college students in this short video made a strong point that they want feedback that: (1) acknowledges the work they have done and engages it in some genuine way, and (2) clearly spells out what they can do to make the work better. Students find these two responses motivating and respectful. It was thought-provoking to witness faculty feedback from the students' points of view. We recognized that we in academia can forget how strenuous it is to read and write at a college level, especially when that isn't necessarily your daily bread. It is still true, however, that adult students can be completely unaware of and even resentful about the amount of work that college assignments actually require. We need to help students stay engaged in working over the long haul.

In response to this video, we were asked to take up the four model problem papers again, and so, in small groups, we brainstormed how we might give helpful feedback on these examples of student work. Then in the larger group, we role-played giving our feedback to Cathy who played a "very sensitive student," and to Brett who played a student who was "struggling to make sense of what needed to be done next."

It took a strong effort to steer our feedback between the Scylla and Charybdis of Cathy's and Brett's "students." We all agreed to first recognize the work that was done rather than zero in immediately on what was missing or

problematic. And it took considerable effort on our parts to make our acknowledgement of the work more than perfunctory. In addition, we found that making concrete suggestions about what could be added or changed was much more helpful than suggesting global revisions. We reminded each other to be judicious in choosing what feedback to give, knowing that "less is more" and that a student may only be able to work on a few things at a time without getting discouraged or overwhelmed. Thus, for example, for each assignment, we might choose two or three changes at most to suggest, knowing student progress is a long-term project.

In our feedback, we were trying to do two things: (1) acknowledge and build on what students had done so that they would be encouraged to keep working, and (2) give them clear and "doable" (at their level) instructions on what to do next to improve their work, either on the current assignment or on the next. Both of these responses hopefully encourage the student to keep working smarter and with more satisfaction. These strategies addressed the problems we identified earlier in the day as "student lack of motivation" and "student lack of knowledge about how to write a good assignment."

Our second exercise with Cathy and Brett focused on writing clear instructions for our written assignments. They broke us into groups again and gave us two common assignments to analyze and revise. We worked together on breaking the instructions down into clear, manageable steps that students with limited experience could follow. We were not assuming any experience on the part of students.

We labored mightily over this task and our own learning became clear: We assume that our assignments are clear and sufficient to help students get started, but often they are not. We think that students know what we mean when we say "apply the theory to case material" or "analyze the impact of 'X.'" We saw that it takes a tremendous investment on our parts to craft assignment instructions that are truly helpful to academically-challenged students.

The importance of "scaffolding" became relevant here. A working definition of scaffolding is to take a complex assignment and break it into smaller components. Thus,

for instance, during the term, while providing formative feedback on earlier assignments, students can master each step before moving forward (Skene & Fedco, n.d.).

The workshop leaders provided many outstanding examples of using this process, and in small groups, the faculty worked on sample assignments using this method. The book *They Say/I Say* (Graff & Birkenstein, 2014) was recommended as a useful tool. This book provides templates and many sound suggestions to help students summarize material from a variety of sources and learn how to integrate their own views in assignments. In our breakout groups, we worked on actual assignments and saw firsthand how breaking assignments into more manageable parts offers students the opportunity to focus in on different aspects of writing, one step at a time.

In our discussion of this exercise, Hudson Valley Region faculty shared their wisdom about how to craft assignments that support students though complex learning tasks. Brett and Cathy gave us a number of tips, templates and model rubrics. It was a vibrant discussion with everyone having more to say than there was time to say it. At the end of the day, even a number of more experienced faculty said they recognized that there was room for improvement on their side in explaining and responding to student work. They said this recognition actually made them more hopeful that there was something they could do in situations that once felt beyond their control. The group as a whole was very positive about revising assignment instructions to make them more clear and doable, thinking this would help students across the board.

We also discussed how scaffolding can serve as an excellent tool for developing critical thinking skills. When faculty give assignments early in the term that demand lower-level critical thinking skills and build toward more complex assignments, students have a much greater chance of absorbing and assimilating their learning (Skene & Fedco, n.d.). There is a wealth of information available to faculty on assignment scaffolding, and how to incorporate it into our learning contracts (for example, see Caruana, 2012 and Sweetland Center for Writing, n.d.). A few years ago, the college incorporated formative assessment as a

component in our learning contracts; we were encouraged at that time to begin this process. It is our belief that the quality of our students' writing and learning will greatly improve as we continue to use this technique more thoroughly and frequently.

In the earlier session, we had identified how often poor student papers result from the student not reading or following the instructions for the assignment. Learning about scaffolding assignments was targeted to that problem, and gave many of us a sense of relief and hope. Altogether, we were invigorated by and admiring of our peers in these exercises in crafting responses to student work, and in crafting written assignments before the student even takes up the pen.

The Evaluation

The Hudson Valley Region retreat was attended by 20 mentors and professional employees. Mentors who were present represented all areas of studies ranging from mathematics and accounting, to history and literature. Professionals were represented by the director of academic review and the assessment specialist. Before and after the retreat, the committee implemented pre- and post-survey tests. The rationale for implementing them was to gauge: (1) whether we shifted in our ideas about the sources of poor student writing quality; (2) whether we shifted in our understanding of what we can do to affect problematic student writing; (3) whether we shifted in the amount/kind of responsibility for writing instruction we are willing to shoulder; and (4) whether we shifted in our feeling of confidence or desire to develop our expertise for giving writing instruction across the curriculum.

When asked "How many students per term do you work with who do not have what you consider 'college level' reading and writing skills?" the answer ranged from two to 20 students, with the average of 13. This shows that a significantly large number of Hudson Valley Region students have problems with college-level writing and need writing support.

The group had a clear understanding of sources of poor student writing quality, and the workshop did not change those. As far as two main sources of problems that students

have with writing and reading, attendees listed lack of experience and poor prior education, followed by lack of students' interest and appreciation for good writing. In addition to options provided in the survey, participants also listed problems such as poor vocabulary, very little reading experience beyond easy access (non-critical thinking) Internet articles, significant time gaps between their last institution attended and their education at ESC, along with misunderstandings of why writing is important. The results of the survey are presented in Graph 1.

After the retreat, mentors changed their beliefs about their responsibility for teaching writing skills in content courses (Graph 2). Twelve of them were interested in collaborating with others to embed some skill-building activities into ongoing ESC studies. Additionally, six more mentors than in the pre-retreat test claimed they will require students needing assistance to contact the region's writing coach.

None of the responders indicated that they are not equipped or prepared to provide support, and the majority stated that they had gained some new ideas and will begin to examine revisions to learning contracts. Participants were very interested in collaborating with colleagues to develop and expand embedded learning in their teaching.

Based on the survey and received comments, we feel the retreat was a big success and a valuable use of our time. The information we received was new and interesting. We found the presentations to be very engaging. We appreciated having guest speakers rather than only in-house faculty and staff presentations. When we asked about participants' interest in future professional development opportunities, most of the respondents asked for workshops on enhancing student independence and responsibility, followed by workshops on mentoring in the new ESC, online course development (Moodle), and blended learning and time management. This shows that no matter how overworked and overwhelmed we are, we still focus on helping our students to become successful independent learners.

Conclusion

As teachers and mentors, we try to keep three basic assumptions in mind …
We do the best we can.
We do what works.
Small change leads to big change.

We do the best we can …
We are shaped by our life experiences, and our choices and decisions are made from this perspective. They may not always be the best but they are all we've got.

We do what works …
A behavior is never all good or all bad. All behavior has purpose. And so, even the most seemingly negative, destructive or unhelpful behaviors have a payoff or value to us.

Small change leads to big change …
Our desire for immediate gratification and self-efficacy often drives impulsive and careless behavior. The poor outcomes that result leave us with a sense of failure and hopelessness.

Graph 1. Mentor Judgment about the Source of Student Problems with Reading and Writing
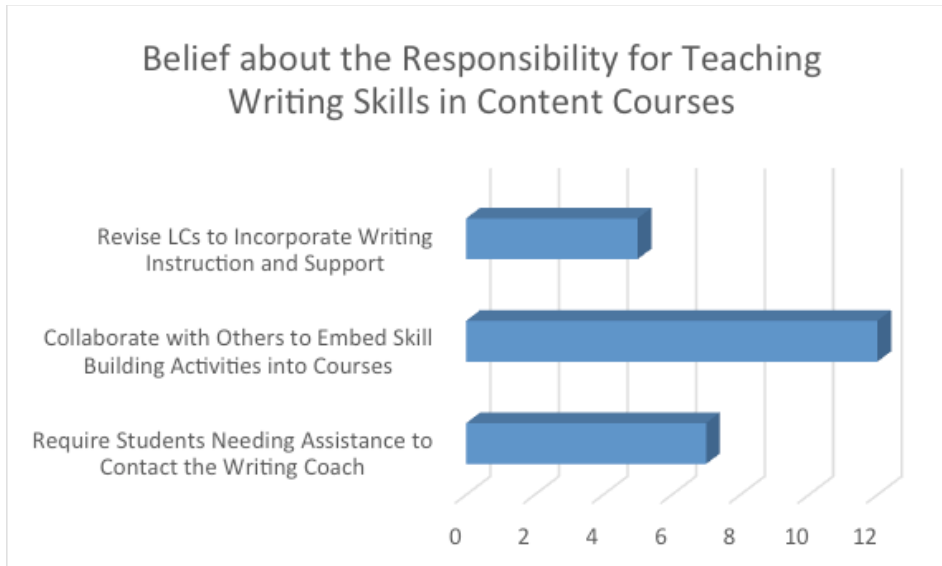
Graph 2. Belief about the Responsibility for Teaching Writing Skills in Content Courses

Any small step in a new direction changes our status quo and builds our confidence for making bigger change.

It is with these assumptions in mind that we approached our roles on the Hudson Valley Region Retreat Planning Committee. These ideas were central to developing a meaningful retreat that could have concrete and realistic outcomes. Having felt frustrated and powerless about the quality of student work we have sometimes received, we can honestly say that we had developed two very maladaptive coping strategies:

1. Ignore it!

2. Be overly critical!

Many of our peers had expressed similar responses. As you would imagine, neither of these approaches were quite effective.

As we thought about our assumptions, we concluded that our students were doing their best. Even if we wanted to believe that, at times, some students were testing limits to see what they could get away with; we would not accept that after a poor grade and extensive negative feedback that they would continue on that same path. And so, we recognized that they were doing the best they could.

So, after that first disappointing grade and all that feedback, came the perfect paper! Content, grammar, punctuation … flawless! NO! The student used whatever resources necessary to quickly turn things around. Did someone else write it? Was it completely plagiarized? Whatever the method, students believed they found something that worked, a way to make it better and get to their goal. We do what works!

Next came that difficult conversation with the student and the start of problem-solving about how to best address the issue. We would recommend the usual, the writing coach, the amazing resources of ESC's library and submission of a draft before a final product. Initially somewhat overwhelmed and frustrated, some of our students began to "see the light." They understood that it was OK that they needed to learn this stuff as an evolving college student. And so, in many cases, they began to take on the challenge and responsibility of learning to write. So, the small change led to the bigger change.

Well, if it works for students, it can work for faculty, too, right? How do we create an experience for faculty that validates what we do and gives us the tools to enhance our own practice for the benefit of our students? Cathy and Brett did just that. They presented a framework for thinking about student writing in a way that made it part of our teaching rather than parallel to it. They provided strategies for embedding writing instruction into our current content in ways that did not feel complicated or cumbersome. Most importantly, to us at least, they provided a rationale. We think it would have been difficult to leave the retreat unchanged in our thinking about our role and responsibility here.

It was with this in mind that the pre- and post-retreat surveys were created and implemented. Fortunately, the change was evident. Attendees reported a greater appreciation for the importance of their role in supporting students, rather than only directing them to other resources. The majority also expressed an interest in collaborating with colleagues on strategies for revising LCs to provide the much needed scaffolding and detail in assignment instructions. Although workload and time management were noted obstacles, all expressed a willingness to work with colleagues to make the task a manageable one. SUCCESS!

Small change leads to big change.
Let's hope so!

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Suggestions for Successful Synchronous Sessions

Lorette Pellettiere Calix, Center for International Programs; Patrice Torcivia Prusko, Cornell University and School for Graduate Studies

Synchronous online meetings can be a valuable addition to otherwise asynchronous online courses. They help to combat a student's sense of isolation, and build community. They can be used for instruction, collaborations, brainstorming, office hours, group work, student presentations, guest speakers, language learning and more.

However, simply calling for all your students to be online at the same time does not, in and of itself, create a successful learning activity that will contribute to meeting course objectives. Following are some suggestions for organizing what we have found to be more successful synchronous sessions in which mentors synchronously connect with a group of students using audio-visual tools.

Reflect on what you want to achieve with a synchronous session. Think about the skills, competencies or knowledge you want your students to attain from the session and how the session can contribute to your overall course learning objectives. For example, a globally networked collaboration can be used for gaining cross-cultural competencies; collaborative exercises for team-building skills; paired interviews for communication; small group discussions for understanding; student-led presentations or discussions for virtual facilitation. Remember, a big benefit of a synchronous session is building community, so it is important to include activities that will lead to meaningful interactions.

Decide the format. A video conference involves two (or more) webcams and may be used for a classroom-to-classroom collaboration or to invite a guest speaker to your class. It usually involves someone facilitating/presenting and learners taking turns asking and responding to questions. This is similar to a face-to-face group format.

Lorette Pellettiere Calix

A Web conference is usually used for online classes where all the learners are not located in a single location. Each learner logs in individually from wherever they are (work, home, at a conference). This allows for individual use of tools such as a chat box, polling, breakout rooms and a whiteboard. This type of session tends to be more interactive and can allow for deeper discussions and exchange of ideas through backchanneling.

Allow for longer lead time. If you are going to be collaborating with another instructor and group of students or bringing in a guest speaker, synchronizing schedules and joint planning of activities take longer than a session that you might manage on your own. Discuss logistical considerations as well as content: Who will moderate the discussions? How much time will be allotted to participation from each student group? Who will present instructions and/or content? Plan for joint practice sessions before the students meet.

Give students time to plan. Announce the date(s) and time(s) well in advance and provide students with any required materials at least

Patrice Torcivia Prusko

two weeks before the session. Since many online students often do not have the flexibility to attend synchronous sessions, record the meetings and prepare alternate assignments for those unable to attend. Consider allowing students to attend only some of the sessions (three of five, for example). Send out reminders and meeting links during the week prior to the session.

Know your tool. If your institution provides a specific meeting tool that you must use, learn the functions and capabilities of that tool before you plan your learning activities. SUNY Empire State College provides Blackboard Collaborate, Skype for Business (formerly Lync) and Jabber (MOVI), although Jabber is not allowed for use with students. If you have the option to choose a tool, one of our favorites for virtual meetings is Zoom (http://www.zoom.us/). In our experiences, Zoom provides stable connections, isn't demanding of bandwidth, is easy to use, is free or inexpensive and provides a comparable set of tools to the more expensive alternatives. There are many others, such as the free tools of Google Hangouts (https://hangouts.google.com/) and

regular Skype (http://www.skype.com/en/), as well as other pay tools like WebEx (http://www.webex.com/) and Adobe Connect http://www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect.html). When choosing a tool for synchronous meetings with your students, some functions you want to look for are:

- the option to have audio and video connections for all participants. (Hearing and seeing one another is important!)

- a chat box feature

- easy screen sharing

- video sharing and Web tour features

- the ability to connect from mobile devices (becoming more important every day)

- the ability for participants to raise their hands or request participation

- the ability to break students into small groups

- a whiteboard and related tools (highlighter, pointer, etc.)

- a polling or survey feature.

Most of these sites have FAQ's, case studies and/or a support center with information on how to use the tools, on troubleshooting and ideas for their use. Recommended tutorials are also listed at the end of this paper. Practice using the various functions and try to schedule a practice session using the same equipment in the same room you will be using for the session(s).

Design learning activities. A group of students getting together in a synchronous session is not the same as that same group sitting together in a common physical space. Think about what you can do now that you don't have walls. Also review the sorts of activities you would have in a traditional classroom to support your learning objectives. Then reflect on how you can do something similar in a virtual meeting format. It is better to leave learning activities that demand deep reflection for the asynchronous portion of the course. Some ideas are:

- ask students questions to which they can respond verbally; encourage discussion among students

- ask students to prepare questions on the material before the session

- ask the students to type something in the chat box

- insert polls or surveys

- insert a video clip

- ask the students to visit a website or do a search

- have students take control of the whiteboard or share their screens

- break students into small groups for a discussion or activity and then have them report back to the larger group

- ask students to be involved in helping to monitor the chat box, manage the camera, etc.

- develop role plays, debates or mock trials

- have students moderate a discussion or activity.

Consider accessibility issues. When designing your synchronous sessions, be proactive and keep universal design practices in mind. In order to make your session accessible to those who are hearing impaired, you need to provide captions or an interpreter. If a deaf student is participating in the live session, the moderator has to give permission to use the caption window, and the captioner can enter the live captions there. Instructors should describe images or graphs. As an alternative, sessions can be recorded and shared with captions. In addition, the same best practices used in a face-to-face classroom should be followed. The University of Washington's DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking and Technology) Center (http://www.washington.edu/doit/ or http://www.washington.edu/doit/videos/index.php?vid=22&t=1) suggests that distance learning instructors:

- look for a Web conferencing system that supports captioning screen readers and keyboard navigation

- provide alternative text for images

- mark HTML headings and subheadings

- be proactive about making courses accessible

- ask vendors specific questions about the accessibility of their products or services

- make sure media can be accessed using sight or hearing alone

- arrange accessible facilities for any onsite instruction

- be prepared to offer additional accommodations as requested [through disability services].

Provide some sort of interaction every 5-10 minutes. With this goal in mind, it can be tempting to use all the "bells and whistles" in order to "keep them hopping." First ask yourself, what is the pedagogical intent? Become comfortable with synchronous sessions and just a few features before trying too much.

Encourage everyone to participate. Plan how you will manage student participation and encourage everyone to participate so the more vocal students don't take over. A chat box can help to give shyer students a voice. Smaller breakout groups also encourage more participation.

Don't make the virtual session your first interaction. Prior to meeting, create an "icebreaker" discussion forum to help build relationships, community and excitement.

Make the meetings short. As with all meetings, shorter tends to be better. Try to plan your session to take no more than one hour.

Start each session with instructions or reminders about how to use the tool, and session protocol. Be sure everyone can hear you and have each participant speak to be sure you can hear him or her. If you are going to be using functions like polling or raising hands, have everyone try it before starting.

Keep the cameras turned on to cut down on multitasking and keeps students more engaged. At the beginning of the session, ask participants to keep their cameras on, but, to mute their microphones when not speaking. (If someone has low bandwidth problems, turning off the camera usually helps. Good audio is more important than video.)

Have a Plan B and alternate communication channels. If there are technical difficulties, a power outage or any other mishap occurs, how

will you let the students know of alternate arrangements? How will they communicate with you if they are having difficulty connecting or hearing the speakers?

Although incorporating synchronous sessions requires extra effort at first and you lose some flexibility, evidence supports the value added to a student's learning experience. Benefits include reduced social isolation, stronger teacher-learner and learner-learner relationships and sense of community, as well as the ability to enhance teaching and learning in a wide variety of ways.

Additional Resources and Tutorials

• Cornell University Yang-Tan Institute manages the Northeast ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Center. There are many resources on accessibility and compliance, including websites, at http://www.northeastada.org.

• Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 provide recommendations by the World Wide Web Consortium on designing accessible Web technology. More information is available at www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/.

• ESC faculty can contact Kelly Hermann, director of collegewide disability services, directly with questions about how to accommodate a student in online sessions. The office email is disability.services@esc.edu and the phone extension is 2201. Disability services needs at least a week to 10 days to arrange for captioning or live interpreting, so it is important to work with them early.

• The University of North Carolina School of the Arts offers an "Online Course Accessibility Checklist" at http://www.uncsa.edu/disabilities/Disability-learning-Resources/Online%20Course%20Accessibility%20Checklist.pdf.

• How to Use Zoom: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLKpRxBfeD1kEM_I1lId3N_Xl77fKDzSXe.

• Skype for Business Training: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_c4zVJ739M https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Skype-for-Business-and-Lync-2013-training-411f15d5-64ce-4b9e-a3c0-193690d85eb6.

• How To Use Google Hangouts: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6bLIPnAEiA.

• Blackboard Collaborate Tutorial: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhQKJa8e09o.

Talking with New York City's Public Advocate, Letitia James

Sharon Szymanski, The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies

Letitia James is public advocate for the City of New York in Mayor Bill de Blasio's administration. As the public advocate, and first in line to succeed the mayor, she's an incredibly busy person: Her office functions as the watchdog over city agencies, investigating and trying to resolve the numerous complaints brought against city services. According to a recent New York Times *article, she is a prodigious public servant: "She has introduced 24 pieces of legislation, about as many as Mr. de Blasio proposed during his four years in the post, and as many as [former Public Advocate] Ms. [Betsy] Gotbaum in eight years" (Stewart, 2015).*

Yet, Ms. James has found time to co-teach a course, Labor and Public Affairs, at the Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies. The Van Arsdale Labor Center serves a range of students, mostly coming from NYC's building trades – electricians, plumbers, carpenters and painters – but also paraprofessionals. The main body of students – electrician apprentices, members of Local Union No. 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers – work all day, typically outside in the heat and cold in places like One World Trade Center and other high rises, or underground in places like the long awaited Second Avenue Subway. They then attend classes, at either the associate or bachelor's level, in the evening at the Van Arsdale Center. The public advocate was also an inspiring speaker at Van Arsdale's graduation celebration in June 2015. (The video of James' speech can be accessed at https://www.esc.edu/labor-studies-center/.)

Below is a conversation with Letitia "Tish" James about her experiences in the Van Arsdale classroom.

– Sharon Szymanski

Photo credit: Kate Spaulding

Letitia James (left of center, in glasses) with colleague Kate Spaulding (back row) and some of James' students.

Sharon Szymanski: How did you come to teach at the Van Arsdale Center?

Letitia James: Katherine [Kate] Spaulding, who is the director of intergovernmental and legislative affairs at the New York City Department of Probation, recruited me to be an adjunct professor at the Van Arsdale Center. We work together teaching students in the Labor Studies program. *(Interviewer's note: Kate has been a dedicated adjunct at Van Arsdale for many years.)*

S.S.: Given your incredibly busy schedule, why do you adjunct at Van Arsdale?

L.J.: Curriculums like those offered at the Labor Studies program are so important to working adults who want to further their education without putting their careers on hold. The program benefits so many people – it's worth it to make time for Van Arsdale.

S.S.: For the last year, you have taught the course, Labor and Public Affairs, to our electrician apprentices. How does this course relate to your work as the New York City public advocate?

L.J.: As the public advocate, it's my job to listen and respond to the needs of the people. One of the most important things I tell people is that they must know their rights, whether as workers, tenants, students or simply as citizens of New York. This course is so important because it connects working people to political relations, and gives trade unionists the knowledge to better understand how the organizations they work for connect to the larger sphere of government.

S.S.: Do you think the type of program Van Arsdale offers in Labor Studies matters? Why?

L.J.: There's a misconception that it's not worth it for working men and women with trade union jobs to pursue higher education and college degrees, but that's simply not true. The problem is that the traditional college curriculum does not fit the needs of these working people. The Van Arsdale Labor Studies program matters because it better suits New Yorkers who want to learn the leadership and critical thinking skills applicable to their careers.

S.S.: I know your students have benefited tremendously from having you as their instructor, but what have *you* learned from them both personally and professionally?

L.J.: I was regularly inspired by my students. These individuals work all day in jobs that are physically and mentally exhausting, and many of them have families at home, but they are so dedicated to continuing their education that they came to class each week, did their work, and were engaged and enthusiastic.

S.S.: Overall, what kind of education should take place in unions, the labor movement and the college to better understand discrimination in general?

L.J.: Everyday people are put into boxes – boxes labeled by color, gender and economic background. These boxes limit young people from reaching their full potential. These individuals could achieve so much, but they need to be educated. They need to be exposed to classes that will challenge them intellectually, prompt them to think about social and economic issues, and help them to grow as people. Because they are working trade unionists, they also need classes specific to their field; classes that connect what they do now – maybe it's electricity – to the world around them, the global civilization, to literature and history.

The Van Arsdale program and its students are most fortunate to have the public advocate as an instructor: She brings into the classroom not only her firsthand experience with NYC issues, policies and politics, but also her passion and commitment to bettering the lives of all people. She embodies the purpose of the Labor and Public Affairs course, which is to provide students with the opportunity to identify, grapple with and publically present the economic, social and political issues that are important to them so that they can take on leadership roles in their workplaces, unions and communities.

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The Institute on Mentoring, Teaching and Learning, 2015-2016

Colleagues from SUNY Empire State College

The Institute on Mentoring, Teaching and Learning (IMTL) is a program of the Center for Mentoring and Learning (CML) that provides time and support to mentors and academic professionals pursuing projects that further their development, enhance their mentoring and teaching practices, and offer regular opportunities for input from colleagues. In addition, college librarians, educational technologists and instructional designers support the participants during the annual residency and throughout the year.

On 29-30 June 2015, the fourth annual IMTL residency was facilitated by a planning committee of Desalyn De-Souza (Central New York Region), Sara Hull (ESC Library), Mary Mawn (Center for Distance Learning), and Alan Mandell (Metropolitan New York Region and OAA, chair). Jase Teoh (Long Island Region) provided educational technology assistance.

For the academic year, 2015–2016, the IMTL is supporting nine different projects from across the college. In addition to the two-day residency, the 15 colleagues have regular contact with one another and are linked to a member of the planning committee who can provide additional aid.

Included below are the initial descriptions of the nine projects; we look forward to sharing more details in the coming months. Please contact your colleagues if you have any questions about their ongoing work.

Information about applying for the IMTL 2016–2017 will available early in the January term at http://cml.esc.edu/programs/InstituteMTL.

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Leslie Ellis, Hudson Valley Region; **Joan Johnsen,** Northeast Region; **Bernard Smith,** Center for Distance Learning; **Nan Travers** and **Amanda Treadwell,** Office of Collegewide Academic Review

To what degree is there a connection to between PLA and persistence to degree completion?

In what ways are there differences in persistence between students who do and do not incorporate prior learning assessment (PLA) in their degree plan? Looking closely at differences between PLA and non-PLA students would provide SUNY Empire State College with more information on PLA's impact on students' persistence. By examining trends and comparing outcomes from both groups (through the use of student and mentor focus groups and a survey), we can provide better guidance and supports to students regarding PLA and positively impact their persistence to graduation.

Himanee Gupta-Carlson, Center for Distance Learning

Rethinking Online Curricula

This project involves a comprehensive review of the courses under my area of coordination as well as a general look at the range of study groups, independent studies, graduate studies and community projects that I've carried out in my five years at SUNY Empire State College. My goal is to try and map the work I've done in hopes of integrating these various aspects of my life as an ESC faculty member into a coherent plan for scholarly development. My plan includes the following activities:

- reviewing the content of Historical Studies courses I oversee, beginning development of a new advanced modern American history course (with Ann Becker), and carrying out major revisions of an introductory early American history course and an Asian-American history course

- developing a series of writing and research skills learning activities that can be placed into online courses and/or made available to mentees and other students

- continuing the curricula development work I began last year through my 2014-2015 IMTL project, "Cultivating College and Community Through Gardening," and exploring ways to tie that curriculum more directly to community projects I've initiated at the Franklin Community Center and the Saratoga Farmers' Market, as well as my personal farming endeavors

- mapping a scholarly research and writing agenda tied to these activities.

I want to do more scholarly writing on the subjects of online teaching and learning, curricula development and creative pedagogy, topics intrinsic to my ongoing interests in hip-hop as a community building and pedagogical practice. It is my hope that the work I do this year in the IMTL will give me a sense of next steps for transforming my on-the-ground activities into effective scholarship.

Renata Kochut and **Linda Treinish,** Hudson Valley Region

Team Teaching in Blended Learning

We would like to investigate the benefits and drawbacks of using blended learning studies in business and economics teaching. Our goal is to examine how the blended learning format compares with other modes of studying. We would like to expand our horizons to creatively explore new ideas and approaches in the teaching of business and economics. We believe that there is much benefit to using a blended learning model to create an environment that supports student learning, networking and retention. Our plan is to create a detailed feedback survey to interview all students who have participated in our

blended studies. Based on our research, we will complete an article and present information to the broader community.

Overall, we want to investigate different modes of study that encourage learning and help retention. We will search for new and creative teaching methods that will enrich our studies to make them more interesting, relevant and engaging.

Joanne Levine, Center for Distance Learning

In Their Own Words: Online Undergraduate Students' Reported Barriers to Success

This exploratory qualitative study, using a grounded theory approach, will retrospectively analyze approximately 90 letters submitted from January 2012 – April 2015 by adult online students who have applied for a "second reinstatement review." In their own words, students identified and discussed a range of psychological, emotional, financial, environmental and social barriers that have impeded their academic success. In their narratives, they also described how changes in their own behaviors or circumstances can support their efforts to succeed in college. Students applying for a second reinstatement review are at high risk for not completing their studies, as they report a range of stressors and have already been dismissed from the college. Without understanding the barriers these students experience, we cannot successfully meet their needs. Based on the qualitative analysis that I intend to carry out, a suggested framework will be developed to support student success considering the reported psychological, social, emotional and environmental factors these students have described.

Susan McConnaughy, Hudson Valley Region;
Debra Kram-Fernandez,
Metropolitan New York Region

Supporting CHS Faculty Research and Writing

This project is an effort to encourage research and writing activity within the Community and Human Services area of study at ESC – especially among newer faculty. Working by phone and email, we will draw members of CHS into a variety of shared experiences around research and writing, such as developing a list of members' research interests; hosting occasional meetings on specific skill

sets; matching newer faculty with more experienced faculty, etc. We hope to learn what types of support these newer colleagues need to make their research and writing goals a reality.

We also will interview and record our most experienced CHS faculty as they share with us how they developed their research agendas. From these interviews, we hope to gain insight into what might further support and inspire research and writing, especially among the new faculty in CHS.

James Robinson, Long Island Region – Hauppauge Location

Object Lessons: Working with Historical Artifacts in Blended/Distance Courses

My goal for the IMTL is to begin structuring a cross-region, blended course in the history of technology that involves demonstrations and analysis of material artifacts.

I currently offer this course as a group study at my location, and have begun offering it as a statewide option. An important aspect of my face-to-face study is the use of material artifacts for the exploration of ideas about the past, present and future of technological development. Students are asked to do in-class analysis of objects and computer research. I would like not to lose this "in-class" aspect of my face-to-face students' work when I extend the reach of this study and, in this spirit, would like to experiment with different ways to engage students at a distance.

Kymn Rutigliano,
Center for Distance Learning

Leadership Outside the Box: Nurturing the Human Spirit at Work

"Leadership Outside the Box: Nurturing the Human Spirit at Work" is the evolving working title for my project that brings together my subject matter expertise, research interest, mentoring and teaching experiences, and lessons learned from my career. I believe that the human spirit is an "untapped resource" that, when nurtured and fueled, contributes greatly to individual, team and organizational success. There is a foundation for this work in the literature. For example, the *Academy of Management Review* published a special issue in 2012 and convened a panel discussion on

caring and compassion in the workplace (see http://aom.org/News/Press-Releases/Skeptics-notwithstanding,-business-increasingly-embraces-care-and-compassion,-leading-management-journal-says.aspx); *Harvard Business Review* featured a cover story on the value of employee happiness (see https://hbr.org/2012/01/be-happy-be-audacious); and Kim Cameron at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan and co-founder of the Center for Positive Organizations writes extensively about Positive Organizational Scholarship, an umbrella concept used to emphasize what elevates and what is inspiring to individuals and organizations (see www.bus.umich.edu/Positive). During this year, I expect to make a conference presentation and write a peer-reviewed article.

Richard Savior,
Metropolitan New York Region

Development of a New Study in Global Leadership

This blended study on which I will work seeks to support a thoughtful examination of the complexity of leadership in a global context by exploring the ways in which various cultures' values and moral foundations affect how leadership is viewed and effectively practiced around the world. This study's development has already involved an extensive literature review on global leadership theory and practice and cross-cultural diversity. Such work will be followed by empirical research that will serve to bridge the theoretical undergirding of the study with current application of leadership behavior and practice.

It is envisioned that offering this study across multiple domestic and international locations will further reinforce the collective commitment to the college's mission, thereby enhancing academic quality and the range and depth of available learning resources. Students who take this study will gain a better understanding of the attitudes, learned behaviors and experiences key to effective global leadership, including intercultural competencies; that is, the course will encourage students to learn about other cultures, recognize the value of cultural differences and express such differences with respect, thus reflecting the breadth, depth and maturity of the global leader.

Victoria Vernon,
Metropolitan New York Region

Development of Two New Courses: 1)
Econometrics; 2) New Perspectives in Economics

The goal of my IMTL project is to gain peer support, technical advice and constructive feedback while creating two new and potentially collegewide studies.

Econometrics combines applications of economic theory, mathematics, advanced statistical methods and computer skills to analyze data and test various hypotheses. It is a core course of a typical economics degree nationwide. Even though a competency in advanced data analysis is emphasized in our newly revised economics concentration guidelines, we still don't have an econometrics course. My goal is to design the course in three formats: based on a traditional textbook, as a blended combination of textbook and online resources, and entirely based on open educational resources (OER). The course will include video tutorials, multimedia, an e-textbook and free statistical software for weekly problem sets. A pilot version will be tested as an independent study in summer 2016.

New Perspectives in Economics is an OER-based study that I will develop in collaboration with Tanweer Ali from the Center for International Programs. The global financial crisis and the recent events in Greece have started a series of debates among economists about the role of economic policies in mitigating the crises. This course helps students better understand causes and consequences of financial meltdowns, the policies of austerity, the significance of debt, deficits and trade imbalances, the corrosive impact of inequality and the role of government. My goal is to find OERs that are suitable for students with economics and non-economics backgrounds. I intend to create an outline, a reading list and a set of questions for each course module. Tanweer Ali and I hope to offer this course via Moodle to students in the U.S., Lebanon, Greece and the Czech Republic simultaneously. One of our goals is to evaluate the benefits of this type of "internationalization" experience for our students.

Considerations in Mentoring From a Transgender Ally

Sara Farmer, Central New York Region

Important Definitions to Understand
Transgender – People of any age or sex (determined at birth) whose appearance, personal characteristics, and/or behaviors differ from the stereotypes about how men and women "should be" represented.
Gender Identity – A person's internal, deeply felt sense of being either male or female, or something other and/or in between.
Gender Expression – A person's external characteristics and behaviors that are socially defined as either masculine or feminine: body representation, such as outward dress; identified body parts; mannerisms; speech patterns; and social interactions.
Gender Variant – People who choose not to classify themselves internally and/or externally as either gender, and/or who may identify with one gender but participate or have traits typically associated with the opposite gender.

Introduction

B eing in the field of "helping" others was something I knew I was destined for from a very young age. When I was 14 years old, my boyfriend at the time committed suicide, which changed not only who I was, but who I wanted to be. That tragic event turned into a passion for wanting to guide, support and assist individuals in order to make sure that each and every person felt valuable and "enough." I never veered from that path, and my commitment only strengthened while I developed myself through my education and my personal and professional experiences.

Fast forward to graduate school, I was working with Dr. Deborah Coolhart of Syracuse University (and formerly a SUNY Empire State College mentor), discussing what my niche or specialization could be. There she introduced me to a community struggling with gender and the often horrific stories of suicide, hate and confusion. I began my training and counseling with these individuals, learning all the necessary ins and outs of working with a population that required supportive individuals to advocate for them. From there, I researched, developed and co-authored

the only mental health assessment tool for evaluating transsexual youths' readiness for medical intervention (Coolhart, Baker, Farmer, Malaney & Shipman, 2012).

At the end of my graduate school studies, I was diagnosed with a shocking illness that almost took my life. I was young, newly married, and just starting my work with students at Empire State College and with my clients in therapy. However, as a result of my illness, I now had to change everything about how I lived and what my new "normal" would be. What I did not anticipate was just how much this experience would connect me in new ways to my transgender students and clients, and to the feeling of being "different." When I am in a room with others my age, I have the feeling of being the only one dealing with a situation like mine. I also know that from my outward appearance, I blend right into my surroundings. This new part of my identity provided me with insight into some of the types of struggles that my transgender students and clients describe. At the same time, though, I became more acutely aware that this community might not receive the same level of social acceptance as I do. For all of these reasons, I developed an even deeper sense of responsibility to try to advocate for and support this underrepresented group.

I have had the privilege to educate myself, work in the community, publish, counsel and assist individuals as an ally for the transgender community. Being an ally means that I may not identify as LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or queer), but I am supportive of LGBTQ equality in its countless forms, and through a wide assortment of diverse expressions – personal, professional and private. As an ally, I do not pretend to know everything about this community (or any community!), but I try to educate myself as much as possible in order to address my own barriers to understanding, and to commit myself to the challenge of teaching others. Very importantly, I want to share with my colleagues how to use what I have learned, in order to assist them when (not if!) they are asked to work with
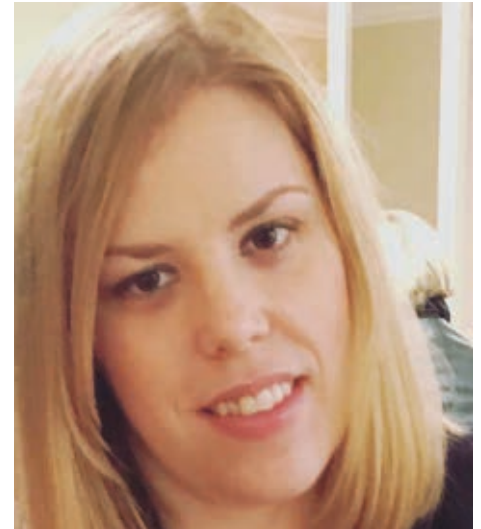
Sara Farmer

students who may present and describe their gender in ways that are different than the typical identifiers one may be used to. Finally, SUNY (2015) is implementing new policies that will allow students to self-identify their gender identity and sexual orientation. These changes will require us as professionals to be more aware of and open to the needs of our diverse student population.

Why Is This Important?

For gender variant, traditional-age students, college is often the first place where they present or question their assigned gender at birth. In fact, many studies have shown that students establish various aspects of their identities during their college years (Chickering, 1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993). College may be the first time that they are living away from their family, friends and any other people who know them in a concrete way or identification. For example, one of my previous students reported that Empire State College was a safe place where she could work on her transition without worrying about having to go to a traditional classroom setting three days a week where people would notice the results of her medical procedures. Often, the transgender students I have met discuss

how difficult high school was because they were around people who knew them before their transition. Therefore, they expect that college will allow them to explore and cultivate their identities by offering a safer and more open environment.

Students who attend Empire State College will be impacted by the relationships that they develop with their mentors. In fact, the connections with their mentors often set the stage for their entire experience at ESC. One of my previous transgender students reported choosing ESC over other schools because of the ability to transition while taking a study online or to learn in an independent study mode. However, at some point, students will likely come face to face with their mentor. Mentors should acknowledge what this diverse population of students may need, how to best mentor and interact with these students, and how to develop a plan where students can be free to express themselves without any educational repercussions.

Gender Expression

To understand this community, one must understand that *every* student we encounter as a mentor has a gender expression and that someone can identify gender internally, externally and/or in between. There is not one way to express gender. A student's gender expression will be something that the student's mentor and other faculty, staff and other students may or may not see. In addition, several individuals may present in an androgynous (gender-neutral) fashion. Now more than ever, the young people I encounter are growing up in a non-binary gender system, meaning that students are not conforming to understanding or expressing gender in a rigid manner.

Carter (1999) suggested three primary ways for colleges to address the needs of this population: ending institutional gender divisions; providing direct support services; and educating the campus community about transgender issues. In addition, I suggest that mentors seek assistance, gain knowledge and better understand how to address differing gender expressions. The more we understand how gender is being defined, the better we will be able to assist our students in having a healthy, safe and academically rich time at Empire State College.

Working as a Mentor with Gender Variant or Transgender Students

My work in the community, as a mentor, and in my therapy practice has provided me with first-hand experiences of what members of the LGBTQ community encounter and what they prefer from their interactions with schools and the people who guide them. Like any community, this population is very diverse, and I can only speak from the stories my students and clients have offered me. I will share some of my knowledge – my sense of "do's and don'ts" – and provide suggestions about how to interact if you are introduced to or made aware of a student's gender identification or expression.

Please note again that what I have provided here is based upon my background, education and experiences with this population. It's crucial that colleagues continue to educate themselves on how to assist and support their gender variant or transgender students. It's our responsibility to do that.

A Case: Imagine a student with whom you will work face to face, "Jane Smith," walks in to meet you for the first time. The name and gender marker on the application represents "female." "Jane" comes in and "she" is wearing all masculine clothing. It is clear to you that perhaps in public "she" may not be identified as female by outward appearance. You may notice something is different, but in the moment you are not sure how to address this situation.

The Dos

- **DO try to avoid identifiers/names that are gender-specific.** For example, you can say, "How are you today?" instead of "Jane, how are you today?" Being labeled or identified by the incorrect or non-preferred gender can often be a very painful reminder to these students. Changing a name and gender marker officially is a legal and often expensive process. Therefore, students will often dread a situation where their birth name or identified sex will be revealed.

- **DO wait for students to bring up the topic.** Individuals will appreciate your attempts and will recognize when someone avoids identifiers or gender-specific pronouns. This will show that

student how you may be a safe and open person with whom to communicate. Most students report wanting to be responsible for telling and explaining who they are and how they identify. Even if students state that they identify as transgender or perhaps gender variant, let those students further explain what that means to *them*. How you understand the term may not be the same way the student expects people to understand that term. For example, students may state that they identify as a male transsexual (assigned female at birth; identify as male). They may or may not say, "Please use this name or these pronouns." Most students will probably explain in more detail so that there is no further confusion or misidentification. However, not everyone may be far along enough in their transition process to advocate for themselves.

- **DO ask open-ended questions.** For example, the mentor could state, "You are telling me that you identify as a transsexual male; is there anything I should know about how I can address you that would be recognizing and accepting your identity?" This gives students a chance to discuss their preferred name, preferred pronouns, and where they may be in terms of their comfort in how they want to present or identify to others. *Please note there are pronoun identifiers other than "he, man, him" and/or "she, woman, her."*

- **DO know that more often than not, students will be happy to educate you in order to be identified correctly.** That being said, try not to ask specific close-ended or personal questions with individuals until you have a deeper connection or the individual gives you permission to do so. You may ask someone after that person presents information about what pronoun to use if you are really unsure. Most individuals will not be offended, since they see that you are trying to respect them. But try not to ask unless you think it is necessary.

- **DO ask them if and how they may want to express this information to other faculty or to others with whom they will interact at the college.** Depending upon how far they are along in their transition,

students may or may not want to share their gender identities with others. On the other hand, they may ask you about possible ways to bring the topic up with their professors.

The Don'ts

DON'T ask (without permission from students):

- **"Are you transgendered?"** As stated previously, there is no single way of identifying in terms of gender. Individuals can be very sensitive to how they are labeled or questioned by others.

- **What is/Is this your "real name"?**

- **How far have you gone in your transition?** These could be questions concerning medical treatment, hormones, surgeries, who they are "out" to, etc. Individuals will most likely share with you what they are comfortable with and the information they think is necessary to communicate during their time in college. Students may share this information with you in order to assist them in explaining this to other faculty and/or to help you understand if they will need time off or any special considerations for medical intervention.

- **"Do you have male or female parts?"** It is not appropriate to ask about body parts at all.

- **How did you look before or at birth?**

- **Are you sure this is not a phase?**

- **When did you "become transgendered"?**

- **Do your parents know about your gender expression?**

- **What medical procedures or interventions have you tried?**

- **How do your partner, children or family feel about your transition?**

It *is* likely that you'll make a mistake, and that's OK; students will probably anticipate that. If you accidently use the wrong name or pronoun, apologize quickly, correct yourself and then move on. After students provide information to you about what they are comfortable with, ask them how, if and what

they are comfortable with in terms of others knowing about their gender (for example, you might ask: "Is there anyone with whom you would like me to share or not share this information?"). This is important because it is up to them as to who they want to be open with and why they may or may not be safe in certain situations. Also, remember that even though transgender students may be transitioning in adulthood, they could be experiencing a puberty similar to that of an adolescent. Thus, regardless of age, their mindset and even brain chemistry can be changing. Researchers are still exploring the effects of transition on adults' brain chemistry when new hormones are introduced later in life.

Conclusion

This world is ever-changing, and understanding how to work with students who challenge our assumptions and present us with experiences we don't necessarily understand is more important than ever. We will continue to meet these students in our college and we will need to keep up with the best practices and latest information regarding this and other new populations. I can say that I learn a new term or identifier every few months; as a result, I am always trying to keep up to date with what is ever-evolving information. Our students rely heavily on their relationship with their mentor, and it is our responsibility to understand the students we are serving, not the other way around. Remember that this is about the student's process of self-discovery and identity, and that there is not a "clear cut" way of handling, transitioning or representing gender identity and/or expression. We must try to be open, ask respectful questions and seek other resources when making every effort to support these students. More often than not, these students have had to tell their stories to people and, more often than not, will be happy to share with someone who seems nonjudgmental and open to non-rigid understandings of gender and expression. All of us have the power to represent SUNY Empire State College as a place that is open to *all* students regardless of their gender identification and/or presentation.

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Immigrant Experience and Cultural Competence in Delivering Educational and Social Services

Lear Matthews, Metropolitan New York Region

For some time now, both in the human services and in higher education, there has been a demand for what is referred to as "cultural competence," yet the elements of cultural competence have not been clearly defined. In addition, there has not been a standard formula for developing a culturally competent system of care nor of teaching. Cultural competence as a concept or movement emerged in response to concerns that certain populations were underserved. In human services, it evolved as a model consisting of cultural awareness, knowledge acquisition and skill development.

The *underserved groups* identified were: African-Americans, Latino-Americans, Asian-Americans and First Nations people. In higher education, the idea of instituting cultural competence took the form of the development of diversity policies. In fact, the State University of New York, through its Diversity Task Force, established the "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy" in 2015. In 2007, the NASW (National Association of Social Workers) identified 10 standards of cultural competence that describe an array of knowledge, skills and expected behaviors that demonstrate the ability to function effectively with diverse groups. The cultural competence movement further grew by addressing the social context of diversity, racism, homophobia, discrimination and oppression (including discrimination based on ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation), as well as social and economic justice concerns (NASW, 2007). As we deliberate these issues and our understanding of cultural competency, however, we must apply them both to the recipients of service and providers of service.

In this regard, the New York State Office of Child and Family Services established the Racial Equity & Cultural Competence committee. Its goal is to eliminate poor outcomes (disproportionality and disparity) for families of diverse populations, including immigrant families, within the child welfare system. It also focuses on the development of a racial equity impact assessment tool for child care practitioners, welfare policy analysts and administrators to help reduce institutional racism (NYS OCFS, n.d.).

With the increase in the number of immigrant groups utilizing social services and attending educational institutions (Matthews & October-Edun, 2014), there is a growing need to address issues and concerns of immigrant groups. In response to this need, I believe that one of our challenges as educators is to use mentoring strategies and activities that enhance students' (transformative) learning process so they can develop – from different perspectives – integrative knowledge about themselves and others in a multicultural society. This is at the core of cultural competence.

In working with immigrants, whether in human services or educational setting, it is important to understand that their transitional experiences impact their adaptation, and that aspects of their culture may enhance or preclude their full participation in various social institutions, including social services and education. Many newly-arrived immigrants (or "transnationals": a term used in contemporary literature on immigrants) do not have a good command of the English language, nor are they acculturated to the customs and norms of the host society. Consequently, it is often difficult for them to fully comprehend available social services, or to access and navigate such services efficiently. Or, for example, they may not be able to adequately give informed consent or participate as partners in setting goals and working toward change. Is a social services agency or educational institution deemed culturally *incompetent* if it does not

Lear Matthews

have interpreters or staff of the same ethnic group/cultural background as the client/student? Within the context of formal educational systems and deliverers of human services, this perennial question has great relevance.

Recognizing the hegemony of race and racism that are embedded in the very structures of American society and the dilemmas these forces create for some immigrants, it is too often assumed that they enter societies that is far more prosperous than the ones they left behind, and it is too often missed that these immigrants join the ranks of America's most frequently oppressed groups. Having come from societies where people like themselves are in the majority, their newly realized identity and the racial and ethnic divisions they encounter do not escape their attention. Their "otherness" becomes pronounced in various social situations.

In light of the above, and in thinking about cultural competence as it relates to immigrants and other populations, these issues and the

realities faced by members of immigrant groups must be considered. Thus, one definition of cultural competence that I find useful is: " … a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or amongst professionals and enables that system, agency or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations" (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989, p. iv). Such a definition captures critical dynamics of cross-cultural engagement within educational and human services. It also highlights the importance of organizational collaboration and change agents' understanding of the needs of culturally different groups in effectuating meaningful change.

I will close by raising a number of questions that we need to think about as mentors. Do we believe that a culturally competent system of delivering educational services is important? Should the college develop a more

> *Do we believe that a culturally competent system of delivering educational services is important?*

culturally competent way of providing services? What form should this take? Should such services be embedded in the information we disseminate (for example, in helping mentors to better understand historical contexts and facts regarding contemporary issues across the areas of study)? What about the methods involved in providing such information? What constitutes a culturally *in*competent system of education? How do educators, practitioners, support and professional staff learn about different cultures and the most effective ways of applying that knowledge in the effective, respectful and regular delivery of educational/social services? How do we respond to students whose perspective on issues such as race relations, political ideology and the impact of globalization differs from ours? How do you respond in a study group setting when there are intense debates among students about these issues? Within such a context, what responsibilities do we have to sustain a positive

learning environment? How do mentors deal with a situation in which a student openly disrespects another student's culture, ethnicity or country of origin? What do we do?

Finally, it is assumed that in higher education, what we call "academic excellence" is and should be one of our principle goals. However, academic excellence should not be measured only in terms of scholarship or mastery of subject matter. Given the importance of cultural competence today, our assumptions about excellence, our goals for our students and for ourselves, must include the ability to address diversity issues, social justice, human rights and equity.

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A Perspective on Policy Punctuations and Learning Outcomes at SUNY Empire State College

Nadine V. Wedderburn, Northeast Region

As I sat through two days of discussion, deliberations and debates concerning processes related to the creation of a collegewide course catalog, it occurred to me that I was participating in what might be considered a protracted, defining moment along the institution's trajectory. Vibrant conversations about learning outcomes took on various qualities and I conjectured that yet another fundamental change to SUNY Empire State College's identity was imminent.

Whereas higher education institutions may be typically characterized as firmly rooted in tradition and somewhat immune to shifting public policies to which other sectors of public education are vulnerable, increased competition for government funding amidst additional policy concerns such as completion, enrollment, retention and tuition-pricing have forced public colleges and universities to contend with intense change. In the realm of public policy, these interruptive government actions are referred to as "policy punctuations" that have the potential to alter an organization's identity and priorities (Baumgartner & Jones, 1993).

In this essay, I contend that policy changes punctuating Empire State College's narrative are in evidence. Further, I propose that in this dynamic context, "learning outcomes" may be alternatively used to conceptualize an educative process in which the college community is currently engaging, not solely the formulated components of knowledge, skills and abilities promised by a course of study as is typically understood.

Policy Punctuations

The notion of policy punctuations draws on Punctuated Equilibrium Theory, which seeks to explain a system's evolution as periods of stability interrupted by dramatic transition or transformation (Gersick, 1991; Romanelli & Tushman, 1994). Based on this theory, Baumgartner, Jones and Mortensen (2014) submitted that " … policymaking both makes leaps and undergoes periods of near stasis as issues emerge and recede from the public agenda" (p. 61). As a result, the policy process is susceptible to intervals of stability and gradual, incremental change throughout its duration. Against this backdrop, it can be deduced that changes in higher education policy have resulted in marked pauses, exclamations or stops for many institutions. Indeed, here at ESC, we have been experiencing recent calls to revise, re-imagine, rebuild and restructure teaching, mentoring, learning and administrative practices, and to re-emerge as a community ready to work through the challenges of delivering 21st century tertiary-level education.

In their 2014 and 2015 higher education policy briefs that prioritize higher education state policy issues, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities identified policies that emphasize the need for public higher education institutions to prepare students to meet states' workforce and economic development demands, all the while dealing with lower enrollment rates, increasing tuition and heightened attention to academic quality. These concerns may be seen as converging into what has become known as "the college completion agenda." The Education Policy Center confirmed, "[t]he college completion focus is both a workforce and an economic development issue" (Friedel, Thornton, D'Amico, & Katsinas, 2013, p. 2). Seemingly driving the college completion agenda are performance-oriented policy reforms and increased demands on institutions for stronger accountability, affordability and access (Conner & Rabovsky, 2011).

In response to these forces, SUNY (n.d.) has devised "SUNY Excels," a system intended to measure performance as a function of

Nadine V. Wedderburn

Photo credit: Nadine V. Wedderburn

five factors – Access, Completion, Success, Inquiry and Engagement. This model has been embraced by ESC. Commonly referred to as performance-based funding, many states have established formulae or policies to determine funding based on measures such as course completion, time to degree, the number of degrees awarded, or the number of low-income and minority graduates. SUNY Excels is a policy rejoinder that is intricately tied to funding and is expected to provide greater accountability and transparency across the entire SUNY system. As SUNY's Big Ideas (2015) blog reported after Chancellor Nancy Zimpher's State of the University Address:

> … in response to Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's call for performance-based funding plans in his 2015 State of Opportunity Agenda, SUNY will hold itself accountable to its stakeholders through 'SUNY Excels,' a performance management system that will measure the university's achievements at the system and campus levels. (para. 8)

To my mind, these tensions among funding, completion and academic quality have reoriented the mission of higher education at large and produced some specific outcomes that the ESC community has had to learn, namely, how to mentor students through ESC-style degree planning in an environment of changing state aid regulations; how to create programs that generate robust enrollment rates while staying true to the essence of a liberal arts and science education; and how to develop tools, systems and processes that promote equity and ensure efficiency of resources for faculty, staff and administration.

Take, for example, the fact that New York state financial aid regulations insist that students have a nearly finalized degree program plan soon after their first year of enrollment in order to continue receiving aid. Additionally, decisions about transfer credits are expected to be conclusive almost immediately upon admission and no later than the first-term registration (K. Delbridge, Northeast Region Meeting, June 2015). This is, in effect, opposite to the practice of many mentors who work with students over a period of time planning their degrees before concretizing decisions in the form of degree plans. Clearly, both the regulatory strategy and educational planning approach serve students well, but increased attention to performance and accountability gives pause to a long-established mentoring practice carried out in the spirit of promoting individualization and students' ownership of their education as a focal aspect of degree planning and of an ESC education more broadly. Establishing "pre-structured" programs at ESC has been touted as one practical response to facilitating the financial aid policy demands as such an approach would likely reduce ambiguity around required courses and offer a clear path to degree completion. This method of program development is conceivably revolutionary to extant ESC practice and consideration for its implementation has proven to be quite enlightening.

As mentioned previously, a recent instance of ESC's punctuated narrative is exemplified in the activities related to understanding how to effectively and efficiently capture and publicize the wide variety of "courses" available for study across the college. This undertaking is arguably tied to enrollment and retention efforts, as

straightforward, transparent access to study options is vital to the college's existence and to students' success. Hence, a concrete outcome of the project is an e-catalog that includes a comprehensive listing of courses offered at ESC and fully available for use by the entire community. The development of the catalog has been a multi-layered exercise and not one of simply agreeing upon course titles. Different constituencies have been involved in rounds of sorting and assigning courses to respective areas of study, determining and prioritizing course learning outcomes, organizing the relevant components of the catalog and making various decisions about study offerings along academic disciplines' lines. These activities reflect a clear departure from the way information concerning learning opportunities has been conceptualized, processed and disseminated at ESC in the past. They offer us a clear example of systems that are evolving at ESC.

Perhaps the most significant of all punctuations that ESC has been experiencing recently is the major restructuring to its organizational configuration. As Parsons and Fidler (2005) noted,

> Punctuations are brief periods when the organization may undergo a profound transition or transformation … in most cases where the trigger, which precipitates the punctuation, is external events or the actions of senior management, the punctuation does change the deep structure in a traumatic way. The brief period of punctuation produces distress for organization members. They are disorientated and confused because the organizational certainties which provided security are being undermined. (p. 450-451)

At the time of this writing (mid-fall 2015), the ESC administration is seeking to add several positions to its cadre: one dean of academic services, five associate deans, and three executive directors. These newly-identified positions are part of a completely redesigned organizational chart that systematizes the college into seven "key functional areas": Academic Affairs; Advancement; Administration; Community, Media and Government Relations; Decision Support; Enrollment Management and Marketing;

and Integrated Technologies. Based on the new organizational chart, the five associate deans to be hired will report to the newly appointed dean of undergraduate studies, Nikki Shrimpton, and will provide leadership to five respective groupings of areas of study (Business; Human Services; Humanities; Science, Math, Technology; and Social Science); while the intended dean of academic services will potentially have responsibility over virtual learning, faculty development and academic support (SUNY ESC, 2015). Prior to this arrangement, primary administrative, teaching and learning activities were organized around regional clusters across the state, with each "center" exercising a measure of autonomy over its respective operations. In contrast, the latest structural adjustments to personnel responsibilities and alignments actualize deep disruptions to some of ESC's characteristic relationships and processes. In essence, the college community will have to learn new alliances and come to terms with new ways of coexisting professionally within a rearranged workplace matrix.

Learning Through Change

Although policy punctuations may be unsettling to an organization, they also provide opportunities for "new" thinking and learning within organizations. The definition of learning as offered by Nisbet, Lincoln and Dunn (2013) is instructive here: "the process of developing knowledge, skills or new insights, bringing about a change in understanding, perspective, or the way something is done or acted upon" (p. 469). Given this characterization, it is evident that change and learning can be neatly intertwined, allowing for meaningful transformation if harnessed wisely. Schultz (2014) concurred:

> … intentional continuous learning supports organizational readiness for change; though specific change implementations can be marked in time, organizational change and learning is continuous; and learning itself *is* change, and deliberately recognizing and identifying learning as a kind of change can help to create an environment for sustainable organizational change over time. (p. 21)

When punctuated moments of change occur in higher education, learning outcomes may manifest themselves not merely as the consequences of change but as a worthwhile, edifying process within a dynamic milieu of public policy changes and pressures. At ESC, the entire community is being forced to examine and define aspects of crucial roles and responsibilities in completely unprecedented ways. As agents of change, faculty, staff and students are able to exercise reflexivity and create strategies that will equip them to adapt to and survive continuing change.

Alternatively, while learning may be a valuable by-product of organizational change, punctuated moments can also reveal failures to learn. Given the high levels of uncertainty and ambiguity that come with punctuated equilibrium, individuals may choose not to participate in the processes attendant to organizational change and thus become part of a passive and apathetic collective. What may happen then, is that little to no learning takes place, and opportunities to recognize organizational "blind spots" or "misfits" are missed. For instance, learning takes time and the rate of change or approaches to change may be perceived as untenable by some. In addition, since learning is a more reflective and active process than merely acquiring knowledge, successful learning through change requires that organizational members are willing, ready and able to engage the change process. Some may feel out of their depth in contending with the changes afoot and simply exclude themselves from the process. This can result in a serious knowledge-sharing deficit and should be of importance to those promoting change so that barriers to learning can be acknowledged and mitigated.

To a large extent, organizational change involves behavioral change at the level of the individual. Further, Nisbet, Lincoln and Dunn (2013) point out that learning is as much communal as it is personal. Therefore, during periods of change, the shared beliefs, values and experiences of individuals that influence the core identity and mission of an organization are likely to be challenged, thus inhibiting the benefits of learning through change. Lines, Sáenz and Aramburu (2011) submit that when justifications for change are referential and penitentiary, organizational

learning is more likely to be generative and engaging. In other words, when success stories of similar change activities are presented as evidentiary reference, or when managers/leaders exhibit awareness of and concern for the potential hardships that come with organizational change, individuals are more apt to embrace change and participate in creating new knowledge and sharing knowledge across the organization. The authors surmise that referential and penitentiary justifications are beneficial for fostering learning due to their effect of reducing uncertainty, ambiguity and perceived levels of threat. Lines, Sáenz and Aramburu (2011) stated:

> Uncertainty and ambiguity reduction in periods of change can foster learning because information processing and solution development become focused on specific issues that are important for the effective functioning of the specific change that is pursued by the organization … it is possible that the perceived level of threat diminishes when penitentiary justifications are received by those that are (negatively) affected by change. (p.178)

Punctuated equilibrium is tantamount to changing human behavior and attitudes in the organizational context. However, accomplishing change in human behavior, even through learning, is a complex task and often demands more than rational explanations. Individuals' inability to accurately estimate future payoffs of risks inspires fear and resistance to change. Behavioral change theories and strategies, although not the subject of this essay, may offer useful responses to this issue.

Concluding Comments

This essay has sought to apply Punctuated Equilibrium Theory to illustrate three profound change instances at ESC that may be considered responses to contemporary higher education policy shifts. I posit that these punctuations have resulted in significant changes to the structures and practices of the organization. At the same time, they are valuable in demonstrating the community's capacity to work through change experiences over time. Parsons and Fidler (2005) proffered that punctuated equilibrium is helpful

for analyzing change in higher education institutions, and recommended its application for understanding change in educational organizations over an extended period of time. In the same way that grammatical punctuations serve specific purposes, policy punctuations have utility in revealing an organization's and its constituents' capacity for change. Parsons and Fidler (2005) submitted that "deep changes are formulated at senior levels in the organization and it is those lower down who have to puzzle out what the changes mean for their work" (p. 451). The punctuated moment is not final. Rather, it sets into motion a knowledge-creation process across the organization. Ultimately, the practical value of transformational change is contained in constituents' interpretations of the change that become routinely enacted to establish new norms. If it is true that "the only thing constant is change," then faculty, staff and students may be well-advised to expect ongoing policy punctuations, and seize them as opportunities that are potentially constructive for learning innovative outcomes beneficial to their practice, pursuits and the future of higher education overall.

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Making Space

Barrie Cline '01, '04,
The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies

"Weave," 2013, Ceramic, wood panel, mixed media, 6' x 4'

New York's spatial politics have long been both the real and imagined site for my works of video, installation, activism, and other performed and pedagogical acts. I am particularly interested in practices that make space for themselves in a profit-driven social and built environment.

My craft initially incorporated ceramic and recycled mixed media in a process-oriented building of sculpture evocative of organic growth, visceral urgency and bottom-up development. It functioned as a kind of intuitive and metaphoric grappling with ways to respond to normalizing regulating systems or strictures. By introducing chance elements inherent in the materials, or limits imposed by experimenting with grid formations in the installations, I also sought ways to experiment with degrees of (de)authorship when working. I then experimented with digital collages where these sculptures were projected into the urban environment in ways that suggested either preposterous public art proposals or monstrous urban interventions/consequences of the uneven development of gentrification and the neoliberal "taking" of New York City. These works became emblematic of my feelings about the city, as well as my growing dissatisfaction with time spent in solitary and interior studio experimentation. They seemed suggestive of new and more directly politically-engaged modes of being in the world with others. Then Occupy Wall Street happened. I began seeking out ways to connect with public space – or to make space – with cultural work that seemed more urgent to me.

Along the lines of the "urban interventions," I produced a public art proposal for a Workers Pavilion honoring working people. This marked a turning point in my practice, inspired by a Social Practice Art program in which I was involved at Queens College. It connected my current teaching of public art with union construction workers at the Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies with my public art practice. A version of the pavilion was actually realized with support from the center. We then formed the Workers Art Coalition (http://www.theworkersartcoalition.com/), a group comprised of artists, other construction tradespeople and some of my former public art students like Jaime Lopez.

The Workers Art Coalition has engaged in art and movement building projects in the public realm, such as creating a Workers Pavilion for the anniversary of the World's Fair, a 24-foot Labor float with the People's Climate March, an ongoing solidarity project for the U.S. Social Forum; and with Greg Sholette, a Precarious Workers Pageant to protest the conditions of migrant labor building the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. Recently, the group created 10 foot 3-D illuminated signage for the Fight For $15 campaign to raise the minimum wage, and with the help of HVACLS students and administration, Jaime Lopez built a portable exhibition structure/sculpture for the cultural program of a global labor education conference in Peru. These projects have sought to make space for the individual artistic/artisan expression of workers, and to serve as creative platforms for collective action, research and dialogue.

I ask myself whether there is some relationship between the kind of labor it takes to be a part of building and nurturing this sort of interconnectivity and my former ceramics work. Perhaps one day I'll return to the studio in order to better understand these mysteries. ...

Barrie Cline earned her B.A. and M.A.L.S. from SUNY Empire State College, and her M.F.A. from Queens College (2014). More information about Cline's work can be accessed at http://barriecline.com/.

Photography by Barrie Cline unless otherwise noted.

**"Untitled," 2004, Glass, ceramic and mixed media,
19" x 11" x 11"**

**"Untitled," 2009, Ceramic and mixed media,
44" x 21" x 9"**

"Untitled," 2009, Digital collage, 11" x 17"

**"Untitled," 2005-2006, Ceramic and mixed media,
14" x 11" x 5"**

"Downtown (NYU)," 2007, Digital collage, Dimensions variable

"Park Ave," 2008, Digital collage, 24" x 20"
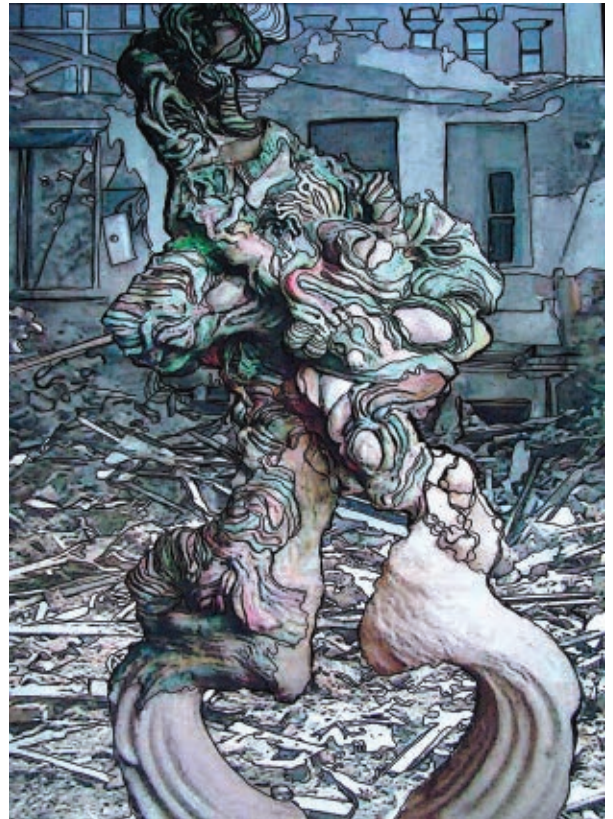
"Untitled," 2009, Digital collage, 24" x 20"

"We Build the Future," 2014, Workers Art Coalition, People's Climate March (NYC), Photo credit: Bobby Andrew

"Worker's Shanty," 2014, Workers Art Coalition
installation at Queens College, Dimensions variable

"Workers Pavilion," 2014, Workers Art Coalition, Open Engagement, Queens Museum, Photo credit: Bobby Andrew

What Your ESC Education is All About: Six Questions and Some Explanation

Lee Herman, Central New York Region

Mentor Lee Herman offered these words at the SUNY Empire State College graduation celebration held in Ithaca on June 20, 2015. We thank Lee for giving us permission to include his talk in All About Mentoring.

It's a graduation tradition for someone *very* important, like *me,* to tell *you* what your own education *really* means, then tell you to do better. I feel a little uncomfortable doing this.

Here's why:

Since ESC is a student-centered school and you all have designed your own educations here, I figure you know a whole lot better than I do what you've accomplished and what's still wanting.

However, as [Dongho] Kim (mentor and Ithaca location coordinator) and my dean, Nikki [Shrimpton], will tell you, I'm the soul of compliance. Therefore, I will now indeed tell you what your ESC education has been all about.

But, I'm going to tell you in the ESC way:

I'm going to ask you questions, six questions. Then I'll offer a little bit of explanation, which of course you can take or leave.

Answer the questions "yes" or "no," just to yourself. But do please answer honestly. If you do, your answers will be correct and you will then know what your education really means.

Okey-dokey, here we go:

1. When you became an ESC student, were you asked what you wanted to learn and why?

2. Did you respond honestly and were your answers taken seriously?

3. Were you asked what you believe you had learned already, why, and how well?

4. Did you respond honestly and were your answers taken seriously?

5. Did you then begin to ask on your own what you wanted to learn and why; what you had already learned, and how well?

6. Did you answer honestly enough and take your answers seriously enough to act on the consequences?

If your answers to these questions are "yes," well then, you have achieved the very best higher education available anywhere on the planet.

Really? The best higher education on the planet? Why do I say *that?*

Here's why:

All learning occurs alone, in solitude; and all learning occurs in freedom, by choice.

The learning you achieve, you do as an individual, inside your own head. You can be helped, you can be encouraged and even coerced, but, you really can't be injected with knowledge by anyone else.

You might have noticed that my list of questions begins with a questioner who isn't you. After that, you pretty much become both asker and answerer. Your learning is entirely your own. You need only be honest with yourself, in both the asking and the answering, and you will recognize both your learning and your ignorance. You will know what you have done, and you will know what you need to do.

Individuality and freedom, I suggest to you, are the essential *conditions* of human learning. And, perhaps paradoxically, individuality and freedom, are also the *outcomes* of human learning. You get out of it what you put in, just more and better.

I think you graduates and my colleagues here at Empire State College understand this very well, better I think than at almost any other college I've ever heard of. Those six questions

Photo credit: Lee Herman

Lee Herman

I asked you, offer and demand individuality and freedom. To answer them honestly – to say to yourself what you really mean – you have to learn who you are; and you have to choose, freely, on your own, to do so.

Those questions are pretty much what ESC is all about. Your education at ESC, the education you have created, means that you are learning your self. That's an education you will keep, and keep doing, long after you forget the details of any of the studies you have done here.

Did you find the questions difficult? Did you find it difficult to create your own education here at ESC? Was it difficult for you to keep asking yourself again and again about your learning as you went along, and to take complete and sole responsibility for what you had learned and had not learned; to take complete responsibility for your curiosity, for your need, and for what you cherish?

In a high academic tower, it takes courage to discover who you are, to know your self. I think it takes even more courage to do so while you are immersed in the tasks, duties,

pressures, seductions and sheer noise of the normal world. I admire you and congratulate you for your learning and for your courage. I'm not sure that I could have done what you have done. Thank you for inspiring me and my colleagues. Thank you for letting us bear witness along the way, and today, to *your* achievement.

> *"The exact role of faculty differs somewhat in each case, but the trend, far from moving in the direction of deemphasizing and devaluing faculty, is progressing toward a heightened recognition of the unique contribution of faculty. The role is at once more specialized and more generalized – more specialized in the increased focused on substantive matters of program development and of individual student learning and more generalized in the broader perspective on the relationship of advising, professional training, and community and experiential setting to academic study. Common to both aspects of the trend is the focus on intellectual rigor imparted in a climate of human support as the most necessary, and most neglected, faculty role in today's university."*
>
> *James W. Hall, The Faculty and the Future*
> Alternative Higher Education, 1*(2), 1976, p. 105*

Diversity Residency: Building Bridges to Understanding

Linda Treinish and Susan McConnaughy, Hudson Valley Region; John Lawless, Central New York Region and Office of Academic Affairs; Gina Torino, Metropolitan New York Region

*"Sitting in a room openly talking about issues that affect all of us on a daily basis (for good and bad) was in one word, **remarkable.**"*[1] This sentiment was echoed many times over by students in attendance at this year's Hudson Valley Region Diversity Residency: Building Bridges to Understanding. Going into the residency, we hoped to provide students with a rich set of perspectives on diversity. None of us anticipated the tsunami of emotions and incredible impact the day's events would bring.

The residency was held on May 30, 2015 at the Hartsdale location and was organized by mentors Susan McConnaughy and Linda Treinish. Mentors John Lawless, our opening keynote speaker, discussed "The Intersection of Power, Privilege and Oppression" and Gina Torino led the final afternoon session on "Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life."

The Hudson Valley Region traditionally offered a diversity residency every other year. Due to changes in our local administration and faculty over the past few years, the last diversity residency was held in 2010. Since that time, the Business, Management and Economics (BME) faculty have presented an annual residency during the Summer I term on various themes ranging from entrepreneurship to women in the workplace. This year, we wanted to try an interdisciplinary approach, and Susan (Community and Human Services) and Linda (BME) took the lead to resurrect the diversity residency. The topic of diversity lends itself well to the needs of CHS and BME students since these areas of study (and others, too) have a guideline related to diversity.

Offering a residency during the Summer I term can have many benefits. It can broaden the variety of offerings for students to take in the eight-week term, and can provide two-credit, follow-up studies of residency workshops. It can expose students to different mentors with whom they might not have had the opportunity to work before. By focusing student attention on an all-day meeting, residencies also can help reduce the number of incomplete (IN) grades during this short summer term. And the residency can be listed in the term guide in the March as well as the Summer I terms, thereby increasing the potential number of students available to enroll. Residencies involve a great deal of work, and there is plenty of anxiety associated with the planning, organizing, marketing and successfully executing a residency, but our students truly enjoy them and residencies have become an important mode of study for our region.

Early in January, the Hudson Valley Region received a SUNY Empire State College Community Outreach Grant for our proposal, "Community Conversations on Diversity," for the purpose of "raising awareness of the diverse life experiences among our students." The grant provided funding for small, monthly discussions between faculty, support staff and professionals culminating with our interdisciplinary diversity residency open to students and to the community. We invited our students to bring their friends, family and colleagues to the residency. Both the students and community participants would get to enjoy a stimulating day of workshops and a delicious lunch. The students paid tuition for the residency plus a small fee of $40 and, thanks to the grant, the community participants could attend free of charge. We had an enrollment of 29 students for the residency, along with eight community members attending. One of the students brought three of her co-workers, while others brought their friends and significant others. Overall, the attendees were a diverse group in regard to gender, race, ethnicity and age (student age ranged from their early 20s to their mid-60s).

Planning the Residency

We hoped to build on the HVC tradition of hosting a diversity residency that drew from a wide range of our faculty and of our student population in terms of area of study (BME, CHS, Educational Studies and Cultural Studies, especially) and in terms of race, ethnicity and gender.

We wanted to honor the "celebrating diversity" focus of past residencies by welcoming faculty to present workshops on any topic related to diversity that they chose to offer. But we also wanted the residency discussion to take up the timely and profound issue of continuing racial inequalities in the United States, a critical topic that would be somewhat new for our center. We decided to do this by assigning relevant readings and by inviting guest speakers who were experts at setting out the issue of racial inequality and were skilled in facilitating intense discussions. We invited four experts; two agreed to speak: mentors John Lawless and Gina Torino. While both of them are white – and we knew that was not ideal when discussing racial inequality – we decided to move forward, knowing both mentors were very able and experienced colleagues.

We did little to prepare our guest speakers other to give them an overview of the assigned readings and the agenda of workshops for the day. We knew the work of both John and Gina and we knew we could trust them to engage emotionally and academically complex issues with our students.

We selected readings that would prepare our students for discussions about diversity, power and oppression. We wanted them to have some useful concepts and language for addressing the issues of bias that arise in individual interactions and on a societal level. We chose two classics: Peggy McIntosh's (1989) article on "white privilege" and the article by Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal & Esquilin (2007) on racial microaggressions. We also selected articles by Lynn Lieber (2008) on changing demographics and by R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr. (1996) on redefining diversity in the workplace. We asked students to view an excellent training video on implicit bias

prepared by the American Bar Association (2011), and students were then asked to take a confidential implicit bias test (Project Implicit, 2011) at home. We had found these materials bracing and substantial, and we felt confident that our students would too.

To recruit participants, we pitched the residency to mentors at our center meetings; we printed and posted fliers at each Hudson Valley location; and we encouraged the enrollment of our own mentees who often need studies dealing with "diversity" to respond to the guidelines of their chosen area of study guidelines.

As part of what became ongoing planning and thinking about next year's residency, we learned that any future planning process must include student leaders of color (who emerged for us from this year's residency); we also came to recognize that we need to get our planning started earlier.

Guest Speakers

John Lawless: The Intersection of Power, Privilege and Oppression

When asked to be the keynote speaker at the diversity residency, I was excited, worried and apprehensive. My entire academic career has focused on the intersection of power, privilege and oppression (PPO). In particular, I am interested in how the intersection of contextual variables (e.g., race, class and gender) affect peoples' experiences of mental health services. While my academic, clinical and personal experiences are more than sufficient to speak about PPO, I am always concerned about how students experience me, knowing that my physical appearance can represent something different than how I perceive myself. I question why a white, heterosexual, middle-class, able-bodied, Christian, man is the keynote speaker at a diversity residency. And once I begin to wrestle with this question, I realize that if I said yes, the task becomes more complicated. It is hard to discuss the complexity of PPO in a three-hour meeting, a 16-week course or in a dissertation, let alone in one hour.

Rather than wrestle with this myself, I engaged Susan and Linda about these questions. These conversations helped me to say yes to their invitation and use the dissonance that I have about myself as the crux of my presentation. The presentation revolved around questions I have had about myself in my training and practice as a couples and family therapist. I believe these are a few questions all human services professionals should ask themselves:

- How is it that my context gives me unearned privileges (e.g., redlining housing loans)?

- How is it that I see myself as a good person but people call my behavior hurtful/oppressive (e.g., microaggressions)?

- How is that I want to help people but I don't think about local, state and federal policies (regarding, for example, pollution and the environment; social justice; economic inequalities) that affect human development?

The questions, while not explicit in the presentation, shaped the type of information and resources to be presented. In the end, the students asked wonderful questions, shared experiences to further expand on the information and openly challenged their assumptions as well as my own. It appeared that the presentation sparked something for many of the students. Based on some of the feedback, students felt energized that someone gave voice to their lived experiences and that the presentation challenged them to be more reflective around issues of PPO. I appreciate the invitation from Susan and Linda to struggle with and engage others around these complex topics.

Gina Torino: Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life

Discussing issues of race with large groups of people can be difficult at times. When I was asked to talk about the topic of racial microaggressions, I was pleased and yet at the same time, apprehensive. I have been conducting research and presenting on this topic for almost a decade. Each presentation is different. I wasn't quite sure what to expect at this diversity residency, so I created a presentation based on what presentations I have made in the past.

I was very happy with my experience at the residency. I felt free to share my research with the group, as well as my own personal journey toward creating a non-racist, white identity. People in the group disagreed and, at times, individuals expressed anger and frustration. These emotions are typical when discussing issues of race; I welcomed them. Usually when I present on this topic, people have quite a bit to share. I actually didn't expect to get through my entire PowerPoint presentation, but I did! I would certainly participate in the diversity residency again. The feedback I received was very moving. Many students felt transformed by the discussion and wanted to learn more. A few students wrote to me and thanked me for my time and for sharing my work with them. These types of experiences are so gratifying to me, and I felt so honored to be a part of the students' racial/cultural awakening and development.

The Workshops

Between John Lawless' keynote presentation and Gina Torino's afternoon session, we offered two rounds of workshops covering a wide range of topics. The students selected one workshop from the three being offered in each round. All of the workshops were led by HV Region mentors from CHS, BME and CUL, and our by dean, Gary Lacy.

In the first round of workshops, Gary's "Critical Issues in the Understanding and Practice of Diversity" talk explored the disparities between the rhetoric and actions used to reduce the inequalities between racial and ethnic groups. In feedback from this workshop, students were struck by the cultural assumptions we make on a daily basis. After a group exercise in which students had to provide three thoughts about a photo provided to them, one student stated,

> *"I learned that many people hold cultural assumptions due to the fact that a majority of the population also holds them. I learned to view cultural assumptions with a critical eye, and to avoid stigmatizing, stereotyping and discriminating against people who are different from me."*

Wendy Chabon, a CHS mentor, led a workshop on multicultural counseling where she discussed the importance of cultural sensitivity and awareness when counseling

clients of different races and ethnicities. Feedback from this workshop included this statement,

> "The multicultural counseling workshop was insightful and reminded me to always respect people and their differences. It was also stressed how important it is to research ones' culture and start were the client is at."

Linda offered a session on "Women in the Workplace." After viewing Sheryl Sandberg's TED Talk, "Why We Have Too Few Women Leaders," workshop participants examined the obstacles women and men face at the workplace and at home. A lively discussion ensued between the men and women in the room. Members of each group left with a greater understanding of the other's perspective. As one of the male attendees reflected,

> "I came out with the sense of need to make sure I do not raise my sons with the old fashion attitudes like 'men run the show'; it must be a 50/50 deal, and that they may even have to become house-dads when they get married and have children. I want to instill in them that this does not make them less of a man, but more of a human."

In the second round of workshops, Cultural Studies mentor, Elaine Lux, offered a workshop on culture and communication. She explored with students the sense of time, personal space, relational contexts, power distribution and the cultural valuing of achievement versus nurturance within various cultures. After the group discussion where students shared their own personal experiences, one student was reassured by the commonality of feeling between the students.

> "It was extremely interesting listening to others talk of their experience. After the session, one of the woman participants approached me. She wanted to let me know how she completely understood my feelings about my personal episode."

Susan led a workshop about child rearing across cultures. Her session examined how both biology and culture shape the way we raise young children, and explored a wide range of cultural views on many aspects of parenting including feeding, sleeping arrangements, discipline and independence. Students felt they

were able to "get deep into the conversation" by sharing their own experiences of parenting and the ways that they were parented. As one student reflected,

> "The class was very diverse and I loved that, but it wasn't just diverse because of our race; it was also gender, age and religion, which made the class that much more interesting. The things that I learned from those ladies and gentleman I will carry on with me in parenting."

BME mentor, Renata Kochut, looked at economic diversity across cultures. By examining resources, products, workforce skills and capabilities across the globe, students were given an understanding of the challenges and opportunities of economic diversification. This was brought home to the students by a series of slides showing different families from around the world, their weekly cost of food and their country's gross domestic product. Many students expressed astonishment at the disparity in wealth across countries and how these families sustained themselves with very little money. As one student reflected,

> "The poorest families were required to live together in order to survive. The best things in life cannot be bought. This reminds me to be thankful and share my good fortune."

Closing Thoughts

Our strategy for evaluating the residency overall was based on asking participants to write a short essay (1-2 pages) as part of their final assignment. In this essay, they would reflect on their experience at the residency sessions, the assigned readings and on their own final research papers. [Note: These reflective essays were factored into the students' final grade for the 2-credit residency, so they may well have emphasized the positive learning from the experience.]

This student quote beautifully expresses the thoughts and feelings of the majority of the participants:

> "Of all of the obvious themes and conclusions I could have taken away from the whole residency as a young black woman, I was surprised with the things that resonated with me. I walked away with a greater sense of self, as well as many revelations.

> It felt as if I was viewing myself from an out-of-body experience, and seeing myself as others perceive me. I found myself actually starting conversations with people there, when I would usually stay quiet [and] to myself. When I had to speak up in some of the workshops, I was nervous, I was shaky, but I did it anyway. I saw the power in my own voice, and how others valued my contributions. I realized that what I have to offer is important, and it can help other people. I had people come up to me and tell me that they valued what I had to say; I actually exchanged numbers with some of the people there. I actually want to take some study group classes now, so that I can interact with other people. These are all things I would have never done in a million years. This residency totally pushed me out of my comfort zone, and for once, I was OK with it; [I] actually embraced it. I found the whole day to be very powerful. I could see minds hard at work, and how our various and diverse experiences contributed positively to lively discussions. I loved that we were able to learn from one another and give each other a glimpse into our lives. The other day, one of the students there texted me and told me he noticed a microaggression, and stepped in to say something. I found it so commendable and positively powerful to know that we all took different things away from this residency, and are applying it to our lives, and sharing the knowledge with others."

We couldn't have asked for more.

Note

[1] The student quotes in this paper are included by permission of residency participants. We thank our students for their contributions.

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On Being Equal: A Conversation About *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*

Mary Helen Kolisnyk, Michael Merrill et al., The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies

What follows here is an edited transcript of a March 20, 2015 "Dialogues at Noon" talk, part of a series of presentations and conversations initiated and guided by SUNY Empire State College's Michael Merrill of The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies, and Bob Carey of the Metropolitan New York Region, Brooklyn location. The focus of this "dialogue" is Jacques Rancière's (1991) The Ignorant Schoolmaster. *The text also includes comments from two colleagues, Tom Kerr and Richard Wells. Many thanks to Mike and Mary Helen Kolisnyk for taking the lead in preparing this text.*

Michael Merrill: Let me start by saying a few words about Jacques Rancière and *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*. Rancière is a very influential professor of philosophy, now retired from the University of Paris, who has written extensively on art, literature, aesthetics and politics. There is much to recommend of his work, which is thought-provoking even when disagreeable (itself a very Rancièrian notion). Today, however, we are not concerned with the main body of his ideas, but rather with an early stream of work preoccupied with the intellectual history of the 19th century French working class.

In the 1960s, Rancière was a student at France's elite preparatory school, the *École Normale Supérieure,* where he participated in Louis Althusser's famous Reading *Capital* seminar. Althusser's role in the events of May 1968 soured Rancière on his mentor. Partly in reaction to these events, Rancière himself became a solidarity activist seeking to forge stronger ties between the student movement and the workers' movement, which in Rancière's view, Althusser's influence had helped to divide.
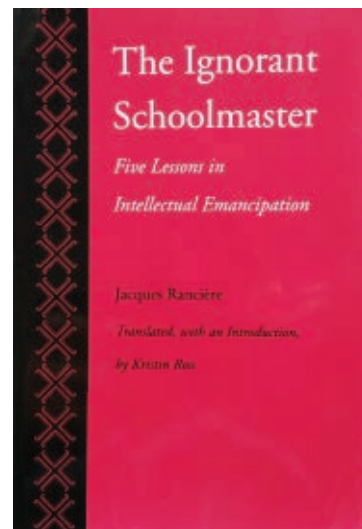
Rancière's experience as an activist convinced him that he could learn more about the working class from workers themselves than from philosophers and other intellectuals.

Eventually he found his way to the 19th century Parisian popular and working-class press – just before and leading up to the Revolution of 1848 – and especially to the many working-class contributors who managed to get published in its pages. The variety and pitch of the articles he found there astonished Rancière, who decided to devote himself to their study.

He went on to edit two collections of 19th century working-class writing – *(La Parole ouvrière 1830-1851* [1976: Union générale d'éditions], with Alain Faure, and *Le philosophe plébéien* [1983: La Découverte/Maspero]) – neither of which have been translated; and two extended commentaries – *(Proletarian Nights: The Workers' Dream in Nineteenth-Century France* [2012: Verso] and *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation* [1991: Stanford University Press]) – both of which have appeared in English. We are here concerned only with the latter.

The Ignorant Schoolmaster focuses on the work and influence of a young teacher and lawyer-in-training, Joseph Jacotot, who was 19 when the Bastille fell. Swept up in the events of the time, Jacotot joined the French revolutionary army, where he served as an artilleryman. He then held several minor but by no means insignificant positions in the Ministry of War and, before returning to his hometown of Dijon, served as acting director of the *École polytechnique.* In Dijon, he taught various subjects including ancient languages, mathematics and the law, and became well enough known to find himself elected in 1815 to serve as a deputy to the National Assembly following Napoleon's short-lived return from exile.

After Waterloo [June 18, 1815], Deputy Jacotot fled to the Netherlands to avoid his probable arrest and obtained a royal appointment as a part-time professor of French literature at the University of Louvain. According to Rancière (1991), Jacotot's lectures were "highly appreciated by his students," among whom were "a good number of [Flemish] students who did not speak French … " (p. 1). As he knew no Flemish, a way to communicate had to be found and Jacotot ended up urging his Flemish-speaking students, perhaps in desperation, to learn French by using a popular didactic novel, *The Adventures of Telemachus* [originally published in 1699], which had just appeared in a bilingual French-Flemish edition.

Through an interpreter, Jacotot instructed his students to memorize the French text with the help of the translation, and then come back to him prepared to write in French about what they had read. The results were a revelation. Two decades later, when Jacotot was at the height of his fame, two journalists recounted his pedagogical experiment, reporting that he had

expected horrendous barbarisms, or maybe a complete inability to perform. How could these young people, deprived

of explanation, understand and resolve the difficulties of a language entirely new to them? … And how surprised he was to discover that the students, left to themselves, managed this difficult step as well as many French could have done! Was wanting all that was necessary for doing? Were all men virtually capable of understanding what others had done and understood? (p. 2)

From the passable French of his Flemish students, Jacotot concluded not only that it was possible to teach those to whom one could not speak, but also that it was possible to teach what one did not know. What worked in the one instance would also work in the other. This discovery became the mission of the rest of his life: to let everyone know that such a thing was possible.

He was especially concerned to assure illiterate parents that they could help their children learn to read, and thus have a larger role in life, without knowing how to read themselves. In pursuit of this dream, he opened a school of "universal teaching," published a magazine, the *Journal of Intellectual Emancipation,* and wrote several books to illustrate and publicize his findings.

There are three provocative ideas connected to and arising from Jacotot's teaching and proselytizing that Rancière develops and queries in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster,* which I would propose we focus on. For mnemonic reasons, I have given these ideas a title: The Virtue of Ignorance; The Principle of Equality; and the Lure of Inequality.

By **the virtue of ignorance,** I mean the idea that one need not know a subject, a discipline or a skill in order to teach it. In fact, according to Jacotot, it's possible that one might teach a subject better if one doesn't know it than if one does.

Second, according to **the principle of equality,** human beings are more or less equally intelligent. All teaching needs to be based on this conviction. Differences in acquired learning are best generally accounted for on the basis of opportunity and desire rather than on the basis of intellectual capacity.

Finally, **the lure of inequality,** which is a focus of much of the second half of *The Ignorant Schoolmaster,* refers to the temptation to turn any successful method or achievement, even one built upon the principle of equality, into a justification for inequality. One might say, for example, "I know something that you don't know, therefore I am better or more powerful than you are."

The first idea in particular is likely to strike most people, especially educators, as ridiculous. But I would like to argue that it is not as ridiculous as it seems.

To appreciate its force, let's first translate "to teach" as "to enable someone to learn," which I believe is a reasonable translation. If we then restate the virtue of ignorance as, "One need not know a subject in order to enable someone to learn it," it seems a much less obviously ridiculous notion.

Enabling people to learn is in fact a pretty good functional description of what headmasters (I only just now got the pun!) and college administrators do. In effect, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* can be read as a philosophical defense of why headmasters and college administrators contribute something as important to the educational enterprise as do classroom instructors, perhaps even more so.

Suddenly we are engaged in a conversation about what is conducive to learning and how it is different from what is considered "good teaching." In this context, the notion that an "ignorant schoolmaster" might actually be better equipped than an expert to enable someone to learn no longer seems so strange.

There is an additional proposition entailed in this, I think, which has to do with the principle of equality. The notion that individuals are morally equal, each deserving the same respect and treatment, though not universally accepted, is fairly well established. However, the more stringent idea that individuals are equal in intellectual ability and cognitive capacity has far fewer supporters, not least because it seems to fly in the face of our experience.

According to Rancière, however, this is exactly the conclusion that Jacotot reached from the ability of his Flemish students to teach themselves French without the benefits of his

explication [see more below on "explication"], and to write it as well as those who had had that benefit.

We often think of the classroom as a hierarchical space in which there is an instructor who knows, and lots of students who don't know. We then think the purpose of the class is to raise those who don't know closer to the level of those who do know.

Jacotot, however, drew an entirely different conclusion from the ability of his Flemish students to teach themselves French. In effect, he began to believe in the possibilities of the classroom as an egalitarian space.

This belief is consistent with the principles Jacotot had most likely fought for during the French Revolution. It, too, was about attacking the principle of inequality or hierarchy. *The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* [1789] is a declaration of equality. It says that people are not higher or lower. They are equal, and society needed to be founded or based upon the principle of equality.

What does this principle of equality mean when applied to education? As I mentioned earlier, we think of the classroom as a hierarchical space that serves the purpose of delivering explanations – explications – of the subjects being studied. Jacotot understands this structure of the classroom to be, in his word, "stultifying": a relationship and a practice that lead to the cessation of thinking.

But can we also think of the classroom as an egalitarian space, in which are gathered a lot of people, each of whom knows different things? If we think of the classroom in that way, and act in it in a way that is consistent with that way of thinking, then it becomes an egalitarian rather than a hierarchical space.

Mary Helen Kolisnyk: Maybe this is a moment for me to jump in. How do we know that we are among equals in the classroom? How is this equality revealed?

For Jacotot, the principle of equality is established when he realizes that his students, who don't speak his language, have actually learned to engage with it, understand it and to write it. In Rancière's version of Jacotot's story (and I don't know if the word I am

about to introduce comes from Jacotot or from Rancière), the process by which one's equality is established is called "verification."

This process of verification seems to be the primary intellectual activity of students in an egalitarian classroom. It is what they do when they speak with and to one another, testing what one says against what they all read, and against what each comprehends, in the text. As I read him, verification is the primary engine of egalitarian learning, according to Rancière.

M.M.: Yes! I agree. Let's take an example. How do we know when we are speaking to someone who knows our language? It seems to me that the process of verification that you are talking about is like the process we go through when we are trying to find someone who speaks our language.

The same thing happens when we talk with anyone who knows more than we do. We have to learn how to speak their language, if want to know what they are trying to say.

The same thing also happens in reverse. If someone more knowledgeable than we are is going to make themselves understood by us, they are going to have to learn to speak our language, to talk with us in terms that we can understand. In such situations, we confront one another not so much as a teacher who knows and a student who doesn't, but as one who knows some things and as one who knows others.

M.H.K.: I think there is a pedagogical jargon for this interaction, or at least for an aspect of it. Verbalizing what you think you comprehended in another's statement is an act of translation: you put it into your own words. The pedagogical jargon for this is "sayback." It's an attempt at reciprocal engagement, and it usually reveals whether two people understand each other, or not. Are we talking about the same thing here?

M.M.: I think we are talking about the same thing. But part of what I want to stress is that verification is not a specialized exercise, the province of experts, the way explication is.

Verification is an everyday exercise. It is something every one of us does every time we "verify" that we have just understood what has

been spoken. And it is this "everyday-ness" of verification that makes it an instance of the principle of equality.

M.H.K.: So, I think I have an example: Last night I brought a short passage from Mike Rose's *The Mind at Work* [2004: Viking] to my class, and asked the students to try to unpack it. They got stuck on I think the second word, and we had to go through our own little bit of verification.

This happens in class all the time. But this time, we actually got hung up on the word "reflection." They didn't know what Rose meant by it and so we had to talk about it, use it, and each of us had to verify, for ourselves as well as others, that we knew what each of us was saying about that word.

M.M.: In the classroom, or for that matter anywhere, it has always seemed to me that whoever controls the language controls the class. One of the first things I do in all my classrooms is to attempt to establish that the language of the students is just as important as the language of the instructor.

Of course, students also need to know that their language is not the only language of the classroom. The instructor's language is important, too, and they will be expected to learn it as part of the class. But I nonetheless always try to start out with activities that affirm for everyone that their voice and their language are also essential elements of the class.

I call these kinds of activities "mirrors." I use them to help students discover themselves in a text we are reading, or see themselves in a problem we are working on. But the learning process can't stop with mirrors. It needs to go somewhere; be something more than self-regarding. But it is helpful to start there. For students have to begin somewhere if they are going to get anywhere.

M.H.K.: I know that I'm familiar with "mirroring" from teaching how and why and when to teach quotations from others' texts in our own writing. But, can we talk about emancipation here? I think emancipation is connected to verification, but I struggle a bit with Rancière's (Jacotot's?) notion. Knowing that you can command your language well enough to be understood by others means that

you can speak for yourself. And I think this is Jacotot's point, but I'm not sure. When you can speak for yourself, are you emancipated?

Maybe it's worth quoting one of the early passages in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* concerned with emancipation.

The passage appears in the second chapter, "The Ignorant One's Lessons," where Rancière is discussing the implications of Jacotot's enabling his Flemish-speaking students to learn French. According to Rancière, "stultification" is what happens in the other, more hierarchical mode of instruction, where students are expected simply to parrot the teacher's explication. Parroting fosters stultification and people stop thinking.

Rancière then observes that emancipation "is precisely the opposite of this. It is each man becoming conscious of his nature as an intellectual subject. It is the Cartesian formula of equality read backwards." And he quotes Jacotot:

> Descartes said, 'I think therefore I am.' And this noble thought of the great philosopher is one of the principles of universal teaching. We turn this thought around and say, 'I am a man, therefore I think.' The reversal equates man with *cogito*. Thought is not an attribute of the thinking substance, it is an attribute of humanity. (p. 35)

And Rancière then goes a bit later in his own voice:

> The whole practice of universal teaching is summed up in the question: what do you think about it? … It is not about opposing manual knowledge, the knowledge of the people, the intelligence of the tool and of the worker, to the science of schools or the rhetoric of the elite. … On the contrary, it is about recognizing that there are not two levels of intelligence, that any human work of art [or artifice] is the practice of the same intellectual potential. … He who makes a distinction between the manual work of the worker or the common man and clouds of rhetoric remains stultified. (p. 36)

M.M.: I think these passages suggest what it means to be emancipated in the context of the classroom. It means to recognize oneself as a thinking subject, a person who thinks. To be emancipated is to have the courage as well as the capacity to think for yourself, to think your own thoughts.

Tom Kerr: The problem that I have with this is that any time anyone goes into a classroom and says something unconventional or outside the norm, one of the first things students say is that they are confused.

I think that there are two words for "confusion" in French. One is simply a cognate of the English term – i.e., *"confusion."* But there is also another possible French translation of "confusion," *"embarras,"* which signifies "perplexity" or to be embarrassed. Similarly, in Dutch, "confusion" is *"verwirrung,"* which also means to be embarrassed or perplexed.

I think it is important that neither Jacotot nor Rancière mentions this kind of confusion, which is not just about understanding, but also about shame. Emancipation is not just about thinking one's own thoughts. It is also about having a particular set of feelings, or not.

M.H.K.: It's interesting to hear about these translations: Confusion is an intellectual state; whereas, you are right to point it out, Tom, embarrassment is more of an affective or emotional state. There are other moments in the book where Rancière gets into "attention," which he talks about, rather unusually and refreshingly, in affective terms. I mean, you feel it. Attention for Rancière seems very much a feeling or emotional state. Part of what I think Rancière is describing is how an individual learns to value or to experience her or his own attentiveness. And, for whatever it's worth, it seems important to build on Tom's questions to say that the willingness to go public with your own critiques is also affective – and it's an essential element of sayback, or verification. So, the engine of equality in the classroom needs its own engine. Or does it?

That said, I often can't tell in this book whether Rancière is just using the classroom as an allegory for society, or whether he is actually talking about teaching. There are times when it definitely seems as if he's just talking about teaching. I guess those are the times when he is citing Jacotot, and describing equality. But

there are also times when it seems as if he is talking about much more, and that he reveals that Jacotot didn't exactly remain, or even become, mainstream.

M.M.: Well, I can report that Rancière has said that he didn't think at all about the educational and pedagogical implications of Jacotot's discovery. He was only interested in it for what it implied or taught him about equality.

M.H.K.: In any case, I find this a productive divergence. I don't think the book fails because it always isn't clear whether it is or is not just about the classroom. But this ambiguity is also a real challenge for me. And I definitely think that Rancière's attention to "attention" is worth noting.

I think of "attention" as one of three central parts or emphases in Rancière's argument, the other two being "verification" and "emancipation." Together, it seems to me, these three elements comprise or characterize an egalitarian classroom, as Jacotot-Ranciere delineate it.

M.M.: What appeals to me about this conversation, and the book in general, is that they challenge us to reflect upon our classroom practice without, at the same time, letting us easily off the hook.

"Universal teaching" is no more a magic formula than is the Socratic Method. Neither Jacotot nor Rancière say to us, "If you do this, you'll be fine." Instead, they say to us something more along the lines of, "If you do this, you may not be any better off than you were before. But nevertheless, you must do this."

M.H.K.: But, of course, this raises the question of what the "this" is. … I think that another standout notion in the book is the argument that equality is not something to be achieved in the future, but rather something to be assumed in the present.

A lot of progressive thinking, Rancière says, is insufficiently egalitarian because it proceeds on the basis of an assumption that equality is something that does not yet exist, when in fact, according to Jacotot, it does. To build an egalitarian society does not require that we

make people equal. It requires that we cease to make them unequal or cease to see each other as unequal (no mean feat).

M.M.: How do we act or treat each other in egalitarian ways in an unequal society? My argument with the text is that both Rancière and Jacotot seem to treat equality as if it were a natural condition, when on the contrary, it seems to me to be clearly and wholly a social condition.

As physical creatures, we are born with different natural capacities, which express themselves in different rankings and functions. But the overwhelming majority of human beings are also born with a cognitive and symbolic capacity, which enables us to create a social order to which we all equally belong, simply by virtue of the fact that we are aware of ourselves as one of its members.

This social order may be equal or unequal, just as a classroom may be egalitarian or hierarchical. There is no guarantee in nature that it will be one or the other. But whatever form the order takes, it is founded on the equality of our cognitive and symbolic capacities.

Rousseau was thus right, it seems to me, that we are born equal, even if we are everywhere in chains. Domination does not annul equality. It asserts it. It is because we are equal that domination must be enforced.

I thus agree with Rancière that equality has to be treated as a premise rather than as a conclusion, the place from which we need to begin, rather than the place to which we wish to tend. We must always act as if we are equal despite our differences, or even because of our differences.

If we act otherwise, if we act as if our differences are barriers to equality, then we will never be there. Or, it will be a horror: a world in which everyone is the same. We need, instead, to accept our equality and always to act as if we are already equal. When we do, we will be equal. Just like that!

What does this mean for us as educators? First, if we are going to be committed to the principle of equality in the classroom, part of our commitment has to lie in recognizing the

virtue of ignorance. We cannot assume that we know everything and our students know nothing, or next to it.

At the same time, having committed ourselves to equality, we are not going to be able to live this commitment in any consistent way until the social conditions under which we practice our craft are themselves equal.

There's a relationship between the challenge of practicing the principle of equality in the classroom and practicing it outside the classroom.

In each case, there is a strong temptation to conclude that living the principle of equality, whether inside the classroom or out of it, is too hard. And so, we give up. We stop rolling the boulder up the hill, since it is just going to roll down again.

As soon as we do so, we accept defeat and cease to be the masters of our fate. We are no longer emancipated because we no longer choose to push the boulder, even though, short of suicide, we are still forced to.

M.H.K.: Right, well, yes, I guess. I mean, I have the sense that when Rancière talks about attention, and tries to describe his experience of it, he is describing just this refusal to give up. It also seems to me that attention is really the thing that we are trying to facilitate in the classroom – that if we can enable our students to be attentive, they will learn, or at least they will learn about feeling equal or not. Equality is also a feeling, right? Like fairness? Otherwise, they won't. Attention is the key to the whole problem.

M.M.: Yes!

Richard Wells: Where does this leave explication? I think this question ties into where some of the conversation is going: How or when does that conversation move out of the classroom and into the society? And where or what kind of emancipation are we looking for? Do we expect too much in the classrooms?

When I think about learning in the classroom and its relationship to the wider society, I think some kind of explication is totally necessary. I get that such explication might implicitly establish the dominance of one person over another. And certainly, that kind of power relation has often existed, at least historically.

But when you think about the explication about what's going on in our world, the major dominant explanations are often wrong in important ways. And unless we push against these falsehoods, offer counter-explications, if you will, they will remain in place and in force.

Some teachers might feel irresponsible, as teachers, if they didn't *ever* offer their own explications.

M.M.: I agree. I don't think all explication is stultifying; this is part of accepting that the students' language cannot be the only language in the classroom. Explication can be emancipatory. But for it to be emancipatory, it must be a self-imposed or self-generated explication. It has to be something that students each come up with on their own. We really only understand something that we can explicate for ourselves and to others. What else does critical thinking mean than the capacity to figure obscure things out for ourselves?

We can help each other do that. Some of us may even be better at it than others. But if an explication is going to be emancipatory, each has to get to it on his or her own. To be emancipated is to think, to explicate, for oneself.

M.H.K.: We have to stop soon but I want to note a phrase in the book that Rancière comes back to frequently toward the end: "the reasonable man raving." I love this phrase. It seems to me to be something like a model of Rancière's argument, or maybe of Jacotot's experience: It sounds initially as if unreasonable raving but attentive listening reveals the reason in it – maybe, verifies it. Rancière worries about the political effects of such reasonable raving. And yet somehow the opportunity to rave, to say apparently unmotivated or irrational thoughts, needs to exist. People need to feel free to speak, even if it goes so wildly against the conventional wisdom, if they are going to attempt to sustain equality.

M.M.: Whether reasonable or a rant, that's a great place to end the conversation. And fun. Thank you all for coming!

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Nighttime They Come Alive at the Mall

Robert Congemi, Northeast Region

It is the middle of the night – I'm not sure of the exact time; I think it varies, according to my experience and research – when all the many mannequins at the mall come alive to do their shopping. If they are not on a stand of some kind, they just start walking around the various clothing and shoe stores, for instance, and begin so happily to buy as much as they can afford, or even more often than one would think, *more* than they can afford. For those on stands or pedestals – really featured, as it were, say, in the large departments stores, rather than merely standing as advertisements – chances are the mannequins will, in an appropriately regal manner, descend and slowly, deliberately, wander amidst the cosmetics and perfumes, cost be damned.

I wish I were fated to some other destiny, though it is clearly and incontrovertibly, not the case, given my DNA or accidental socialization as a youth, who knows, but to prevent the mannequins from shopping in what seems to me a mad fashion is what I find myself doing. I would say to them:

"What are you doing? Are you mere robots? Will you be totally in control of those who are *de facto* your masters? Will you reflect, if only for a moment, regarding what you do? Isn't that part of your supposed humanity, to more fully understand who you are, what you do, why you do what you do, and, come to terms in some kind of positive way about your existence?"

A few of the mannequins might pause to think about what I am saying. A smaller number might even change their behaviors somewhat for a time. But most think I am the one who is deranged, or at least, sadly, misled or misguided or alien or odd or tricked in some nefarious way that they don't even care to understand. The mannequins continue night after night, sooner or later, to come alive, move from their seemingly stationary position in life and shop and buy, shop and buy, gleefully, maniacally behaving this way without end – even the mannequins who are children. Will I ever countenance this travesty? Or, worse, could I ever embrace their manner? Am I not the guard at the mall?

To be honest, I am by no means the only guard at the mall. As with any other group, we range widely in our interpretation of our duties. But there is one guard, "Gideon," I'll call him, who completely endures these actions of the mannequins; indeed, he often openly encourages them.

"Yes, that's it, boys and girls," he tells them. Gideon is a slight, energetic, nervous man, highly emotional, and will at times refer to the mannequins as boys and girls, endearing nomenclature, in his mind. "Do it. Do it with glee. You are doing the right thing. Besides, life is too short. Why not simply enjoy yourselves?"

Gideon's behavior saddens me or drives me to distraction, but it does not seem as if there is much I can do to combat it, especially because Gideon is so clever and strong-minded and very popular with the mannequins. They seem to follow him implicitly. Of course, I do try to combat him. In one of the aisles of the department store that specializes in cosmetics, I cannot resist.

"What are you doing to these mannequins? Can you not use your intellect for more useful endeavors? You encourage them in their own mindlessness. Is this what you want to do with your life – to say nothing of what kind of guard you want to be?"

I feel he has little respect for me. "This is the right thing for them to do with their lives," he says. "They know it, and if they don't, I do. You cannot stop me. Indeed, they will not let you stop me." Gideon looks at me sternly, even with intimidation. "I'm not sure why you are here, why you are in this position. Some mistake must have been made."

Robert Congemi

It seemed a lost cause. It seemed as if we would be enemies forever. I felt it would be necessary. And the Mannequins' attitudes only bore out my assessment of the situation.

"Alistair, he understands us. He speaks for us, and for that we honor him. We care about you, because we see your sympathy and concern for us. But Gideon is … is our leader actually."

On the other hand, you will not find it too surprising that we did coexist in some odd or practical way. I, of course, needed this work, for the times are very difficult, and I felt I was doing my job as it should be done. Indeed, quite some time passed before there was a change in our relationship and in how things were done at the mall, as subtle and perhaps subversive a change as it might honestly be described.

One night, quiet and early on, Gideon approached me with a request. He was very pleasant, which immediately put me on guard.

"Alistair, I want you to do something for me. I am putting myself up for a special recognition reward, and I want you to write in support of me. I know we have had our differences, but I

respect you – believe it or not – and know that a word from you will mean something with our superiors and owners of the mall."

I was very much taken by surprise, but, mysteriously, perhaps, I agreed to do this for him. After all, wasn't it my nature? To emphasize the positive? To try and not remain in the past, the source of all depression? And couldn't Gideon, in a gracious moment, be thought of as simply doing his job as he thought best? After all, the mannequins seemed surely to believe in him; they were fundamentally good people who only wanted the best for themselves, and weren't differences of opinion allowable to a certain degree? And isn't charity, or at least, an attempt at understanding merely good character? All the world is relative, they say. Couldn't I be wrong somewhat in my understandings? Couldn't the mannequins in some way merely be a function of my own character? Besides, a clear gesture of kindness almost always has good benefits.

Thus … I wrote for him, accentuating what I said was his honest concern and palpable spirit. Perhaps I made a great mistake in doing this; perhaps sheer instinct to create a bit of kindness in the universe duped me. Perhaps I pathetically hoped one kindness would generate a reciprocating kindness, and Gideon would at some point, to some degree, try to understand me, understand *my* viewpoint and modify his own behavior toward my feelings and beliefs.

Time proves a good clarification of the truth, to say nothing of its ability to write the past. Isn't it in the present that we discover or at least establish the truth of what had already happened? Gideon didn't really change at all. Indeed, if I felt he was injurious to the mannequins in general or to myself, he was a worse foe to others, to the occasional disputant or incident. Over the years, I remember two incidents. I had not had much idea about which was probably a function of my own preoccupation or my inability to understand all others or even the disputants' own hesitations or … worthiness. Whatever the case, the first public confrontation with Gideon that stuck out for my attention occurred when a guard who briefly worked among us – a transfer from another mall, rather different from our own – listened to Gideon espousing his ideas at one of our regular meetings. Being generally

ignorant of how things stood or were done at our mall, this guard, a strong-looking, strong-minded man, thought to have had military experience, I believe, suddenly spoke out to Gideon, undeniably actually staring at him.

"Who are you?" he said to Gideon. My eyes opened widely. "What gives you any more say over the rest of us than anyone else? Tell me – what is it? Ever since I came here I have been listening to you or have been a casualty of your way of thinking. I resent it, and I need to tell you that you have made my last professional days here a regretful experience."

Who knew?

And on a second occasion, an old female guard (I admit, known to be somewhat dotty and verbose) was also in her last days of her career at the mall when she, too, spoke out at one of our meetings. I realized upon reflection that Gideon had always made fun of her and, at this time, had rudely interrupted her in what might very well had been her valedictory remarks before retirement.

Suddenly, Gideon himself was interrupted and contested again!

"Let me finish, please," Gloria called out to him, with more vocal force than I had ever known her to have. "Let me finish." We were all stunned into silence. Gloria went on, breathing deeply. "Yes, have the courtesy to let me finish." She could hardly control her voice. "Let me interrupt *you,* and tell you that I was doing so." Now she seemed triumphant. "Something that I have wanted to say for longer than I can remember. Yes, do you have any idea, Gideon, of how long I wanted to do this and tell you this?"

What pain, prolonged so long, had I not known!

I am ashamed to say that I virtually exulted in his public humiliation, another, however small in number, response to his own abundant wound giving, though I felt guilty and appreciated myself less because of this feeling that I'd like to believe was not worthy of me.

The years have passed. We went on at the mall. We all went on with our customary relationships with each other. The mannequins as always came alive at night and joyfully shopped and bought, shopped and bought,

piled up their shoes and dresses and suits and overcoats and cosmetics and perfumes and God knows what. I continued in my way, with my own thoughts and behavior. After all, that's what we do, isn't it? After all, don't we live in a world where we alternate feeling we are right in our ideas, and then in the next moment or span of time, feeling doubt about these very ideas? Don't we exist in a world that, in the end, at some fundamental, irreducible level, is unclear, a dark glass, eternally unknown? We stumble forward, in our mostly bourgeois fashion. It is finally our best bet, we tell ourselves, or only whisper to ourselves, or only admit in a realm beyond words.

Beyond what I've already told you, there is not much to say. Coexistence and causing no one suffering, I discovered, were signature conditions of aging. For me, the coming apocalypse was a fact, but like countless others, I pushed it out to the edge of my consciousness. As for Gideon and me, we became the familiar and notable avatars of the "old warriors," which I allowed. You know the explanation – so much in common, we grow to be a variety of friend. Recently, though, perhaps the devil in me may have given me the final thrust in our long battle. One day, I conceived the idea of having our picture taken together, with my arm solicitously around his shoulder, looking down smiling at this smaller soldier. He seemed surprised, subdued, out-maneuvered, deep down I suspect not at all sure if he should be happy about this public but very subtle tactic of mine. As for me, I was rather pleased.

"Nighttime They Come Alive at the Mall" is a story from Bob Congemi's upcoming book of magical realism pieces titled *The Spirit Flies Wonderful Distances.*

International Education at SUNY Empire State College: Understanding the Value of Cultural Diversity

Richard Savior, Metropolitan New York Region

Introduction

In the summer of 2015, I had the opportunity to teach a blended study of Behavioral Economics and Finance in the capital of the Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo, within the college's Center for International Programs. The course was sponsored by our partner and host institution, Universidad Acción Pro-Educación y Cultura (UNAPEC) and featured a high degree of instructional technology.

This study was Moodle-based and featured an onsite residency at the beginning of the term. And even prior to the formal start of the study, the class and I were able to get to know each other through Zoom video conferencing and through chat sessions via Moodle and ESC email. The course materials (which included articles, simulation games, tests and videos) were delivered electronically and were accessible at all times to the students and through a range of digital devices.1 Throughout the term, during weekly text, email, Moodle exercises and video meetings, students were able to synchronously interact with me and each other via desktops/laptops, tablets and smartphones.

The class consisted of 14, primarily third- and fourth-year undergraduate business students, most of whom were also enrolled in another study, Security Analysis and Portfolio Management, taught by my colleague Magdy Roufaiel of the Center for Distance Learning. During one point in the residency, Magdy and I combined our efforts to provide our students with both a qualitative and quantitative perspective on topics of common interest. By all accounts, the study was a great success, thanks in no small part to the leadership of the Dominican Republic Program's director, Lorette Calix, and to the support provided by our partner and host institution, UNAPEC – Andy Manuel Crespo Gonzalez and Rosa Ivelisse Valera Ariza were especially instrumental to that success.

Richard Savior (second row, left of center) with his Behavioral Economics and Finance students, UNAPEC, Dominican Republic, 2015.

This was my second experience teaching for the Center for International Programs, having led a study last summer in Organizational Culture and Globalization in the Lebanon Residency Program. That blended study, which incorporated a midterm residency in Pathos, Cyprus, was an equally positive experience led by (then) program director Karolyn Andrews, who has since been promoted to director for European programs.

What I found most interesting and exciting about these experiences was the interaction with students from cultures quite different than my own, who themselves, by their very presence, added greatly to the success of the programs. The students from the Dominican Republic were exceptionally well-versed in a broad range of business disciplines and were able to engage in the kind of high-content discussions typically found at the graduate level. The Lebanon Program students brought a passion for learning and engagement to our sessions that was both energizing and infectious. As an added bonus, students in both programs have kept in touch with me regarding their ongoing studies and research interests.

These were not my first experiences in international education as prior to joining the faculty at ESC, I had the opportunity to work and teach in a number of other countries, including Canada, the People's Republic of China, the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdoms of Bahrain and Jordan. As a result of these opportunities, I have developed over time, a deeper understanding and appreciation for the value of cultural diversity in the classroom by exploring the ways in which various cultures' values and moral foundations affect the ways teaching and learning are viewed and effectively practiced.

To date, my scholarship has been centered on examining the complexity of leadership practice and effectiveness in a global context. Through this research and these academic experiences, I believe certain parallels exist that help to explain the foundations for effectiveness through the development of certain attitudinal and behavioral competencies, coupled with an appreciation for the ways that cultural influences affect how teaching and mentoring are viewed and effectively practiced. It is the goal of this essay to describe some of the insights I have gained

as a result of my activities in this area and why I think this kind of work is so important to all of us.

Engagement in Global Education

Engagement in international education can result in developing new perspectives on different worldviews and cultural diversities, based upon the cultural exposure and richness of living and working in a more intensely focused global context. Through these intercultural experiences, educators' prior opinions and convictions are altered as they realize a lessening of what they previously believed to be certain, and an acknowledgment of that which is yet to be discovered (Steers, Sanchez-Runde, & Nardon, 2012).

Intercultural competence involves a process that often starts from an ethnocentric perspective that is transformed over time by acquiring the ability to empathize with others, communicate across cultural boundaries and adapt one's frame of reference in alignment with the behavior of others (Bennett, 2009). It involves the ability to establish interpersonal relationships, communicate effectively and manage ambiguity in dealing with different social systems (Paige, 1993). This aspect of tolerance of ambiguous situations is particularly important in that it speaks to the way that individuals are able to process information when confronted with the unfamiliar and sometime incongruent dimensions of different cultures. Individuals adept at dealing with ambiguity find those encounters interesting and challenging.

Another aspect of intercultural competence involves having a sense of mindfulness to think in new ways, and be open to different perspectives. By being aware and considerate of our internal assumptions and cognitions, global educators not only better understand themselves, but are better able to see things through the eyes of others (Thomas, Bellin, Jules, & Lynton, 2012). Developing an appreciation for intercultural competence – taking the time to learn about other cultures, recognizing the value of their differences and expressing that view with respect – reflects the maturity that may come with the experience of global education. Intercultural competence does not develop overnight, but rather through a series of transformational experiences that allow one to internalize the values and perceptions of other cultures, and become imbedded through a strong personal motivation to learn and adapt (Hassanzadeh, Silong, Asmuni, & Wahat, 2015).

What Makes an Effective Global Educator?

In general terms, becoming an effective global educator requires an individual to possess certain attitudes, learned behaviors and experience that can only be acquired through exposing oneself to different, oftentimes challenging situations. Global educators must have a certain degree of intellectual competency to be able to cognitively process complex and paradoxical problems, and of emotional intelligence, which is comprised of cultural self-awareness, cross-cultural adaptability, and cross-cultural understanding and effectiveness (Rhinesmith, 2003). Together, these forms of intelligence serve to equip global educators with a high level of cognitive ability to process sometimes unfamiliar and frequently contradictory sources of information and to make effective decisions.

Black and Gregersen (1999) approached the question of effectiveness from a qualitative perspective, identifying several personal characteristics that effective global practitioners must possess. Global educators need a strong sense of inquisitiveness as reflected in valuing a love of learning, being intrigued by diversity and having a desire to seek out people different than those who make us feel comfortable. Put in another way, global educators need to possess a mindset that questions rather than confirms that which we think we already know. Another characteristic is the ability to embrace duality wherein uncertainty is viewed as invigorating and a natural dimension to the global environment, wherein one acts as opposed to hesitates when confronted with ambiguous, complex and rapidly changing situations.

Finally, global educators must possess a strong character that enables the individual to connect emotionally with different cultures in establishing and reinforcing trustworthiness by consistently demonstrating a high degree of personal integrity across a diversity of ethical conflicts (Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012). A strong and consistent reputation for acting with integrity can serve to help influence the views of others, while those lacking in integrity will fail to earn the respect they require from stakeholders within and outside their organizations.

Global educators must also find a balance between resilience and humility. Here we define resilience as the combination of optimism and persistence that is necessary to move forward despite adversity, coupled with the hardiness required to cope with the inevitable stresses inherent in global relationships. Humility, the antithesis of arrogance and ethnocentrism, is an equally important quality for global educators to possess if they are to allow themselves to be open to learning from other cultures (Pauleen, Rooney, & Holden, 2010).

A review of the empirical research conducted over the past two decades reveals over 160 separate competencies associated with global effectiveness (Gundling, Hogan, & Cvitkovich, 2011). These competencies can be grouped into three major categories: characteristics of personality, attitude and self; behavioral skills related to relationship building and cross-cultural connectivity; and cognitive and organizational acumen.

Personality, Attitude and Self

With respect to characteristics of personality, attitude and self, global educators tend to be resilient, possess strong elements of character, are naturally inquisitive, flexible and pre-disposed toward having a more cosmopolitan mindset. Resilience speaks to the educator's ability to process complex challenges across different cultural, political and regulatory systems in a confident manner that minimizes stress, is resourceful and naturally optimistic by nature (Jenkins, 2012). Given the inherent ambiguity and stresses associated with global education, academics in this environment require a higher than average sense of self-identity and core values, integrity and maturity in order to deal with a broad set of ethical decisions, as well as a healthy degree of inquisitiveness, manifested by innate curiosity, an openness to learning and a confident humility that is not threatened by and is open to being taught by others (Black & Gregersen, 1999). Finally, global educators must have an inherent interest in

and knowledge of the broader world, coupled with the cognitive ability to approach highly contextualized cultural, social and political environments effectively (Miska, Stahl, & Mendenhall, 2013).

Behavioral Skills Related to Relationship Building and Cross-Cultural Connectivity

The second major category of global competencies involves those behavioral skills related to relationship-building and cross-cultural connectivity; essentially, the ability to manage interpersonal relationships. A critical element of this ability is a respect for and understanding of people as individuals and for their differences. Implicit in creating and maintaining these relationships is the acknowledgement that they are fundamentally trust-based. Competency in interpersonal skills requires both emotional intelligence, which involves a healthy sense of self awareness and sensitivity to others, and the ability to influence others toward a goal. Finally, global educators require a high degree of competency in cross-cultural communication, which draws on an awareness of contextual, cultural and individual differences in the way messages are coded, transmitted and interpreted (Muenjohn, 2011).

Cognitive and Organizational Acumen

The third and final core competency of effective global education speaks to organizational acumen, which is founded on possessing a practical understanding of one's internal and external environments, and using that knowledge to accomplish objectives efficiently and effectively. This entails the ability to assess the complexity of these environments in a way the balances the tactical and strategic aspects of any decision, inclusive of understanding their interdependencies (Bird & Osland, 2004).

Developing a globally-oriented strategic mindset requires educators who possess, or acquire over time, the intellectual capital to grasp the complexities and associated risks inherent in global environments, along with the cognitive capacity to connect complex elements in alignment to the institution's strategy. Global educators further possess an interest in other cultures and socio-economic and political systems, and the mental

flexibility, openness and respect for different and diverse perspectives and values. Finally, these individuals project the ability to build consensus and influence through authentic, trust-based interactions and are able to do so in a diplomatic manner (Javidan, Hough, & Bullough, n.d.).

Why Effective Global Education Matters

Becoming an effective global educator embodies both the possibilities that global engagement can offer and the means by which an individual's personal development can be further shaped toward reaching his or her potential. In order to realize these outcomes, these individuals must pursue this development with purpose, well-grounded motivations and self-discipline. Such a course is not a purely intellectual exercise, but requires a higher level of personal interest and engagement in seeking out new relationships with others quite different from themselves. By recognizing these challenges and opportunities, global educators can seek out specific experiences that will allow them to learn and grow professionally (George, 2014).

Undergirding these experiences are the educator's inner values that guide the individual's behavior in deciding on moral or ethical matters. Globalization can, in turn, intensify certain differences in culturally-relative values as dissimilar peoples interact. Considering the ways one's personal and moral values may be different from those of others, and how the educator's behavior can affect others' mores, can stimulate a greater degree of openness, acceptance and humility as elements of a powerful personal learning experience (George, Sims, McLean, & Mayer, 2007).

Global educators make a difference in the lives of their students and in contributing to the greater good of their organizations and society. They foster the development of others through setting and inspiring a shared vision toward common goals, by setting an example through their values and ethical behavior, by taking risks and challenging the accepted, through collaboration and empowerment, and by encouraging their students to aspire to greater things (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

Effective global educators recognize the concept that education can and should be seen as a social responsibility, wherein the educator's activities go beyond serving self-interests and seek to benefit the collective society. Acquiring a willingness to contribute to and build social capital requires connecting and bonding with other people who may hold different perspectives. Effective global educators transcend parochial interests in establishing trust-based relationships with others who are often from different backgrounds, in order to contribute to a community's social capital (Putnum & Feldstein, 2003).

Thoughts on International Education at ESC

My engagements with these two programs have been extremely rewarding on an intellectual and personal basis, and have helped to further my knowledge and understanding of the contextual diversity, balance and alignment that are critical to supporting effective global relationships. I am excited about the opportunity to support the ongoing growth of these and other initiatives that expand the opportunities and enhance the beneficial impacts of international education at ESC. These include working with colleagues in developing and integrating global content within our curricula, pursuing faculty engagement through international research opportunities, serving on cross-functional and faculty-led committees to strengthen our collective understanding of international education, and working with the college's student services and enrollment management functions to support student exchanges and other experiential learning opportunities.

Note

[1] One of the factors that instructors need to take into consideration when teaching outside the United States is the accessibility and expense of instructional materials for the students. Oftentimes, students in many parts of the world face unique challenges in affording and securing textbooks and other materials. In preparing for the study, considerable time

was invested in researching and selecting high-quality, easy access/no-cost digital content, which the students appreciated.

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Privilege, Power and Pedagogy

Kate Spaulding, The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies

My name is Kate Spaulding, and I am a 31-year-old cisgender heterosexual white woman from an upper middle-class background, born and raised in Buffalo, New York. I have never been homeless; I have never gone hungry; I've never feared for my life when around law enforcement. But I have been arrested before, and though I did not actually break any laws, it is likely due to the litany of privilege I rattled off in the first sentence that the arrest was expunged. Despite all this, I am going to attempt to discuss my experiences teaching mostly students of color, white privilege, my visit to the 2015 Netroots Nation conference, the Black Lives Matter movement, and in general, the absolute need for us to be able to put ourselves in the minds and shoes of others.

This fall, I embarked on my sixth year as an adjunct faculty member at the Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies (HVACLS) within SUNY Empire State College. Being an adjunct is not easy, but the level of support we receive from the leadership, full-time faculty and staff at the HVACLS is really remarkable. We not only teach about the labor movement and its importance, but are encouraged and expected to embody the movement and its principles within our own center. As the center representative for my union, United University Professions (UUP, an affiliate of New York State United Teachers [NYSUT]), I am acutely aware of this. The incredibly forward-thinking and inclusive policies and environment at the HVACLS have drawn many of my colleagues from the labor and political space to become adjuncts with us, as well. Yes, you read that correctly – young men and women in the labor movement *want* to be adjuncts at SUNY ESC because of the impactful work of its Labor Studies program.

The most rewarding part of the HVACLS experience is, hands down, getting to know our students: the working men and women of the New York City construction industry. Few of my students are like me – I've had only two (that I know of) cisgender heterosexual white women who were approximately my age. Most of my students are men, many are of color and they run the gamut of ages (I've had students as young as 19 and as wise as 57). I began teaching at the ripe old age of 24 (I promise this was not a Teach for America-type experience), where I found myself the same age, or younger, as a majority of the people I was supposed to be "teaching." I think most teachers can agree that we learn far more about our field of expertise, pedagogy and life in general from our pupils than we originally anticipate.

Our center, named after the great Harry Van Arsdale Jr. of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) – Local 3 here in New York City, is unique in that all of our students are working male and female electrician apprentices in the building trades. Some may read that as "construction workers," and yes, our students do work within the construction field. Their apprenticeship training is a minimum of five years and is extremely rigorous; part of the training requires that they receive a college degree from our center (paid for by Local 3) in addition to their electrical theory courses and on-the-job experience. How many unions, or any institution for that matter, provide free and mandatory higher education for their members? Harry Van Arsdale Jr. had an incredible vision and foresight to ensure this access to higher education would live on for Local 3 members.

Not all of our students adore Harry's vision of higher education as much as I do. Many wake up as early as 4 a.m., travel to their construction jobs, work a full day and then arrive at our "campus" to take classes in areas such as economics, public policy, literature, critical reading, persuasive writing, history, and race, class and gender studies. That is

Kate Spaulding

not an easy schedule, especially while taking care of a family, as many of our students are parents. But the hard work pays off in the outcome of a stronger and more educated labor movement that can fight for higher wages and demand that NYC construction projects employ union labor.

For a majority of my six years at the HVACLS, I have taught the course, Labor and the Economy, which was developed and managed by one of my former graduate school professors and mentors, Moshe Adler. I also had the privilege of creating my own course, Governing Gotham: Municipal Government and the 2013 Election Cycle, during New York City's biggest election year in over a decade. (In my day job, I work in NYC government and politics, and therefore felt confident and excited that I could do justice to this topic.) The course, Municipal Government and Politics, eventually became one of the sections of Labor and Public Affairs, a course derived from the center's "Food4Thought" initiative – more on that later. Last year, after hearing about the work of the HVACLS and our student body, NYC Public Advocate Letitia James expressed interest in teaching at the center. Beginning last year, she

was brought on as an adjunct, and now Tish (she prefers being called "Tish") and I co-teach a section of Labor and Public Affairs focused on city and state politics and public policy. It is more than surreal to have NYC's first woman of color elected to citywide office teaching at our center. One of my colleagues, Sharon Szymanski, has interviewed Tish [see her interview in this issue of *All About Mentoring*], so without stealing her thunder, I will simply note that *nothing* is more effective in increasing civic engagement and political efficacy among our students than having them discuss and debate real-time issues with a current elected official. Tish's presence and involvement with the HVACLS is one of the things I am most proud of at SUNY Empire State College. It shows that our model – empowering the working men and women of the labor movement – truly resonates with not only our students, but with the elected officials who represent them.

Earlier, I mentioned the Food4Thought initiative, which was a student discussion forum started in the spring of 2011 after the devastating (to the labor movement) 2010 midterm elections in Congress and state governments across the country. The extremely anti-union rhetoric spewing from newly elected politicians like Scott Walker (or should I say, being fed to Scott Walker by ALEC [The American Legislative and Exchange Council] and the Koch brothers (who, it is estimated, expect to spend almost $900 million on the 2016 election *alone*) was troubling to our students, and they needed an outlet to process what was happening outside of NYC. The Arab Spring in Egypt and parts of the Middle East inspired our students as well, but they didn't know what action to take against the demonization of public sector workers and unions by these politicians. Food4Thought provided a space for the students to both process what was happening and brainstorm solutions they themselves could implement. Here is a very basic outline of the Food4Thought initiative:

- Students, or the course instructor, choose a current news article from a reputable news source.

- The article pertains to issues around economics, politics, the labor movement or income and resource inequality.

- The article is circulated ahead of time via email to the entire HVACLS student body and teachers who will be meeting for classes on that particular day of the week (i.e., Monday, Tuesday, etc.)

- After the break period, usually around 6:15 p.m., students from any and all classes gather in a community space (previously the cafeteria, now the multipurpose room) to discuss the article and unpack concepts and parallels to classroom lessons within it.

- A student from the "host class" (formerly Labor and the Economy, before the creation of a class focused on public policy, research, fact-checking, debate and public speaking that has become the Labor and Public Affairs course) "leads" the discussion through asking questions of the audience and facilitating discussion among the participants.

Though this may sound rather ad hoc to you – and it is! – it is also an extremely accurate portrayal of any town hall or public meeting around a particular hot-button issue in a local community. Not everyone present has the same level of, or accurate information about, said topic. Emotions often run high based on the subject matter. Personal stories and examples, though not the normative experience, have the power to sway the audience. Getting the skills to both participate and manage such a scenario is imperative for our students. Though some Food4Thought discussions were far more fruitful than others, giving students the opportunity to manage and lead discussions among themselves about these complicated issues was incredibly eye-opening. I will digress toward one anecdote in particular:

In the spring of 2012, my class participated in a Food4Thought article discussion on the "merits" of drug testing welfare recipients as a condition for receiving their benefits. Anyone who knows me is aware that I not only find this policy morally deplorable but a financial waste as well, as the time and resources spent on drug testing is often a significant amount or even more than what is provided in benefits. It is simply a ruse to deter people from applying, as it often requires that applicants cough up $30 for a drug test *before* they can receive benefits. If you are so poor that you need

apply for a $100 a week benefit, $30 is a hefty sum. However, governors who champion this policy, such as Rick Scott in Florida,[1] point to the slight reduction in those applying for benefits after the drug testing was instituted as "evidence" that the policy works. (Later evidence showed that not only is this a fallacy because a majority of those applying did scrape together $30 and tested negative for drugs, but the practice was deemed a violation of privacy and therefore unconstitutional by two federal courts.) Our students vary widely in their political ideology, though they are all union members and therefore it would make sense for them to skew more liberal, particularly on financial issues. Yet a majority of them, especially the men, have been hoodwinked by the FOX News right-wing spin machine that convinces people that everyone receiving public assistance is a "Welfare Queen on drugs that pops out kids to get a bigger check." (For a really good unpacking of the carefully and historically-crafted stereotypes of black women, for example, I highly recommend MSNBC's Melissa Harris-Perry's book *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America* [2013: Yale University Press].) There was a lot of initial grandstanding and speaking poorly of those on welfare. Phrases such as "I will never go on welfare," "I don't care what I would have to do, I'd make money before accepting a handout," and "those people are all lazy and steal our tax money" were uttered frequently. Mind you, I don't blame the students for thinking this way; they have had that false message drilled into them by practically every media outlet possible, which eventually causes them to believe it. That is, until "S" spoke.[2]

S was one of only two women in the class, as women still make up approximately only three percent of the building trades. She is also African American, and though Local 3 is incredibly diverse ethnically, there was a time not long ago where the last names of its membership were all Irish, Italian or Norwegian. S had remained quiet during the entire discussion up to this point – a rare move for her. She is normally extremely vocal, both in asking questions and speaking her mind on certain subjects, so I was intrigued and wary of her silence. When there was a moment of pause, she said something along the lines of:

I was on welfare, and it helped me get into this union. I emptied garbage in office buildings for a measly benefit of $100 a week, but it allowed me to take care of my two kids and get by until I was accepted into this apprenticeship. Being on welfare is not easy: we are not on drugs and we are not lazy. I am proof of that.

Did I mention that S is a badass? I was completely stunned and overwhelmed by her candidness after having listened to so many of her union brothers so loudly decry a system about which they personally knew nothing. She told them, openly, her experience with that system and forced them to rethink the false narrative they had in their minds around welfare and welfare recipients. It was one of the most transformative and powerful Food4Thought sessions we ever had, and a moment that likely would not have occurred during a regular class. The unique combination of student-led discussion and a more casual format allowed for this teachable moment. Many of those in class initially thought they had all been on the same page about decrying the ills of welfare because they felt that those receiving benefits were different from them. In reality, one of their own was able to get on her feet because of that system. Who knows, maybe others in their lives had, too. The perception of welfare – putting a human face to the name – had changed.

I know that was a long digression. But I tell it because of the power it has to open people's eyes and minds regarding the judging of another's actions, conditions or choices. As I stated earlier, though in a union, the students at the HVACLS are extremely diverse politically, ethnically and racially, and in regards to their educational backgrounds. Some enter the apprenticeship straight out of high school; others hold bachelor's and even master's degrees from completely different prior careers. No one is as you might expect them to be.

No one is as you might expect them to be.

The stereotype of the Italian tough-talking construction worker from Staten Island may exist here and there, but when it comes to issues of policy, they are full of surprises, too. In class, I once witnessed a very robust dialogue on the controversial "stop-and-frisk" practice by the NYPD between an Italian-American from Staten Island and an African-American from Brooklyn. From demographics alone, one might safely assume that the Brooklynite was against and the Staten Islander was for the policy. But ironically, the Staten Islander was from a family of law enforcement and against the practice because, he felt, the quotas surrounding the policy made policing much more difficult than was effective. The Brooklynite student was born and raised in East New York, one of the higher crime areas in the borough, and honestly felt that stop-and-frisk, or the possibility of it, was the only thing keeping crime at bay in his neighborhood, even though that meant being regularly stopped and frisked himself. Again, no one is as you might expect them to be. People will continuously surprise you.

The one thing I do expect at the HVACLS is the varying degree of debate and discussion on policy issues. I enjoy the role of envelope-pusher, eye-opener, and norm-challenger (as much as a heterosexual cisgender upper middle-class white woman can, anyway) in that scenario. However, being human, sometimes I long for a space where my positions and the work that I do are agreed with, confirmed and validated. I enjoy conferences and panels on topics of interest in the comfortable and safe company of other "progressive" activists. Therefore, it was a jarring moment this summer to be in a convention hall filled with a who's who of progressive, labor and liberal digital strategists, and have a major disconnect regarding the Black Lives Matter movement. (The hashtag #blacklivesmatter began on social media after the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin.)

This past July, I attended the 2015 Netroots Nation conference in Phoenix, Arizona, courtesy of a scholarship from the United Steel Workers. If you're not familiar with Netroots, it began as a gathering of progressive and labor focused organizers and digital strategists, to help bridge the gap and share

ideas between progressive causes and their effective dissemination through online technology. It connects the thought leaders with the implementers. It has people of all ages, ethnicities, religions, sexual orientations, gender identities, professional credentials and educational backgrounds in one space. As the conference developed in size and scope, it became tradition that "progressive" or left political candidates attend, give remarks and participate in Netroots debates. This year, its 10th year, Netroots became famous for the direct action taken by members of the Black Lives Matter movement during the presidential candidate debate between former Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders. The action was widely covered, and misconstrued, by the media and, as someone who was there and had the full arc of reactions during the protest, I'd like to shed light on what it was like to witness one of the most influential political direct actions in recent history.

Just five days prior to the debate, Sandra Bland, an African-American activist, had been found hanged in her jail cell after having been arrested following a strangely escalated situation allegedly resulting from a "failure to use her turn signal." For better or for worse, the Netroots Nation conference panelists and speakers, the best and the brightest in the progressive sphere, had not addressed this horrible incident. Members of the Black Lives Matter movement attending the conference felt that as each day passed, this issue needed to be dealt with, and the names of black women who died while in the custody of law enforcement needed to be heard. They planned the action merely the night before, which interrupted the Democratic Party presidential candidate debates with the singing of "Whose side are you on my people, whose side are you on? THE FREEDOM SIDE!" Utilizing a circle and the people's microphone (remember Occupy Wall Street?), they began to chant the names of black women who died at the hands of law enforcement invoking the hashtags #SayHerName and #ifidieinpolicecustody.

My initial feelings during the action can best be described by another conference attendee, who shared the following statement through the Netroots 2015 app:

Learned an important lesson. When #blacklivesmatter protest began, I felt annoyed and inconvenienced. I wanted to hear the candidates speak. But my inconvenience, or the fact that O'Malley and Sanders were interrupted, is nothing compared to the crisis we have on our hands. I was having my privilege interrupted, and that's why I initially reacted as I did. To my black and brown brothers and sisters, I'm sorry. You're lives matter. I'm with you. #nn15 #StillGrowing

I am not proud to admit this, but my years of upbringing to be patient, quiet and respectful caused me to initially have profound discomfort with what was taking place. I didn't know how to react, what was happening or how this was going to play out. I initially felt bad for O'Malley, as I knew he was in a tough spot, until I realized that anyone who wants to be the leader of the United States must be able to handle tough spots every second of every day. Two older white women at my table from Arizona got so angry that they started to boo the protestors and yell at them to "shut up!" That moment I realized: you cannot be a progressive only on your own terms. You must live with some discomfort to truly affect change, especially from within your own community and those supposedly "on your side."

The numerous times those two older white women at my table told all of us that they were on the "side" of Black Lives Matter, but that they couldn't condone the action because it was "more harmful than productive," were countless. It even sparked an extremely interesting disagreement between them and another older white woman at my table around the effective protesting tactics against the Vietnam War. They (the action dissenters) claimed that the "inconvenient and obstructionist 'street theater' done by protestors was not what ended the war," while the other woman expressed that it was *exactly* those types of inconveniencing methods that *forced* those in power to look at what was happening and end the war. The dissenters claimed the action was not effective; we countered that our table – and the entire conference – which had not been previously discussing #SayHerName and #SandraBland, was now *only* talking about #SayHerName and #SandraBland. The action was not only effective, but flipped the entire conference, and its tenor, on its head.

What does Netroots Nation have to do with teaching at the Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies? The fact is that I would have *expected* (there's that word I'm not supposed to be using again!) the somewhat negative reaction to the Black Lives Matter action to come from some of my students, but not from people who claim to be "progressive." Even with the best of intentions, there may still be struggles we cannot immediately identify with, and therefore, the continual process of putting ourselves in another's shoes is paramount. I don't know if we changed the minds of those two women at our table. I fear that because they are so often around folks that think like they do, no matter whether that supposed "thinking" is "progressive" and "open-minded," that it becomes just as ingrained in their minds as it is with some of my students and their thoughts on welfare. Even good beliefs can be harmful if they prevent you from ever rethinking, reevaluating or reassessing your ideas and their impact on the world.

During the last weekend in August, I had the pleasure of attending Local 3's apprentice weekend at the Long Island Educational Center on the North Shore. Not only was the environment beautiful, but getting to see former and future students was a great way to become invigorated and inspired for the upcoming academic term. During the closing speech, the apprenticeship director of the Local 3, former military and extremely strict and straight-laced in all things, said the following words: "I recently learned that sex is something you are born with, but gender is something you can choose." Though "cis" and "transgender" are not yet in the vernacular of Local 3 members and their leaders, this small but powerful sentence shows that the process of constantly questioning, thinking and evaluating is taking place, often by those most surprising to us. We must continue to push for more open-minded and critical thinking from our working men and women. But we must not overlook those on the left who identify as progressive, yet stand in silence, or worse, "boo," those who challenge the norms of structural racism.

Notes

1 Personally, I prefer to refer to him as Voldemort. You see the resemblance now, don't you?

2 "S" was flattered and honored to have her story shared in this paper.

Brown Bag on Mentoring Practices

Shantih Clemans, Metropolitan New York Region; Alan Mandell, Metropolitan New York Region and Office of Academic Affairs; A. Jordan Wright, Center for Distance Learning

Brown Bag: What We Do

Over the past few years, while we have engaged with our colleagues significantly about structural and policy issues around the college (multiple restructuring concerns), it occurred to us that we have not spent enough time engaging with each other around our everyday teaching and mentoring practices. In fact, in conversations, we realized we actually had very little knowledge or understanding about how even our next-door neighbors worked with their students – even with the students we shared. We began thinking of ways we could learn about, and from, each other's mentoring practices. We came up with a process to do just that.

The Brown Bag on Mentoring Practices has been running monthly for more than a year with mentors at the Manhattan location; participants also have included our colleagues from the Center for Distance Learning based at Hudson Street. For one hour a month, a group of mentors comes together to discuss mentoring challenges and practices in a structured fashion. Each hour-long session is broken into two halves, each with a discussion on a single "case" or problem in teaching or mentoring. Volunteers are asked to present a three to four minute "problem" or "issue" that they have faced with an individual or group of students; we encourage the cases to be as specific as possible. The presenter stops at a point in the presentation when he or she has to make decisions about how to handle the situation. Then, the group is invited to first ask any clarifying questions about the case itself. Once clarification is complete, members of the group are encouraged to think about how they would handle the situation from the point the presenter left off. This has been a key aspect of the process; that is, rather than discussing what they *would have done differently* than the presenter, or what the presenter *should have done,* the group is encouraged to discuss what they would do from that point forward,

(l–r) Jordan Wright, Shantih Clemans and Alan Mandell

assuming they had handled the situation to that point in the same way as the presenter. In this important way, the "brown bag" does not work as a group feedback session for the presenter about how he or she handled the situation (it's not about judgments); rather, it opens up a discussion about the different ways we approach situations, presenting multiple options for handling the same problem. At the end of the half hour, the original presenter is invited to "wrap up" the discussion by presenting what he or she did and, if he or she wishes, to describe how it turned out. Again, the fact that this final component is optional is important, as we do not want the presenters to feel exposed or judged. The second half of the session is devoted to a second case presentation.

The role of the facilitator is twofold. First, the facilitator directs the flow of discussion, such that he or she helps remind the presenter to be brief, keeps a queue of those who want to respond and wraps up the discussion at the appropriate time. Second, the facilitator helps steer the discussion toward alternatives for approaching the presented situation, rather than toward either giving feedback to the

presenter about how he or she handled the situation, or veering into discussions about policy or procedure at the center or college level. That is, the facilitator helps keep the focus on teaching and mentoring practices.

Broadening the Scope

We have made three concerted efforts to broaden the scope of the Brown Bag on Mentoring Practices. First, the model was replicated by CDL, specifically for primary mentors and primary mentoring situations. In-person and conference call versions were attempted, with varying degrees of success.

Second, in an effort to increase access to the process, specifically to our Brooklyn and Staten Island locations, we held our July and November 2015 brown bags via Skype for Business, a videoconferencing tool that is standard with Office 365, and thus is available on every office computer at the college and downloadable to home computers, laptops, smartphones and tablets. Each session has had around a dozen participants, including mentors from all three Metropolitan New York locations and mentors who participated from

home. The process worked quite well, with positive feedback from those who participated. Although we've initially found it slightly more difficult to moderate a discussion using this tool because of the difficulty of forming a queue without a hand raising function (we are just getting acquainted with Skype for Business options), the number of participants was easily manageable, and we have decided to use this format again.

And thirdly, we held a version of the brown bag at this year's Fall Academic Conference at the end of October. Close to 40 people attended and energetically participated in this discussion. As we have done in the past, two colleagues offered us cases dealing with provocative issues regarding student work (both issues of plagiarism) and the mentor role (issues of the range of mentor responsibility). We were gratified that so many colleagues wanted to come together to talk about their day-to-day mentoring experiences.

Personal Experience: Shantih

I'll be honest, I was skeptical at first. Coming from the profession of social work, I did not want to turn a discussion of mentoring and teaching moments into a "case conference." This felt both tempting and inappropriate. I was worried that colleagues would use the brown bags to talk about student issues, which to me seemed an easier focus than our own mentoring challenges. I was not convinced that the brown bag model could actually be a source of learning and support for me or for other colleagues. Mainly, I worried that there would not be adequate time to get to the heart of a case, especially with two case presentations within one brown bag, which has been our practice.

Through my experience as a presenter and a facilitator (of sorts) of brown bags, my perspective has broadened and my appreciation of the value and importance of talking together about our mentoring practices has deepened. The first case I presented involved a student struggling with a history of sexual abuse and my challenge around maintaining boundaries between "class" and personal life issues. As I prepared my thoughts for my first brown bag case, I recognized in myself an attachment to "my way" of thinking about the case and a reluctance to hear colleagues' ideas. Once the

brown bag session began, I felt both nervous and relaxed. Above all else, I was struck by the rareness (novelty almost) of talking about mentoring practices with each other. Through talking about the case and listening to my colleagues, here is what I have learned and what I appreciate most about brown bags:

1) I know very little about how other mentors work with students (even those mentors who are geographically close or with whom I share an AOS and/or students).

2) I learn best when I listen to colleagues' questions, ideas and reflections.

3) A nonjudgmental atmosphere matters – I am more likely to put myself out there if I know I am not being judged for making a mistake.

4) Facilitation matters. It has been important to have a facilitator(s) to set the tone and keep an eye on the clock and move the discussion along. This role has made the brown bags "safe" and productive.

Personal Experience: Alan

What is terrific about this model (one that Jordan encouraged us to try out and that I understand is sometimes used among helping professionals) is its simplicity. Yes, it is the case that in our one-hour format, two colleagues have to prepare a "case," but in contrast to other case-based models, presenters here are offering us an opening – the opportunity to take up a problem, issue, question or confusion, not a dissection or elaboration of what they did. At times, it is really difficult for participants not to judge, not to see even in the bare bones of what a mentor is presenting some missed move, some limited understanding – a critique of poor or at least wobbly practice. And, too, it is sometimes difficult for the case presenter not to feel defensive or not to break in and blurt out what he or she did. In this way, the brown bag becomes practice in trying to listen to one another, trying to make sense of a colleague's questions or approach or angle of understanding. Perhaps, in this way, this regular hour together is not only about our own experience of reflective practice, our own

learning; it is a kind of modeling with each other of how we try to communicate with our students.

There have been many moments in which our brown bags have reminded me of the heart of what was called at its start in 1993, "The Mentoring Institute" at the college. The subtitle of *All About Mentoring,* the "newsletter" of The Mentoring Institute was "Mentors for Mentors." How interesting to think about mentoring each other as well as our students. For me, this kind of reciprocity is at the heart of our core values. Isn't it neat that we can get a real feel for this by sitting around and eating our bag lunches and listening and talking with one another?

Personal Experience: Jordan

Having participated in the Brown Bag on Mentoring Practices as a facilitator, presenter and participant, I have felt growth in my repertoire of mentoring and teaching practices. It has been amazing to learn more about how my colleagues approach things differently in practice, especially when we disagree about how to handle situations. I have found the sessions collaborative and respectful, even with widely varied opinions, and it has helped open me up to alternatives, while at the same time certainly honing my own voice as a mentor, to the way that I do my job.

It has been amazing to learn more about how my colleagues approach things differently in practice, especially when we disagree about how to handle situations.

I once presented a case in which a student held values with which I disagreed entirely, and which I felt would impede his ability to advance in his chosen field of social work. Finding ways to discuss core values with students is never easy, and learning outcomes rarely focus on adoption of certain values, as

they are not easily measurable (e.g., measuring that one understands the value of diversity is much easier than measuring how much one genuinely values diversity). Hearing from faculty with so many different backgrounds (my own is in clinical psychology, so I am already biased), levels of experience working with students and personal values encouraged me to recognize different ways of viewing the situation, without devaluing my own approach to it at all. This has been the case on numerous occasions during the brown bags.

At the same time, I feel like we have developed further as a community of educators and mentors. Understanding where each of us is coming from, how we approach our work, and even our different perspectives has helped us support each other as a community. I simply

feel closer to my colleagues. We take for granted that we do similar work, but when we get together, we too often focus on collegewide or policy issues, rather than sharing in the fact that we work, day to day, with our students and mentees. I feel I now have more colleagues to turn to when I need to discuss an issue, because I know the diversity of what they can offer me. A senior colleague and I have, for example, become much closer as a result of the brown bag; despite the fact that we disagree (respectfully and often very interestingly) about many different aspects of our work, I know that he will offer me a perspective on situations different from my own, a perspective that is valuable at helping me figure out how to move forward.

Final Thoughts from the Three of Us

At a time of significant change in the college, it is critical that we find opportunities to discuss our everyday mentoring activities. In such a dispersed and diverse institution, we work with our students in many different ways (individual tutorials, study groups, residencies, at a distance and multiple "blends"). But, especially now, we need to carve out the time and make the effort to talk together about what we do have in common: the goal of meaningfully and imaginatively connecting with our students, helping them in their learning and gaining new insights into our practice. This brown bag experience – one that we hope to keep alive – is one simple way to keep the conversation alive.

SUNY Empire State College Oral History Project: Interview With William R. Dodge

Richard Bonnabeau, Center for International Programs and College Historian

Richard Bonnabeau, ESC historian, has offered the community wonderful insights into the college's rich history through a series of interviews with key participants in Empire State College's history. What follows is one of those interviews with Dr. William R. Dodge that was done on 26 February 1991 and minimally revised in June 2013. We thank Richard Bonnabeau for this document (and for ongoing help along the way). The excerpt from the interview included here focuses on the earliest years of the college. (The full text of Bonnabeau's interview with Bill Dodge can be found at http://cml.esc.edu/publications/aamextras.)

As described in the "Remembering Our Colleagues" section in this issue of All About Mentoring, Bill Dodge, as dean of administrative services, worked closely with President James W. Hall, Arthur Chickering, vice president for academic affairs, and Loren Baritz, provost for learning resources and subsequently executive vice president, to create a new institution based on the "Prospectus for a New University College: Objectives, Process, Structure and Establishment" (1971), a statement of the college's guiding principles. As Bonnabeau noted in his preamble to the interview, "In the very first year of the founding of Empire State College, Dodge was the Dean of Deans."

Among myriad projects and accomplishments, Bill Dodge was responsible for what became the Center for Statewide Programs, which included three New York City-based programs – Arts and the City, Religion and the City, and Communication and the City – and sponsored small ESC learning units so vital to this day to the college's statewide presence. In 1979, Dodge also led the effort to connect what was called ESC's "Extended Programs" and its "Independent Study Program" (with rich ties to the British Open University) to create the Center for Distance Learning.

After some time at the World University (Universidad Mundial, headquartered in San Juan Puerto Rico), Bill Dodge became dean of instruction and then vice president for academic

affairs at Rockland Community College, from which he retired in 1988. William Dodge passed away on June 12, 2015.

Richard Bonnabeau: At the time that Empire State College was founded, or being planned, what responsibilities did you have at SUNY?

William Dodge: I was in the central administration and my primary responsibility at that time was to develop independent study programs, primarily for adult students through two- and four-year campuses of the university. The central administration did not operate the programs, the campuses did. What we did was develop the materials.

R.B.: Did you have any relationship with SUNY of the Air [University of the Air]?

W.D.: We worked very closely with them. We worked with them in identifying program needs and identifying faculty and other resources that they used in the production of TV courses that were broadcast over the University network.

R.B.: I understand that the SUNY of the Air [University of the Air] project or program was running into trouble about the time Empire State College was planned and launched. Can you discuss that?

W.D.: Yes, the University of the Air was really developed under Chancellor [Samuel] Gould, who, prior to becoming chancellor of the university [SUNY], was president of Channel 13, New York City [a public television station]. He had quite a commitment to educational television. In the 1960s, during the Rockefeller administration, there were ample resources allocated to the university. Governor [Nelson] Rockefeller made sure of that. He wanted to build a great university in the state of New York. New York was the last state in the union to create a state university. He hired Sam Gould because of his reputation, first as president of Antioch College in Ohio and then as president of Channel 13. He was an

educational innovator. Sam established the central Office of Continuing Education and the University of the Air. He created an Office of Planning for the university, and he did a lot of things that he felt were necessary to move the university forward.

Well, the University of the Air consumed a lot of resources. One course, and this is in terms of 1960s dollars, cost about $100,000 to produce. What was in the can, so to speak, from Harvard and from the Chicago city colleges and other institutions that had been doing instructional television for a while, was pretty much the talking-head approach to television teaching. That is, the professor stood in front of a drape with a camera on him and lectured. Sam, because of his background at Channel 13, wanted to do more of a production of these courses, hence the higher cost. The stuff that was available wasn't really suitable. It really didn't hold an audience's attention, and so the University of the Air set about producing its own programs. Well, they built up quite a staff. They had studio facilities. The University at Albany was given a magnificent studio at that time because it was handy to

the central administration, and they began to produce some courses using outstanding faculty throughout the university. But they couldn't get good air time. The university network consisted of the educational TV stations around the state at that time. They gave the University of the Air broadcast time that was negotiated between the university and the [public television] station managers. So, you had University of the Air programs on at 6 o'clock in the morning or opposite the game of the week on Saturday afternoon. It did not attract an audience. In its final year, the University of the Air had two FTEs [full-time equivalent students] enrolled – literally – and it was spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on air time. Anyway, with the cost of production, with the significant staff the University of the Air had, and with FTEs, it was decided, when the budget crunch came in the early '70s, to pull the plug on that operation.

R.B.: How would you compare your program [producing independent study courses] in terms of reaching adult students, nontraditional learners, to SUNY of the Air [University of the Air]? What kind of an impact were you having across the state?

W.D.: We used the University of the Air courses as part of our effort. In part, it was a joint enterprise, but the Office of Continuing Education developed mostly print material supplemented by audio tapes, other kinds of media. We believed that if we could package quality instructional materials and offer them through various campuses, using good faculty members, and make these materials portable so students wouldn't have to be at the television set at 6 o'clock in the morning or when the game of the week was playing – if they could use these materials wherever they were and whenever they wished, they would be effective. And through the various campuses, once we set up the program, the total enrollment quickly reached about 6,000 students. To hasten program development, we bought correspondence courses from places like the University of Wisconsin, the University of California at Berkeley, which had a very large correspondence program, and we supplemented those with our courses. When we did our study

guides, we tried to put in illustrations, and we tried to identify other collateral readings and resources for the student.

R.B.: What kind of students were you reaching with this program?

W.D.: Mostly working adults. I would say about 99 percent were working adults.

R.B.: That was really significant. You had about 6,000 enrollments a year and you were reaching working adults. Am I correct in thinking that you had demonstrated that there was a significant market for the nontraditional adult student?

W.D.: Well, nobody ever said no, but I think that the success of that program and the response to it probably figured in, at least in part, in the establishment of Empire State College.

R.B.: Yes, I think you're right. Now, Bill, how did you become involved with the planning of Empire State College? Did you have a formal or informal role in that planning?

W.D.: I had a fairly formal role. I was asked to be part of the planning committee right from the outset because of what I'd been doing in the Office of Continuing Education. I believe that I was the only one on the university committee who had the practical experience of creating materials and working with the adult student. Art Chickering was brought in very early on as a consultant because of his publications on the adult learner and his work at Goddard [College] and with other nontraditional universities. He had really more experience than I did in organizing a nontraditional college, and he had done considerable theoretical research on adult learners and what makes them tick and what works with them. Initially, there were about five of us. There was Chickering, myself, Jim Hall, and there was somebody out of Ernie Boyer's office, he was a vice chancellor at the time.

R.B.: Merton Ertell [Boyer's deputy vice chancellor]?

W.D.: Yes, Ertell was there. However, his schedule precluded him from being at a lot of meetings. He was looking out for Boyer's interests but many times he had an assistant substitute for him.

R.B.: When did you join this planning group?

W.D.: If my memory serves me correctly, the [grant] money – the million dollars [from Ford and Carnegie] was obtained during the summer, late summer. The planning committee was created in October of '70. We were planning through about December. We had gone as far as we could in our minds anyway, and the only way to flesh out the plan was to do a pilot, get an experimental program going. We asked Ford and Carnegie, which had given the university money for planning, if we could use the balance of it for operations, and they said yes. So, in the spring of '71, we began to hire faculty, find facilities, and we took our first students in the fall of that year.

R.B.: In regard to your role in the planning, what were the major points that your planning covered?

W.D.: For the draft for the college?

R.B.: Yes.

W.D.: Well, there were a number of things. We were told to plan a college without regard to traditional academic concern. If we were to wipe academic history away, what would we plan? So in our discussions we decided that the academic year based on an agrarian society didn't make any sense. Students ought to be able to enroll at any time, drop out and come back and graduate at any time. That was the first thing. Secondly, we decided that numerical grades or letter grades really didn't inform anybody of what the student learned. So, we decided to look at that very hard and come up with an alternative form of evaluation. Thirdly, we didn't think there was much rhyme or reason to the credit system – 3 credit hours for this and 2 credit hours for that, etc. The fact that you could artificially divide American history, for instance, into 30- or 40-year segments to accommodate the credit value didn't make sense. So, we decided that we would abandon the credit measure for student progress.

R.B.: So you went to months of credit [one semester hour per week of full-time study]?

W.D.: No, we weren't thinking in terms of months at that point. What we were thinking of was what the student learned. You know a set of objectives. What should a college graduate know? It's the kind of thing we

always talk about in higher education and then go back to general education requirements. We didn't get around to months until we started the operation. You see an academic unit was one of the problems that we couldn't anticipate, and I'll get to that a little later. The other thing that we decided was that instruction didn't have to be in the classroom for many kinds of instruction, most kinds. The classroom, in some cases, probably was the worst place to learn. So we decided that the college should be a college without walls, not just an experimental college on a campus someplace that would quickly recover all the trappings we were trying to shed. And those were the primary bases for creating a new college. Obviously, we wanted to make it attractive to the working adult, the older student, but we didn't want to cut out the traditional college-age student at that time. We wanted to create an institution that would attract people of all ages. Now remember, we just came out of the '60s where the buzzword was "relevance." The elective system was in vogue, and I think in some ways that thinking was still leading us to believe at that point that this kind of an institution would attract those students who wanted to have a "relevant" curriculum. And starting from these premises, we then developed the proposed college with contract learning, with written evaluations, with open enrollment that, you know, rolling enrollments at any time, any day of the week. We didn't anticipate at that time the need for orientation sessions and the kinds of things that evolved later. The other final element, incidentally, was the evaluation of learning already acquired whether it was in or outside the classroom. In other words, learning acquired from life experience.

R.B.: And that was part of the planning?

W.D.: Oh, yes, absolutely.

R.B.: Why did that come into the picture?

W.D.: Well, first of all, if students can learn informally under the aegis of a university outside of the classroom, then they could learn informally without the university outside of the classroom. And many experiences result in college-level learning that should be recognized without forcing the student to go back into the kind of lock-step learning environment of the college or university.

R.B.: Now who among your group [Boyer's task force] sponsored the idea?

W.D.: Art Chickering, I think, was the impetus for recognizing informal learning. It had been done before. The University of Oklahoma had offered an adult degree program and made something of evaluating informal learning. Again, Antioch College in Ohio had a work-study program since the '30s, where their students went out and worked in various environments and it was part of the college curriculum. Now you can say, "Well, that's contract learning." On the other hand, whether it was contract learning or whether it was an internship, an externship or anything else, what you are doing when you engage in that kind of program is tacitly acknowledging that people learn outside of the classroom in an informal structure. So there was plenty of precedent for us.

R.B.: Of course, CLEP [College Level Examination Program] was established at that point, wasn't it?

W.D.: Yes, CLEP was established but it was very limited. It was nothing on the scale it is now and the Regents External Degree program was not in existence. But that was all by examination, not by assessment, and there's a difference between examining for what people know and assessing what people know.

R.B.: That being?

W.D.: The portfolio, the interview, the demonstration of learning skills and so forth. That is assessment. Paper tests like CLEP are examinations.

R.B.: Sort of like a shot in the dark.

W.D.: Yes.

R.B.: There is no guarantee that the instrument will hit the target. Because learning varies so much, with individualized assessment you're assured of assessing what it is the student has learned.

W.D.: Yes, and you're pretty much running the gamut of whether it's a narrow or a wide range of learning acquired – or no learning at all.

R.B.: Who recruited you to work with the planning group?

W.D.: I don't know. I got a command from on high to join the group.

R.B.: That was directly from Boyer?

W.D.: Yes. Mert Ertell called me and said that there were people involved with this who thought that I could make a contribution to it. I wasn't the first one named, obviously. About the second or third meeting I was into it. I came on board in October, and we had the final report ready and submitted by February.

R.B.: Given your interest in independent study materials, packaged materials, did you push for that being part of the spectrum of learning?

W.D.: No, not really. I thought they might be useful as supplemental materials to a contract but not as the main vehicle because, though we had 6,000 enrolled at its peak, the completion rate was lousy. And nationwide, the completion rate with correspondence courses was less than 25 percent. So, while people enrolled in droves, there was little follow-through.

R.B.: That means instructional follow-through?

W.D.: The people who enrolled did not pursue their studies and, in large part, the faculty at that time did not encourage them or did not follow through with them because a student out of sight was out of mind. Faculty members were teaching full loads and were being paid per student on an overload basis to do this. In many cases, they really didn't care, basically, whether the students completed the lessons or not. They had the tuition money, and if the student didn't complete within a year, which was the time limit, so be it. Because of the completion rate and because of the lack of follow-through on the part of the faculty, I was not really interested in pushing more for correspondence courses. I liked the contract idea and believed that the materials could be part of a contract, but the difference was having a full-time faculty member who was committed to a limited number of students.

R.B.: Why do you think the SUNY campuses bought into the independent student program when the completion rates were so low? How did they benefit.

W.D.: The income rate wasn't that low.

R.B.: Did it help their FTE [full-time equivalency] rate?

W.D.: Yes, sure. And it was something at that time that Sam Gould was pushing. Anything the chancellor wanted usually would be supported financially for the most part. Sam Gould was an innovator and some of the campuses had not yet been drawn kicking and screaming into the 20th century. This was a rather harmless way, with minimum campus disturbance, to demonstrate a form of innovative education.

R.B.: From what I understand, your notion of the learning contract was broader than Chickering's. Chickering focused on individualized learning while you viewed the contract as a vehicle that would reflect different approaches to independent study. It could be independent study materials, coursework, or what have you. Is this correct?

W.D.: No, not at all. We were both supportive of the individualized approach. We both recognized that the contract had to be something more than reading a few books, writing a paper, and meeting with a professor a few times. I know we both agreed that any kind of instructional material that was organized and appropriate both in complexity and level of learning should be grist for the mill of a contract. All I'm saying is that these SUNY independent study courses were a resource for mentors. We didn't know what a contract was going to look like at this point. We hadn't thought out the form of the contract. We hadn't thought out the responsibilities of the mentor. All we knew was that there were a lot of learning materials in libraries, in colleges, in universities, at work, in cultural organizations, and in government – a lot of learning materials that could be drawn on, but we had no idea how to go about organizing them at the point.

R.B.: So, you saw the contract as a vehicle.

W.D.: Yes. It was an organizing structure for marshaling these resources within the community – academic and social, governmental and cultural.

R.B.: When did you make the transition, job-wise, from SUNY Central to Empire State College?

W.D.: Well, when permission was received to become operational, Chickering ["Chick"] and Jim Hall and I were pretty much delegated to get the thing organized and up and running. We were told to find some kind of facility, to begin to hire faculty members, and to bring in students as quickly as was possible. Jim had limited administrative experience at the campus at that time, and Chick came from outside the university and didn't know the state structure and budgeting. I'm not sure he was all that interested in those things. He was, and is, an academic person.

Because I had responsibility for budgets, had worked with facilities at various campuses within the university, I was assigned the administrative role – dean of administration or whatever. None of us had any titles. It was a kind of troika. We were pulling together, and nobody had been appointed anything in those very early days. We did decide that whatever facility we located would not be in Albany. About that time Skidmore had moved to its new campus, or was in the process of moving to its new campus, and they were interested in either renting or selling the old campus they had in Saratoga. That's where we began to look for facilities.

R.B.: Now, why did you want to move out of Albany?

W.D.: We didn't want to be that close to the central administration. The decision was made between the three of us that it might be better to put at least a little geography between us and the central administration. We didn't want Empire State College to be seen as an arm of the central administration, and we didn't want the meddling that kind of proximity might encourage.

R.B.: What did your administrative responsibilities include?

W.D.: Well, initially, it was budget, facilities, and hiring faculty.

R.B.: When did that occur, the hiring process – in the summer of '71?

W.D.: No, actually, we started right away, about March or April. We brought some people with us, administrative people from the central administration. We brought, for instance, Terry Weigert who was in the business office, and we brought some support staff, a couple of secretaries. Judy Dober was one of the first people we hired. We advertised for faculty and were having people recommended to us by colleagues. This was before a lot of affirmative action regulations were in place. So it wasn't a requirement to advertise nationwide at that point. We were looking for a particular type of person. What we got initially, in many instances, were flower children, some of whom we hired to our regret. We got a few wackos, too. So, yes, we started early on. We got some people that other campuses really wanted to get rid of. But we also hired many very good people. But as I say, we got some duds that we had to thin out shortly after hiring them.

R.B.: Were you able to explain the mission of the college to those people at that time?

W.D.: Yes and no. What we weren't able to explain was what a learning contract was. We worked that out in internal workshops where everybody participated. At the time, we were hiring faculty, we were doing soul-searching workshops in Saratoga and we were looking for a learning center facility in Albany. Saratoga was a little too isolated to be the site of the first learning center. We did the orientation in Saratoga for the first new students, but we opened the center in the basement in one of the buildings of the old campus at the state university in Albany. We opened up with about six or seven faculty members. We did a new student orientation. There was no center dean.

Jim Hall was, shortly after we moved to Saratoga, named director of the college by Ernie Boyer. Chick was a little upset with that and went down and talked with Boyer. Boyer said it was kind of a temporary thing and that he would name the president later. Well, he did name the president and it didn't happen to be Chickering. Anyway … back to the [Albany] learning center. We had not a dean at the time. We hired a faculty member out of the University at Albany [SUNY Albany] who was teaching science. We gave him the impossible title of acting director of the learning center. He was on leave from Albany because he didn't think this thing was going to fly, and I don't think he really believed in the concept. Students were enrolled and faculty began writing learning contracts, albeit rather weak contracts – because everybody was new at this thing.

The big hook was how you assess prior learning. All these people who enrolled were there on the assumption that they were a matter of weeks away from their degree. They also believed everything they did in their lifetime was worth credit. Anything was fair game: raising a kid, going to New York City, painting praying hands on black velvet. We had discussed the learning contract but we hadn't had time to really tackle assessment. Well, some of the faculty believed that each faculty member should be able to talk with the student and then grant credit on the spot. Others wanted it to be a committee effort and included a portfolio rather than leave it to an individual faculty member. In any event, there was no process in place. So, the students got frustrated. They were now well into their third and fourth week and they were submitting these hopelessly inadequate essays. They were getting unhappy and putting pressure on the faculty members.

The faculty members got after the acting director who elected to go back to SUNY Albany. Chick went down as acting dean, or director, and tried to split the responsibilities in Saratoga with running the center in Albany. Well, he couldn't spend the amount of time necessary in Albany to do that and people were screaming at him. So, finally, I was asked to do it. I went down to Albany as acting director for about three days a week. The first two weeks, whenever we met, the faculty sat there and yelled at me, literally. The big complaint against Saratoga was not telling them how to do assessments. I said, "Well why don't we do it and tell Saratoga what we're doing. So we did set up a committee and established guidelines for the portfolio. They were rudimentary guidelines that the committee used to assess the students. It was almost like a doctoral examination. We would make judgments as to how much credit a student should have for advanced standing. The problem with that was the students were submitting portfolios without competent evaluation. In other words, the portfolio segments were not substantiated by anyone competent in the field. It was just a portfolio outlining the experience and what the students said they learned. The faculty members on the committee would question the students and make a decision as to whether or not they'd learned anything and then – right then and there – either give the credit or not

give the credit. In many cases, the committees were awarding credit in areas where none of the members of the committee had any competence whatsoever.

R.B.: And you had no central office for assessment?

W.D.: That came much later. At any rate, that was the process at that time – obviously unsatisfactory. But at least it did go to a committee. The refinements, such as expert evaluation of student learning, more effective documentation of when and where and what the experience was that resulted in the learning, all of those things, came over a period of time.

R.B.: Do you know when OPRA [Office of Program Review and Assessment] got started? Was that in '72?

W.D.: Later than that.

R.B.: So, really it was kind of "fly by the seat of your pants" for a while.

W.D.: Oh, yes, in terms of both contracts and evaluation of prior learning.

R.B.: What kind of academic review was provided for? Did the center in Albany have an associate dean who reviewed the learning contracts and assessment portfolios?

W.D.: Every center had an associate dean and an assistant dean. The assistant dean was initially to identify the community resources that could be used by students and mentors in their contracts. The associate dean was kind of the academic officer of the center who reviewed the contracts and assured both quality and quantity for the credit. But after two or three years, the role of the assistant dean disappeared and the associate dean became sort of a "Checkpoint Charlie" for both portfolios and contracts. But as the workload increased, in terms of the numbers of the students, we hired assessment officers in each of the centers. That was shortly after the Office of Assessment was established in Saratoga and Al Serling was brought in [from the Educational Testing Service, ETS] to set up some standards and a process for reviewing the portfolios centrally. Initially, these committees at the various centers would award credit and then the portfolio and the award would be checked in the central administration of the college;

and, you know, the awards were based on very, very flimsy evidence, if there was any evidence at all. So, it was quickly recognized that that process had to be tightened.

R.B.: When you were planning the college, you must have planned some kind of process for assessment, some kind of way of giving students credit for experiential learning.

W.D.: When we were planning the college?

R.B.: Yes, when you were planning the college.

W.D.: No, we didn't. That was the problem.

R.B.: So, you started without that?

W.D.: Yes, the only definite things we had were advanced placement tests or CLEP exams, which were things we recommended frequently that students take when we initially began this. But beyond that, we hadn't even envisaged a system for assessing learning.

R.B.: Now why was that? Why didn't you nail that down ahead of time?

W.D.: Well, it was like the [learning] contract, Rich. We knew that we wanted fundamentally in the contract: objectives, learning activities, evaluations, procedures and so forth, but we hadn't really thought it out. That's why we wanted to go into operation, because you had to have live people there to present the challenge to work out the system. You couldn't have the system detailed on paper because the first guy through the door would blow you out of the water with an off-the-wall case.

R.B.: That's right. So, you had a pragmatic approach.

W.D.: Yes, to say the least.

R.B.: That makes a lot of sense. What would you say the atmosphere was in the college that first year in 1971?

W.D.: Well, I think it was really very exciting. I spent 38 years in higher education and it was something very few people ever have an opportunity to do in a career. I think we all recognized that at the time. There was an excitement about it. There was kind of a missionary element to it in terms of trying to convince our more traditional colleagues that we just didn't come in from an outer planet. It was chaotic and sometimes frustrating because we were trying to make do as went along – to

develop very important procedures and refine them. It is always easier to start something with a rigid structure and then relax the rules. It's much more difficult to start something that's relaxed and then try to impose rules. …

"In time the mentor role may become more peripatetic. Not all the persons who want an education are able to connect with a college; yet the college can travel to them. Acting like the itinerant clergy of the early nineteenth century, these mentors would visit a particular community to engage in individual and group discussion and to assist students in finding the books, films, tapes, experiment kits, and the like that will support learning until the next visit. The educational background of such faculty needs to be broad with a sophisticated knowledge of resource-based learning. Empire State is experimenting with this function: faculty are traveling to libraries, television stations, prisons, and community centers to engage students otherwise unable to attend college."

James W. Hall, The Faculty and the Future
Alternative Higher Education, 1*(2), 1976, p. 107-108*

Metro's Coney Island and Brighton Beach Tour

Jim Wunsch, Metropolitan New York Region

"Dere's no guy livin' dat knows Brooklyn t'roo and t'roo, because it'd take a guy a lifetime just to find his way round' duh goddam town."

– Thomas Wolfe
"Only The Dead Know Brooklyn"
The New Yorker *(June 15, 1935)*

For the past several years, the Brooklyn location of the Metropolitan New York Region has sponsored bus and walking tours of the borough's neighborhoods to gain a better understanding of the places where so many of our students live and work. We try to hold the annual tour in June to celebrate the end of the spring term and the beginning of the summer term.

Understanding Kings County (Brooklyn) is no easy matter because it is made up of so many different kinds of neighborhoods. And this borough is so big that if it seceded from New York City it would, with its 2.6 million residents, rank as the fourth largest and far and away the most densely populated city in the country. So even if our tours never go beyond the boundaries of Brooklyn, we will never run out of new and interesting places to visit.

By now the tours have taken us from posh Brooklyn Heights to less posh, albeit rapidly gentrifying Bedford-Stuyvesant, and over to nearby Crown Heights where astonishingly, one comes upon Weeksville, a carefully restored village (now a museum) of free African-Americans dating to the 1840s.

On one tour of a few years ago, which was organized on the presumption that "Only the dead know Brooklyn," we strolled through the grand, neo-Gothic brownstone arch that is the gateway to Green-Wood Cemetery. Here one finds the last resting place of conductor/composer Leonard Bernstein, mobster Joey Gallo, birth control pioneer Margaret Sanger, New York Mayor and Governor DeWitt Clinton, "Boss" Tweed and many other famous and infamous characters.

Prospect Park South

This year, we headed for two fabled boardwalk communities – Brighton Beach and Coney Island. Since the ocean is about 10 miles from SUNY Empire State College's downtown Brooklyn location, we took the opportunity to explore a few other neighborhoods on our way to the beach.

As our chartered bus slowly made its way along traffic-choked Flatbush Avenue past Erasmus Hall (1786), the city's oldest high school, we turned right onto Albemarle Road and then zigzagged into Prospect Park South, a perfectly intact suburban enclave – circa 1900. It may be difficult to think of hipster Brooklyn as anything but urban, but for the eminent urban historian Kenneth Jackson, Brooklyn Heights can be reckoned as America's oldest suburb; as early as the 1820s, its residents commuted by steamboat to work in Manhattan. By 1900, Prospect Park South was also considered suburban because its residents commuted by train to Manhattan. In fact they still do, but the train is now called the "Q" and thus the neighborhood is ever so urban or perhaps urbane.

Brooklyn neighborhoods (boundaries are approximate).
Photo credit: OpenStreetMap/Wikipedia

The gateway to Green-Wood is also the year-round roosting place of Brooklyn's monk parakeets. You can still get a Green-Wood plot for yourself, but this valuable New York real estate is pricey.
Photo credit: Harrison Jacobs/Business Insider

101 Rugby Rd. (1900-03), Prospect Park South. Featured in the 1982 film Sophie's Choice.
Photo credit: Jim Wunsch

Ocean Parkway, Gravesend and the Ghost of Lady Moody

Did Brooklyn Heights look down on the *nouveau riche* Prospect Park South? Perhaps. In 1900, those big suburban houses – compared to the elegant brownstones in the Heights – might have seemed excessive. Those thoughts came to mind as we headed down Ocean Parkway, and saw the massive new homes being put up by prosperous Sephardic Jewish families. Some of the older residents of Midwood may dismiss the new houses as inappropriate and oversized, but set against Ocean Parkway, the "McMansions" do not appear especially conspicuous. At 210 feet, Ocean Parkway is so wide (Broadway in Manhattan is a mere 150 feet) that it can accommodate two service lanes for local traffic, a six-lane central roadway with generously landscaped "greenswards" on either side, and the nation's oldest bikeway and separate walkways. It would take a castle or worse to overpower Ocean Parkway.

Ever since it opened in 1880, Ocean Parkway has offered a fast and agreeable 5-mile run from central Brooklyn to Brighton Beach/Coney Island. But however enjoyable the ride down the grand boulevard, we could not resist a detour into nondescript, distinctly untrendy Gravesend, which happens, coincidentally, to be the site of the oldest cemetery owned by the City of New York. Few New Yorkers know of the graveyard and fewer still (including the

neighbors) have ever set foot there. Thanks to the Parks Department's willingness to accommodate our crew, Judith Velosky of the department's Salt Marsh Park Rangers swung the gate open, welcoming 35 ESC students, staff, faculty and friends (plus one astonished fellow from the neighborhood) into 1.6 acres – hallowed ground, going all the way back to the mid-17th century.

Lady Deborah Moody, the founder of Gravesend who died in 1659, is said to be buried in this cemetery though exactly where no one knows. A religious dissenter, the wealthy, aristocratic English widow and her followers were allowed by the Dutch (perhaps because she had so piqued pious New England) to establish a village while also gaining title to a substantial part of South Brooklyn, including Sheepshead Bay, Coney Island and Brighton Beach. While Coney Island went on to become the site of dazzling amusement parks, Gravesend remained a sleepy village on the way to becoming what it is today: a relatively obscure Brooklyn neighborhood.

As your correspondent, a mentor of historical studies, concluded this assessment, there emerged from among the ancient headstones an apparition – a mysterious woman in white who boldly proclaimed that rather than being dismissed by the mentor as an historical footnote, Lady Moody should be recognized as the founding mother of Brooklyn and the

trailblazing advocate of the rights of women and religious dissenters. After all, she was the first woman in the New World ever to be granted a land patent and that allowed her to establish the only English-speaking settlement in Dutch America. Gravesend was laid out according to her plans and despite religious strife and Dutch political pressure, the village, under her firm control, remained that rare 17th century community – welcoming newcomers regardless of religious or political beliefs.

Taken aback by this assertive apparition, your correspondent advised a strategic retreat down Ocean Parkway to the beach. (An account of the troubling confrontation between the mentor and the ghost is appended.)

Coney Island and Brighton Beach: A Day of Pleasure

After a ghostly encounter, the Boardwalk is the perfect restorative. Walking from west to east you encounter the Brooklyn Cyclones ballpark, the non-operational, but now thanks to 8,000 diode lights, the jazzily illuminated Parachute Jump, the new Thunderbolt roller coaster, the historic 150-foot high Wonder Wheel (circa 1920) and the most famous of all roller coasters, the Cyclone (circa 1927). Next door, the New York Aquarium, which had been devastated by Superstorm Sandy in 2012, is being restored and rebuilt with a new half-million gallon shark tank. Heading further down the Boardwalk, we enter Brighton Beach

2134 Ocean Parkway mansion, recently reduced to $7,899,000.

Photo credit: Jim Wunsch

A view of Ocean Parkway.

Photo credit: Jim Wunsch

Shae D'lyn, having appeared in the TV series Dharma and Greg, Boardwalk Empire *and* Louie, *is seen here as Moody's ghost. Jim Wunsch portrays a mentor.*

Photo credit: Peggy Sherertz

and Manhattan Beach where hundreds of families from the former Soviet Union live in old bungalows and apartment houses, and in the swank 865-unit Oceana condos, formerly the site of the Brighton Beach Baths. But with sea levels rising, will all this disappear?

On a lovely early summer's day, with gulls squawking, waves breaking and kids screaming on the Cyclone, the deluge seemed far away.

In homage to the sporting crowd that had once played the horses at Coney Island, our ESC group now headed for the beautifully restored merry-go-round that is housed within an elegant pavilion at the entrance to what had once been Luna Park. Within the pavilion there is also, somewhat improbably, a glassed-in conference room, and here we joined Johanna Zaki, executive director of the Coney Island Alliance, a business group, and Lauren Standke, the Parks Department Coney Island project director, to consider the current prospects for reviving Coney Island.

Zaki and Standke pointed to steady progress: The Cyclones (a Mets farm team) now ranks third nationally among all minor league teams in attendance; the brand new $10 million Thunderbolt roller coaster is drawing crowds of fearless teens back to the Boardwalk; and with the opening of "Ocean Wonders: Sharks!," the New York Aquarium, the nation's oldest, will likely see its already substantial attendance double.

Standke pointed out that the city seeks not only to make Coney Island a world-class summer attraction, but also an appealing year-round community with upscale shopping, luxury housing and offices. That is why in the 2009 rezoning of Coney Island, land formerly reserved for amusements was scaled back to make possible extensive new commercial, office, residential and hotel development.

Several of our students who knew the neighborhood quite well questioned how this development would advance the prospects of the many poor families living in the area. (From the boardwalk, low-income public housing projects loom inescapably over the amusement area.) Zaki and Standke pointed out that year-round development, far more than amusement park jobs, would help improve the employment prospects for those living in the projects. And provision was being made for low- and moderate-income housing, which – intermingled with upper-income housing – might serve as an inviting alternative to the projects.

Another speaker, New York Institute of Technology professor Nick Bloom, author of *Public Housing That Worked: New York in the Twentieth Century* (2009: University of Pennsylvania Press), cautioned against dismissing out of hand the motives of those who built the projects and also the desirability of the city's public housing generally. He pointed out that a previous generation's commitment to construct low- and moderate-income housing makes today's efforts seem trifling. And while not all the projects were thoughtfully sited, almost all had been considered desirable places to live. Today, although living conditions in projects vary

"Coney Island Express," by Eric Drooker.
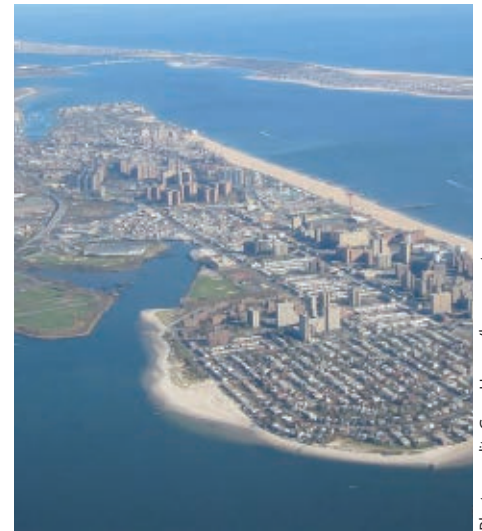
Coney Island, a fragile barrier island.

Cartography by Stephan Van Dam, AIGA. Reprinted with permission. Copyright VanDamMedia.

greatly, it should be noted that almost a quarter of a million New Yorkers remain on the list waiting for admission.

Even as the lively discussion continued, we noticed from our glassed-in room more and more youngsters heading for the carousel. Then we remembered. It was the 26th of June, and for one million kids, it was the most glorious moment of the school year – the last day. Early dismissal! Enough of school! For us, too! We drifted toward the Boardwalk on our way to Volna (the Wave) and the multi-course Russian lunch at Brighton Beach. Summer had begun.

Appendix

Moody Script

Passengers leave bus and enter the graveyard. Jim gathers crowd around him for lecture as Lady Moody is hiding.

Jim (dismissively): In the 1600s, there was little to distinguish Gravesend, a backwater of New Amsterdam and as you see now (gestures), still an undistinguished neighborhood. The obscure Deborah Moody was its first leader. Local boosters and some women historians may stress Moody's importance. But she remains unknown for good reason. She lived in Shakespeare's day when women were akin to chattel, that is, the property of men. Husbands, not wives, held title to family property. Whatever their thoughts and ideas, women had little impact on history. Even from wealthy families, girls had little or no education. So much for Lady Moody.

Moody appears.

Moody (loudly): My good man, may I have a word?

Jim: I yield to difficult women, both the quick and the dead.

Moody (sarcastically): A true gentleman.

Moody (addressing Jim): Now about poor, defenseless women. You know that I was among the wealthiest in England?

Jim: You could not own property.

Moody: So long as Sir Henry lived. When he died, leaving me a 43-year old widow with two children … quite dreadful. Save for the

fact that I now controlled his fortune! Married women could own nothing, but [laughing with a wave of the hand] … widows!!

Jim: So you settled down to a life of luxury.

Moody: As soon as my daughter Catherina married, I left my estate in Wiltshire and headed straight for London and … straight for trouble.

Jim: They must have loved a wealthy, still youthful widow, at the Court of Charles I.

Moody: The only court that concerned me was The Star Chamber. Their spies were about. I was ordered out of London and back to the manor.

Jim: You? … A provincial widow … a security risk?

Moody: I denounced infant baptism.

Jim (incredulously): What?

Student: *Lady Moody believed that children (to say nothing of infants) should not undergo important ceremonies, like baptism, until they were old enough to understand what those ceremonies meant. In other words, whatever your family background, don't join a church, don't join a movement, until you know what the group stands for. For the Church of England – and many other churches – **this was heresy.***

Moody: My life was in danger.

Jim: So you returned to your vast estates.

Moody: Certainly not. To save my soul, I would not keep quiet. But to save my life, I sailed for Massachusetts.

Jim: A risky venture … that sea voyage.

Moody: A risky venture, Massachusetts.

Jim: You spoke up … again?

Moody: To save my soul.

Student: John Winthrop, Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony, *Journal,* 1643:

The Lady Moody, a wise and anciently religious woman, being taken with error of denying baptism to infants, was dealt with by many of the elders and others, and admonished by the Church of Salem, but persisting and to avoid further trouble, she moved [in with] … the Dutch

*against the advice of her friends. Many others, infected with Anabaptism, moved also. She was after **excommunicated.***

Jim: You and your followers took refuge with the sworn enemies of the Crown?

Moody: Where else? For the Dutch – the West India Company – it was mostly about making money. As to belief, my goodness, they even admitted Jews.

Jim: So your Anabaptists settled Gravesend?

Moody: Not at first. Idiot Governor Kieft [pronounced keeft] stirred up the Indians. For two years, we took refuge in New Amsterdam. Despairing in that awful Dutch fort, I thought of returning.

Jim: Back to England?

Moody: No, Massachusetts.

Student: John Endicott, Deputy Governor of Massachusetts advising Governor Winthrop on Moody's possible return, 1644.

*It is very doubtful that she can be reclaimed. She is so far engaged. She is a **dangerous** woman!!*

Jim: The Dutch granted you the right to a major settlement. But on whose terms?

Moody: Oh, dear sir (ironically), what could a poor defenseless widow do? The community was planned and laid out based on my carefully drawn grid. It would be English speaking. The only such settlement in New Netherland.

Jim: But limited to your Anabaptists.

Moody: A settlement open to all – even the Quakers – tortured and executed in Massachusetts. You see, when you are confident in your faith, you can tolerate others – heathens, fools, even … professors.

Jim: But the Dutch maintained ultimate control of Gravesend.

Moody: Certainly not. We elected our magistrates, and when old peg leg Peter Stuyvesant sought to interfere … well, I ended that.

Jim: Ironic that the woman who set up and defended Gravesend could not elect its leadership.

Moody: Sir, you do run on. I cast the first vote. I was granted two land lots, all others but one. Remember, sir, that wealth trumps gender. I voted.

Jim: And so it came to an end.

Moody: Gravesend lives, not perhaps as I envisioned, the great city by the sea, but a solid community open to all. Of course, *I* came to an end after 72 years dealing with super-pious, self-centered and ridiculous men. A bit exhausting. And so having dealt with yet another such fellow, it is time for my repose. Farewell.

[Lady Moody departs deep into the graveyard.]

[Applause]

Student:

- *Gravesend marks the beginning of the English settlement of Brooklyn.*

- *Gravesend was the first settlement in the New World established and headed by a woman.*

- *Gravesend's charter granted freedom of religion and conscience.*

- *Lady Moody, in the 1640s, was perhaps the first woman to cast a vote in a free election in America. Women in New York state were not granted the right to vote until 1916.*

- *Lady Moody is likely buried here. The grave is unmarked.*

- *She abandoned her great English estates. What she did not abandon were her books and love of learning. She left behind one of the largest private libraries in the New World.*

- *One more thing: for 370 years, this hallowed ground in quiet Gravesend has marked not an end, but a beginning – an enduring symbol of empowered womanhood and freedom for all.*

Voice and Struggle

Tom Kerr, The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies

A Review of:
What Did You Learn at Work Today? The Forbidden Lessons of Labor Education
By Helena Worthen

If you lament the closing of college humanities programs in the spirit of Allan Bloom's (1987) *Closing of the American Mind,* then your lamentation might reflect how bummed out you are as liberal studies programs are replaced by professional training in areas such as finance or human resources management. While there's nothing inherently problematic with business programs or areas of study intended to make learning directly relevant to a student's future, when classrooms are filled with students taking management courses but not sociology or world poetry, the question is raised: Just where will students learn to understand other cultures or study a diversity of people they hope to one day manage?

In a recent dialogue with President Barack Obama (2015), writer Marilynne Robinson viewed this dilemma as "a language of coercion." As she put it, " … what we're really telling people is that if they do not acquire nameless skills of a technological character, they will not have employment. … [This] implies to people that their lives are fragile, [and] that is charged with that kind of unspecific fear that makes people … feel that they can't get their feet on the ground" (para. 30). Perhaps students enrolling in business administration, or other professional programs, feel this fragility the most – the "coercion" of work to pay medical bills and other vital costs is staggeringly profound – thus, anyone *not* in programs of a technical nature might want to limit their lamentation to a low rumble. But rumble we all do, and, as Robinson seems to say, it's the low volume of our vocalization and the misdirection of our frustration that has weakened our footing.

But maybe we can learn to compensate for our "fragility," modulate our voices and redirect our frustration in a learning environment of one type or another. In her book, *What Did*

You Learn at Work Today? The Forbidden Lessons of Labor Education, Helena Worthen (2014) documented professional experiences in labor education working with people in a variety of ways. Essentially autobiographical, she writes about a range of topics such as helping workers who "struggle" with downsizing, and helping children of union members tell their stories about their union families. And woven throughout is an advocacy – a response to the problems workers face that takes the form of learning that makes their individual lives and their roles as active members of society that much stronger. She wrote: "Learning is a process. It is what creates knowledge. Knowledge is deep. … It is broad and powerful, but only if the people who share it are organized" (p. 2). And while this is an example where Worthen makes assumptions about organization, self-directed learning and a whole lot of other important factors about what it takes "to know" something, she also is vocalizing and directing her own frustration.

A former educator with UNITE (Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees), the National Labor College and the University of Illinois, Worthen has led working students to " … intentionally, directly … learn how to take advantage of their rights at work and improve and protect their jobs and the jobs of others" (p. 33). I doubt this is easy, but she shares some of her processes, including her emphasis on finding practical applications of learning theories that are intended to help workers sort through labor-management conflicts. Early in *What Did You Learn At Work Today?,* Worthen re-contextualized Lev Vygotsky's Social Development Theory and David Kolb's Experiential Learning Model, and a highbred of Alexei Leont'ev's Activity Theory as useful aids to help workers see that through the act of working together in
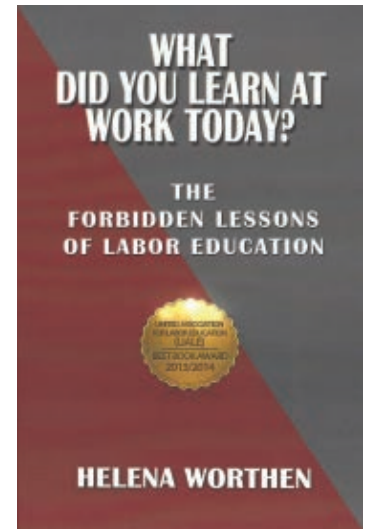
their labor education classes, they can " … talk and listen to each other. That is, they [can] conspire" (p. 33). The refreshing part of this statement (something that is reflected throughout the book) is how enthusiastically she writes about the significance of social processes that help unify people.

For example, Worthen calls for the use of theories to inform practical learning in various environments, including a Chicago night school classroom and a Midwestern health care facility. At each of these sites, she cautioned us about the limits of theory: … [A] "theory of learning is only a theory of social change if it explains how the learning of individuals is also the learning of a whole group of people, and how they collectively improve or even save their lives" (p. 45). This reminds me of something that might occur in a *conventional* English composition course in a liberal arts program where a college student from a rural town reading Alice Walker's (1973) *Everyday Use* might be invited to share his thoughts in a small group discussion consisting of a

city kid, a suburbanite and an international student. The "country mouse" and the "city mouse" might share their association with the story; the instructor might then invite the international student to share her views, and the same with the suburbanite. In these ways, those four might become "conspirators" for social change as they simultaneously improve their relationship with texts, learn from each other and are offered an important opportunity to ask their own questions. Reading Walker's story might not immediately appear to save lives in ways a group of students discussing industrial safety might ensure a safe workplace, but as part of a broader quest for and creation of knowledge, readings such as this might be a useful pedagogical approach that calls on clues that can be taken from Worthen's instructional methods, but in a context she does not consider.

Oddly situated at the end of *What Did You Learn at Work Today?* are definitions that are crucial to her arguments. For example, two key terms in her book's subtitle, "forbidden" and "lessons," are about " … something that has to be learned in practice, over and over again … about a specific social context, the social relations of work. … [we] are talking about a conversation that has to take place through a wall" (p. 238). The reader knows such a "wall" exists, as Worthen repeatedly refers to some sort of barrier throughout the book that has its basis in the struggle between workers and management. She seldom mentions, however, how the wall also exists *within* the worker or workers, about their personal learning, and almost never does she mention the unlearning that must take place throughout an education that gives a person a chance to reflect upon what learning means in their own life, including the way they interact and learn in their workplace.

Worthen also defines the other key terms in the subtitle: "labor" and "education." The wall she writes about is not only between employees and employers, but between mainstream labor organizations and the formal education programs and schools that teach workers.

> Education in the U.S. does not think much about work or the working class majority as workers. It does not want to think about workers having to fight an

employer. Labor thinks very little about learning and even less about theory. (p. 233)

Of course, there are exceptions to this argument; there are schools and unions that work closely to provide coursework in theory that might help workers learn in ways they cannot learn on the job. Worthen is partially correct when she claims that the " … social sciences – history, sociology, political science, for example – are not applied. You learn about things, you don't practice doing things" (p. 236). But can't you use coursework in these areas of study to encourage people to "conspire" and therefore learn?

It seems, however, that arguing for a particular model of education over another fails to address the need for education more generally. For example, Worthen assumed that the type of labor education that " … takes place on the job, among people who have to learn on their own how to push back against bad conditions at work" (p. 233) is somehow superior to a liberal arts approach to learning, where students read literature and history inclusive of experiences working people have and currently face on their jobs and in their lives.

> Mainstream labor history avoids being applied when it is just a stream of narratives: A great leader *organized* people, unions *recruited* members. … How a workforce *learned* to organize itself, or the lessons they learned while doing it, is rarely examined. The learning is skipped as the story moves along. (p. 237)

This appears to be an artificial barrier that Worthen herself has created. I wonder how difficult it would be to ask a worker in an English composition class to use literature to understand people of other cultures, while asking the same worker learning at a workplace training facility to apply Alexei Leont'ev's Activity Theory to "conspire" with other students to overcome a workplace challenge? What would worker-students say about those different types of learning? How would they describe their learning in both contexts? Would they be able to write a comparative essay discussing which location of learning is best and why?

While Worthen doesn't publish such a student essay, she does share writing from a group of students submitting applications for the AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) union college scholarships. These essays are about the lives of union families.

> For example, one girl described how when she was little she would get up to get ready for school and find her mother asleep on the couch in the living room, too tired to take off her shoes. The mother was working a day *and* a night job. The girl remembers laying a blanket over her mother before leaving for school. This mother decided they should move to Florida to save money on heat. When the move didn't work out, they drove back up to New England and the mother went back to her old jobs. (p. 112)

Then the mother landed a union job and the daughter realized how little she had interacted with her mother when she worked "doubles." Suddenly her mother was sleeping full nights and didn't have to work weekends. However, added Worthen, "The union is in the picture, but it doesn't do magic" (p. 114). Indeed, these are essays written by those children who are college-bound: "Young people whose parents have had a bad experience with the union, or who never hear about these scholarships or can't deal with deadlines, do not write these essays" (p. 115). But each of these essays are, as Worthen put it, " … emotionally gripping to read. Together, they form an annual portrait of [the] public sector workforce that does not exist in any other place" (p. 114).

Yet here, again, Worthen misses an opportunity to provide her readers with an expanded educational model, where these pro-union kids, should they win their scholarships, enroll in college and major in psychology or social sciences to earn a living in public sector law enforcement or a helping profession where they can look after others in the way the union looked after their parents. In their classrooms, and given a chance, these students might share with their classmates new insights into the lives of union families. Considering how a majority of Americans don't grow up in union households, sharing such stories in college classrooms would be a real bonus – perhaps most importantly for those union kids who

pursue business majors and might in the future manage people for a career. But Worthen, in effect, shuts down this line of thinking by focusing on the value of the essays and the students' opinions as propaganda articulating pro-union sentiment. My point is not at all intended as anti-union, but rather as pro-voice of union members and their kids. (I'm union without kids.) Arguably, once in college, these kids could continue what might be called an "applied labor education" by learning to share their family experiences and thus helping their fellow students learn about worlds alien to them.

Throughout the book, Worthen uses the term "struggle." I find it a struggle to understand the separation she's making between learning models. However, let's assume she's correct that there is a better way to learn, the learning that is done through activity, through practice. It might not matter except there remain a limited number of jobsites where workers are able to come together to practice community and to learn to struggle together. Also, there are college classrooms in which people can talk about work and workplace circumstances (many more, I'm sure, than where labor unions are talked about). Don't we need to talk about these things together? Worthen's argument would be stronger if she at least acknowledged the limited number of opportunities to educate workers and the importance of championing learning in many ways and in many contexts, not one being better than another.

If there's a difference in opinion between Worthen's educational model and my own, I still respect her enthusiastic efforts to influence me. Her compelling use of theory to develop active learning and participatory education is welcome. She also seems to side with those who would not be discouraged by educational programs in areas such as business administration or accounting, by the mere fact that she encourages learning on the job that will help people shape their own destiny and ultimately work together. I'm sure she would want those business managers to learn to sympathize with their employees, but how that would come to pass is something that needs more attention.

While I've been writing and editing this review, I have returned to the essays of the children of union members that Worthen includes in *What Did You Learn at Work Today?* At first, they seem to be the best cases of the "vocalizing" I mentioned at the beginning of this essay. But I've stepped back so many times from the book that it strikes me now that Worthen has written, in this semi-autobiography, an equally compelling "voice" perhaps meant to give direction to her own thinking and, too, compensate for the "fragility" she, and I'd say, all of us, feel in one way or another. She writes a lot about "struggle" and about "voice." The best of this book comes when she brings together the voicing and the struggling that we might find not only on the shop floor or at a worksite, or even in a labor education course, but in the best liberal arts classrooms, too.

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Found Things

"An Interview with Malcolm Knowles" by Meg Benke from Golden Hill (1992)

In the early 1980s to 1990s (the first issue came out in 1980), the college published six issues of a journal called Golden Hill *(the title was taken from a 1770 event in which the New York chapter of the Sons of Liberty tried to put up a "liberty pole" on Golden Hill in New York City). Long Island mentor Gary Goss was the editor of that first issue. The editorial board included six colleagues: LeGrace Benson, Fernand Brunschwig, Keith Elkins, Thelma Jurgrau, Charles Lynch and Robert Orrill.*

The theme of volume 6 (1992), edited by mentor Lee Herman, was "Making Room." As Lee concluded in his introduction to the issue: "Is it possible for an entire institution – its staff, its organization, its standards and practice – to make its center its students, whoever they are, whatever their interests and needs? Can a responsibly academic institution be that flexible and innovative, that deliberately unfinished? The mission of Empire State College has been to explore and push affirmative answers to those questions" (p. 3).

The "Making Room" issue contained an interview by our colleague Meg Benke with noted adult educator Malcolm Knowles (1913-1997). Knowles is the author of many central texts in the adult education field, including The Adult Learner *(1973),* Self-Directed Learning *(1975) and* The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy *(1970). Malcolm Knowles not only pushed us to think about the distinctiveness of adults as learners, but to develop what he called andragogical practices (including the use of the "learning contract") to encourage the kind of "self-directed learning" that Knowles so prized. Meg includes a most apt quote from Knowles' autobiography,* The Making of an Adult Educator *(1989), in her "Concluding Note": "In my twenty-first century life, I would want an educational system that would develop cooperative people who see themselves as global citizens, are highly creative, and are self-directed learners. Of course, I would want them to be knowledgeable, too" (p. 132).*

We are very pleased to reproduce Meg Benke's interview with Malcolm Knowles here.

MALCOLM S. KNOWLES
1923 EAST JOYCE STREET, APT. 231
FAYETTEVILLE, AR 72703

January 22, 1992

Meg Benke
Coordinator for Academic Services and Assessment
Empire State College
Two Union Avenue
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-1390

Dear Meg:

    I have just finished reading the transcript of our interview, and I am impressed all over again with what a skillful interviewer you are.

    I have made just a few corrections.

    I look forward to seeing it in Golden Hill.

          With very best wishes,

Meg Benke

An Interview with Malcolm Knowles

Malcolm Knowles continues to confront traditional learning theory and structures in his most recent book, *The Making of an Adult Educator: An Autobiographical Journey*. In the final chapter, he outlines his perspective on how he would like to be educated in the twenty-first century. "An educational system [...] would help me become a competent person with my highest competence being that of a continuous, self-directed lifelong learner ... and I would want the same thing for the rest of the planet " (p. 132).

Empire State College recognized Malcolm Knowles for his extensive contributions to innovative higher education at an October, 1991 graduation ceremony. I had the pleasure to spend a morning with him, discussing his perspectives on innovations in education.

MB: You have done so much work in many different sectors. I thought we would discuss the development of innovations in higher education institutions, and also talk about technology and issues you explored in the last chapter of the autobiography. Could you also talk a little bit about some of the turning points in your career? We wanted to do a retrospective, where you took a turn or your work cook a turn, and what might have caused some of those turning points.

MK: Well, without question, the first one was in my first job. In college, my ambition was to become a diplomat and I'd prepared for foreign service and taken the foreign service exam, in 1935, and was notified by the State Department that I'd passed it. But they were then filling only the most urgent vacancies and filling chose currently from the people who had passed the exam in 1932. So there would be at least a three year wait.

Within a couple of weeks after I'd gotten a notice from the State Department, there appeared, in the *Boston Globe*, a story that the federal government, the Works Progress Administration, was establishing a new program for unemployed youth, 18 to 25, called the National Youth Administration and that the state director for Massachusetts of NYA was Eddie Casey, a former football coach at Harvard. I had known Eddie, because I was a waterboy for the Harvard football team when he was the coach. When I called him up he remembered me. I said that I needed a job, "Can I come down and talk with you?" So I did. He said, "We have just one job open on a state level that hasn't been filled by political appointees and that is Director of Training. Do you know anything about training? ". I said, "Oh, yes." Fortunately, in my sophomore year at Harvard I'd volunteered to do group work in a settlement house in Boston and they assigned me to a group of adolescent boys whose main interest was finding a job. So I had had three years of experience working with them on how to go about getting a job, how to prepare for a job and so on, and they were quite successful in getting jobs. When I told that to Eddie, he said, "That's just what we're looking for. When can you start?" I said, "How about tomorrow?" Fortunately the national director of recreational and educational programs for the WPA, Edward Lindeman, was

Benke

my supervisor. He was one of the real pioneer adult educators and he started educating me about adult education.

Edward Lindeman was a philosopher; he was on the faculty of the New School of Social Research and he wrote one of the foundational books called *The Meaning of Adult Education* in 1926. He was just a magnificent human being. He became my role model. So it was back then that I decided not to go with the diplomatic service; I wanted to be an adult educator like Ed Lindeman. That was a turning point.

MB: When did you decide that you had some contributions to make that were different from what other people were doing?

MK: Well, during the five years that I was Director of Training at the NYA in Massachusetts, I'd walked around peering through the glass windows in the doors, and began to notice that in those classrooms in which the teachers stood up in front and read from notes at the students, they were sitting, nodding and uninvolved. In those classrooms in which the teachers were actively involving the students, they were full of interest and energy. So, I began making some generalizations that adults prefer participatory learning. Then I went from NYA to the YMCA in Boston and organized an adult educational program for them. I noticed the same thing, that in those classes in which there was active participation, there was a lot more learning taking place.

I worked at the Chicago YMCA and enrolled in the graduate program in adult education in the University of Chicago, which turned out to be a non-traditional program because I was working full-time and still working on my degree part time. But the head of the department there was a man named Cyril Houle. Cy was a master manipulator of the system and arranged that I would take one course a semester. I was on the GI Bill, which required full-time, nine-credit hours a semester. What he did was to arrange that I would have just one class that I had to attend and then I had two-three hour independent study courses. So I got my nine hours just having to attend one class that met in the late afternoon.

I got my master's and my doctor's degrees with Cy Houle. I also became the Executive Director of the Adult Education Association of the USA during that period. So by the time I entered the University of Chicago in 1946, I'd had 10 years of experience as an adult educator. My master's thesis was an analysis of the techniques that were being used in various programs in the Chicago area serving adults and my general observation was that the successful programs were more informal than the traditional classroom work. It was this informality that stuck in my mind as being the distinguishing criterion.

I had written three chapters of my thesis when Cy Houle was having lunch one day with the publisher of the Association Press, Charles Hall. And Hall asked Cy if he or any of his students had anything in the works that he would be interested in seeing. Cy mentioned that I was working on my master's thesis in this area and he said, "Could I take a look at it?" So Cy called me and I said, "Well, I have three chapters done. I'll bring those down

for you. "He showed those to Mr. Hall and Hall said, "Yes, I think I'd like to publish that as a book." So I went back home and told my wife about this and went up to my study and started typing chapter four. I'd type one page and toss it away. After about four or five nights of this, I came down one night and plunked myself on the easy chair, obviously dejected, and my wife said, "What's wrong?" I told her that I had a writing block. Because I was now writing two things: the master's thesis and a book.

She said, "Name three people that you want to communicate with in the book." I said, "Well, there's Louise Hammel, who is a very dedicated, but naive, Director of Adult Education for the Mobile, Alabama Public Schools; then there's Adolph Adolfson who is very sophisticated, a Ph.D. in political science who became the Director of University Extension for the University of Wisconsin; and then there's Mary Settle who is Director of Volunteers for American Red Cross." She said, "Well, how about writing to those three people and asking them to send you a picture."

So I did. When they came, my wife scotch-taped them on the wall in front of my typewriter. I'd write a paragraph and I'd turn to Louise and say, "Louise, is that clear enough for you?" She nodded. I'd turn to Adolph and say, "Is that sophisticated enough for you?" And if he nodded, then I'd turn to Mary Settle and say, "Does it have application to training volunteers?" And if she nodded, then I'd go on to the next paragraph. My fingers just started racing. I was talking to these three people.

When I sent the manuscript in to Hall, he decided that the title should be *Informal Adult Education*. That was the first real description of what later turned out to be my theory of adult learning.

MB: When did you start to see that people were using your works? When did you see that there were changes in education?

MK: Well, *Informal Adult Education* was used primarily by people in non-traditional programs, you might say. In voluntary organizations, the YMCA, etc. It didn't make much of an impact on formal educational institutions. But then in 1960, Hall asked me - *Informal Adult Education* was 10 years old by that time – if I didn't think it would be a wise idea to put out a revised edition. I revised it, but when I sent that manuscript in, he said, "This is so different from your book that we'll give it a different title." Because then I had conceptualized the andragogical model and given it a name. He published that book as *The Modern Practice of Adult Education* with the subtitle *Andragogy vs. Pedagogy*.

MB: That's when the debate became a lively discussion, right?

MK: Right. That book was picked up by educational institutions, particularly university extension programs.

MB: That was the early '60s?

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MK: Yes. It was at that time that people started reporting to me, started writing or calling me up and telling me what they were doing. It was different.

MB: Did these principles of andragogy get to the business sector at that time?

MK: I think not. I think it wasn't until 1970 that I had another edition, in which I included a lot of appendices from business and industry. It was that edition that was used by industrial people.

MB: So was that when you started going on speaking tours to various industry groups? I had seen in your autobiography that you had written some articles directed to human resource managers.

MK: Right. In 1963 I joined the American Society for Training and Development and started getting oriented to the industrial situation.

MB: At one time, didn't you try to get several of the adult professional organizations to work together?

MK: Oh, that was way back. When I came into the field, in 1935, there were two national organizations: The American Association for Adult Education, primarily of university people, the scholars, and the Department of Adult Education of the National Education Association that was composed primarily of public schools, directors of adult education. I had joined both of those organizations in the '40s. In the mid-'40 s, there had started to be a movement to try to combine these two organizations, and they appointed a task force composed of half-a-dozen people from each of the two organizations. I was on that task force. In 1948, we started meeting on how to amalgamate them and decided that the cleanest way to do it was for both organizations to go out of existence and create a new organization, which we did in 1951 and called it The Adult Education Association of the U.S.A. And I became the first Executive Director.

MB: Did ASTD ever a get involved with education-related organizations?

MK: Not really. I think the explanation for it is that the Adult Education Association was appealing primarily to people in the public sectors. Whereas the ASTD was organized almost exclusively to serve the private sector. That distinction has been maintained.

MB: Let's go back to the '60s, the time when you were seeing some of those reforms in education. Can you talk about who some of the leaders were at that time, the people who were making some of the changes? Who did you see as your colleagues who were making a difference?

MK: In the late '60s, the person that I was most closely related to was Leonard Nadler. When I first got to know him, he was Director of Training for the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Department. And then he went to George Washington University as a professor of

adult education. He really began the human resources development field, composed largely of people from government, directors of training in the government agencies, and private industry. I attribute the growth of human resources development as a field of specialized practice to Nadler's influence.

MB: What about in education? Who did you see as the innovators, the writers, the practitioners?

MK: Let me start with the institutions. The University of Wisconsin was one of the real pioneering innovators in graduate study in adult education and in the utilization of electronic media. The University of Wisconsin was the first university to establish a network, first by telephone, and then by computer, for practitioners throughout the state to work on degrees without having to come to Madison and live full time on the campus. So I think that Wisconsin was the primary innovative institution at that time, and Adolph Adolfson was the spearhead of that.

Now another person that was very influential on the faculty was Burton Kreitlow. And, of course, there's George Washington University, Len Nadler; and at the University of California, UCLA, a man named Paul Sheets spearheaded innovation there; and the University of Michigan, Howard McClusky was the key figure there. And somewhat later, Florida State University and the University of Georgia became hot spots of innovation.

MB: Can you describe some of those people or those institutions? What led to that innovation? Was it a person, was it a president, a group of faculty?

MK: Well, it was a combination of several things. Certainly the people I've mentioned, Len Nadler, Paul Sheets, Howard McClusky, had visions of adult education becoming more pervasive, serving populations that had not been served by higher education. But also another factor was pressure being put on the universities by people who wanted graduate study, but couldn't afford to leave their jobs and come and live on campus full time. The people with vision, I think, sensed that there was a need there that was not being met and started experimenting with ways to serve those needs within the constraints of the traditional system.

When I went to Boston University in the 1960s as professor of adult education, I organized a new program.

MB: What a challenge that must have been.

MK: Yes, it was. My sense of mission was to create an adult-oriented graduate program and I had to find devious ways of getting around the mickey-mouse rules and regulations and requirements of the traditional school of education there. I started experimenting in my own classes - and I found that I could do almost anything that I wanted, so long as I limited my experimentation to my classes, so long as I didn't encroach on the turf of other professors. So I started experimenting with self-diagnosis of learning needs and using

learning contracts and criteria-referenced grading rather than norm-referenced grading, all that sort of thing. I was able to get away with a good deal. What I discovered was the university really didn't care what I did, so long as I turned in my grades. So I was able to get away with a lot of deviations from the standard policies and practices.

MB: I'm sure when you tried to take those changes from the sphere of your classroom into program design, that was probably more difficult.

MK: After I'd been there for three years, in 1963, I got a call one morning in March from Gene

Phillips, who was professor of educational philosophy, and his basic course in educational philosophy was required of all master's and doctor's students. He was an S.O .B. and the students just hated him. He just loved to impress them with how smart he was and how dumb they were. They'd try to get a waiver from having to take this required course; so I petitioned the graduate committee for a waiver and became known by the faculty as the "waiver king." Bur usually I couldn't get it waived. But I got a call from Gene, one morning in March, saying, "Malcolm, I have five of your students in my educational philosophy 101 course and they want to write a contract with me. What the hell are they talking about?"

MB: He wanted to know what a learning contract is?

MK: Yes. So I said, "Gene, let's have lunch together and I'll show you some of the contracts that my students have done with me and how I work with them." So I did. I had half a dozen or so contracts and he read them and he frowned and he looked at me and he said, "Malcolm, this is brilliant. You make them do all the work." I said, "Exactly, Gene." So he said, "Well, I'll experiment with these five that want me to do a contract; we'll see how it goes." At the end of the semester he called me again and said, "Let's get together; I have something to tell you." He told me that those five students turned in, by far, the best work of any of the students in his class. He said, "Next semester, I'm going at least to make this an option for anybody who wants to do it." He did and had a complete religious conversion to student-centered teaching.

The word started spreading around to the other faculty members via my students. What I learned was the most potent change agents in the university are the students. Don't worry about converting the faculty; the students will do that. By the time I left Boston University, let's see I was there from '60 to '74, I would say somewhere around 75 to 80 percent of the faculty of the School of Education were using some, or all, of the andragogical model, and many of the faculty in the Department of Psychology and the Department of Sociology were too. When I went to North Carolina State University, I experimented with ways of energizing the students to do that more directly, and within a couple of years all the faculty in the School of Education there were using student-centered teaching.

MB: In several of your books you have described the qualities of innovative organization, noting that innovative organizations need to be democratic. Tell me about some of those organizations.

MK: Well, the interesting thing to me is that I find business and industry to be much more open to innovation, and the military services are much more open to innovation than are traditional colleges and universities. And I have a hunch that at least one of the reasons for that is that both business and industry and the military services have a more identifiable bottom line. They can see the effects, the consequences of changes that they make much more quickly than traditional universities, which have to wait 10 years to see if a change they've made is making a difference in what their graduates do.

MB: The changes that you've seen in business and industry, what do you think has made them successful? What are some of the qualities that make change work?

MK: For one thing, one of the more innovative areas of study and practice has been management, management theory. Douglas McGregor and Elton Mayo and their classic studies of participative management and the books that resulted from their studies have had a big impact on management in business and industry, much more so than management in educational institutions. Of course, their experience was with business and industry and the audience they were talking with was executives in business and industry. The ideas they had were also applicable to educational institutions. But academic administrators somehow don't see themselves as managers in the way that executives in business and industry do. So the innovative management theory developments have not been picked up and made use of by educational institutions the way they have in business and industry.

MB: Why do you think some of the innovations in higher education have failed? What have you seen as some of the problems that have plagued innovation and change?

MK: Accrediting agencies. And that is interesting to me too, that where accrediting agencies were a big barrier to innovation in early years, some of the original accrediting agencies like the Southern Regional Educational Board and the Western Educational Association have become major stimulators of innovation. But this is a fairly recent development and I think that still administrators of colleges and universities are afraid of losing their accreditation or getting criticism from the accrediting agencies.

MB: What do you think we need to do to make that different, to make the change happen?

MK: I think that nature is taking care of it very gradually. The fact is that as the pool of teenagers continues to shrink, and median age of our population continues to rise, colleges and universities are finding that the student body is growing older and older. And it seems to me that the private colleges were the first to experience this tuition crunch with the demographic change, and therefore, were the first of the higher education institutions

to start changing their policy structure, their curriculum, their time schedule, their methodology, to satisfy the needs of adult students.

Ten years ago, I was asked to come in and do a lot of faculty development workshops for Catholic liberal arts colleges around the country because they were experiencing a real tuition crunch and were having to go out and aggressively recruit adults to come in for their under graduate programs to fill the tuition void. It wasn't until a number of years later that public colleges and universities started becoming aware of the fact that they were losing their students. So I think that the force of demographic change has pressured institutions of higher education to adjust to the adult student.

MB: But, you know, most institutions are still very discipline-based and there is all this talk of the return to the core curriculum. What do you think we can do to combat the development of that very narrow, centralized view of the university?

MK: Well, have the faith. The natural forces in our society are really requiring institutions of higher education to adjust. It takes time; it's a slower process than planned innovation. But there has been a growing body of literature in the field of higher education now that's putting pressure on institutions of higher education. *Change* magazine, for example, is loaded every month with case examples of institutions that have gone bankrupt because they didn't adjust. And institution s have flourished because they did adapt. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* has become a very potent vehicle for stimulating change.

MB: You talked a little bit about some innovations in business. Do you think education is learning from business? Do you see that happening?

MK: Yes. It's beginning to happen increasingly. One of the phenomena that is spreading very rapidly is partnerships between educational institutions and business and industry. Empire State's been a pioneer in that. And where partnerships have been formed, my own observation is that the impact on institution s of higher education in the partnership has been greater than the impact on business and industry because business and industry has required that institutions of higher education adjust their curriculum and their time schedule, etc. to the full-time workers that can't afford to leave their jobs to come and live on a campus full time.

MB: Let's turn to talk about technology. What importance do you see in the uses of technology and where higher education is going with technology? I would also be interested in how you use technology through your own teaching.

MK: Well, let me start with the prediction I make in my speeches and workshops, which is that by the year 2010 most educational services will be delivered electronically. Only those educational programs that require heavy equipment, like atomic accelerators, will be campus based. Several years ago, I was asked to make a speech to the Southern Society of Residence Hall Directors in Atlanta. I opened with my prediction and then said, "Therefore most residence halls in universities would be operated, more or less, as morels with people

coming in for short stays." I could tell that was not a very popular statement. But as I see it, we're just beginning to learn how to use the media for educational purposes.

I see two factors being critical. One is interaction. The building into electronic programs of interaction between the program and the learner rather than the learner having a completely passive role with the program in directing him or her all the way. And we are getting some real interesting ways of creating interaction. In computer assisted instruction, for example, the new programs ask the learner to make one of several choices and then the program will take that choice, the choice the learner makes, to its conclusion and then say to the learner, "Now is this where you want to be or do you want to do something else?" The name they've given that technique is "branching." And the second key factor, I think, is what they call in the high-tech industry, "high-tech, high-touch," building into the program a human touch.

MB: Can you give me examples of that?

MK: Oh, yes. Several years ago, I was asked to come and spend a day with the computer engineering staff of IBM in Endicott, New York. They asked me to critique what they were doing in terms of adult learning principles. I was able to watch and observe half-a-dozen of their programs. When I met with them one morning I said, "I found my mind starting to wander after about the first 10 minutes of watching each program." Because here I was interacting just with a green screen and I felt the need to have a person there somehow. So one of the members of the group of 15 said, "Let's adjourn until after lunch." - this was about 10:30 in the morning- "and go up to our work station s and build in the lead-in , in which we present ourselves." When we came back at 2:00, they showed what they'd done. Several of them had gotten photographs of themselves and built this into the lead-in tape so that on the screen came a person saying "Hello , my name is so and so, let me tell you a little bit about myself because I'm going to be your guide in this program." They all agreed that this gave a much better feel to the program because there was a person there.

In addition, IBM has elaborated on that by building in a telephone network. If a student or a worker is watching a program and experiences a problem of some sort, he or she can go to the telephone and call an 800 number and get a person to interact with. And also they had people team up, two or three or four, watching a program together and the program build s in instances for them to talk with another and then to piece into the program what they've come up with. I'm sure that we're just in the very primitive stages of finding out how to use the media for education al purposes.

MB: You used electronic mail for Fielding. Have you learned some tricks of the trade which you might share?

MK: I think that one of the things I've learned, about using what they call the Fielding electronic network, is to build into my communications with my student s some personal information, as well as, or in addition to, the technical stuff. I have a student in Indonesia,

for example, and if I had to communicate with him by telephone there would only be about one hour a day that we could connect. So what I do now is to type into the computer, at a time convenient to me, a message. But I always start with something about what I've been doing, and I ask him how are things going. Now he can pick it up at a time convenient to him in Indonesia and type a response to me that I can pick up then at a time convenient to me. Also I'm able to connect with two, or three, or four people at a time and have them communicate with each other and then ask me something.

MB: Through our work at Empire State with distance students, we sometimes find that students have only limited connections with telephones. When you say by 2010 we're going to have all these electronically-based programs, I wonder about the issue of access and whether you really see that it is possible that people will have computers?

MK: Oh, absolutely.

MB: How do you see that happening, with the variety of incomes and resources that people have?

MK: Well, for low-income people who can't afford to buy their own computer, one of the things that I see happening across the country is learning centers coming into existence. So that people can come into a library, for example, and have free access to, or very low cost access to computer system instruction.

MB: So you suggest providing the access to the different groups through having learning centers available in communities?

MK: Yes. I'm intrigued with the fact that several external degree programs have established store front learning centers, in shopping malls.

MB: I was intrigued by your ideas about the electronic society combined with the learning centers. I sometimes worry that the focus is on the technology rather than keeping the learner at the center. I think it's important, that, as at IBM, you look at that person who's the actual student. In your autobiography, you also discuss this concept of educational brokering from pre-school to college. Have you seen any examples of programs that have been using those principles that you're thinking of, the educational brokering or the community centers?

MK: It's interesting to me that Canada has been ahead of the United States in experimenting with that sort of thing. There's a group of people that originally were on the faculty of Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, British Columbia, about a half a dozen of the faculty members there, who started brain storming: What would elementary and secondary education look like in the year 2000 and how can we help it get there? They conceptualized a model of what they called "Challenge Education." This was the name of their non-profit corporation that started doing consulting with school systems first of all across British Columbia and then across Canada. They've come down into the United

States now, and they have been very successful in getting some school systems to re-orient their whole program s around this notion of learning communities involving people from the community as resources for student learning. The basic notion is that if you challenge children to excel, they will.

MB: That leads me to thinking about the Federal government's report on the future of the schools. Your ideas about learning centers are very different from these; however, there are a few similarities.

MK: As I understand the administration's proposal, and Lamar Alexander has been the primary architect of that, it's based upon competition, the use of vouchers to enable families to have their children enrolled in private institutions in competition with the public institutions. I don 't think that's a sound approach at all- in contrast to the collaborative system that Challenge Education Associates are promoting.

MB: You also talked about the movement toward competency-based work in the professions and the associations. Could you talk about what you've seen as far as innovations in that area?

MK: Well, here again, the Canadian institutions have been way ahead of us in this regard. There's been a very strong movement among the community colleges of Canada to go totally into the competency-based program. Let me show you an example. One of the people that I've been working with in Canada in faculty development has been to Holland College in Prince Edward Island. They've gone into a totally competency-based individualized learning package system. They've developed competency models for 29 career tracks. For example, this is for the program for legal secretary. This model includes competencies that a task force has developed and there is a learning package for this person. There are several learning packages for this track.

The learning package consists of three things: First of all is the entry assessment, which is a number of performance exercises in which they identify the level of competency they have for each of these competencies. The middle part of the package is learning experiences, reading, clinical experience, field experience, etc. The third part is what they call an exit assessment and this gives the scale indicating level of competency. When a person has completed the package and he or she takes this exit assessment, he or she has an indication of the level of competency in each area.

MB: And they're doing this with all their programs. The work to develop all these competencies must have been outstanding.

MK: Yes. They got a large grant from the Canadian government to do that. But that's spreading all across Canada now. They have a consortium headquarters in which you can buy competency models for any of their tracks.

MB: Do you see any development in the United Stated in this area?

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MK: Well, it's beginning to filter across the border, but very slowly.

MB: And what about into business and industry, are competency programs in the professions?

MK: Particularly the nursing profession. The nursing profession has been the bellweather in this. Bur also, it's appearing now in medical, particularly in continuing medical education, competency-based education. The pioneer in nursing and medicine primary institution has been McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. But their model has spread throughout the world including the United States. The University of Southern California medical school has gone completely into a competency-based medical education program.

MB: To finish up, could we discuss the changing nature of the workforce and the impact changing demographics will have on workforce development. What do you see as developments in this area?

MK: Oh, clearly by the year 2000 the majority of the work force will be middle age or above and certainly one of the consequences of that will be the need for constant retraining. The current number of careers people experience is something in the order of 2.3, whereas by the year 2000 it'll probably be 5 point something. By the year 2010 it'll probably be 7 or 8 career changes. Well, this puts a heavy burden on our educational institutions to provide the opportunities for people to learn new careers. And another thing is, even if they don't change careers, the nature of their work is changing and so there's a need for constant retraining, up-grade, up-dating.

Concluding Note:

As the interview progressed, I was struck by the continued forward-thinking stance Knowles' intellect projects. Our interview ended with an educational view that goes outside of self. This view is also expressed in his autobiography: "In my twenty-first century life, I would want an educational system that would develop cooperative people who see themselves as global citizens, are highly creative, and are self-directed learners. Of course, I would want them to be knowledgeable, too" (p. 132). Clearly, Knowles sees knowledge as part of an expanding educational process, as an attribute rather than as end product. Knowles' intellectual journey has been a continuous search for understanding how people learn and how education systems can enhance this learning process. Beginning as an internal search, an attempt to find internal or personal educational fruition, it is fitting that he has arrived at a point very external to the self, recognizing that the benefits of education extend beyond the self into the community and the world.

Reference:

Knowles, Malcolm S. *The Making of an Adult Educator: An Autobiographical Journey.* San Franciso: Jossey-Bass, 1989.

Remembering Our Colleagues

While it is almost impossible to follow all of our colleagues as they join or leave SUNY Empire State College (and this does seem a pity), we do our best to honor those who have passed away, leaving behind indelible contributions to the college and to our students. We remember and honor them here. (Some information was previously included in the college's Exchange *and* Connections *publications. Thanks to College Historian Richard Bonnabeau for his help, as well.)*

George Dawson (1925-2015), mentor emeritus, served as dean of the Long Island Region, and developed the college's graduate program in economics and business. He received the Award for Excellence in Scholarship in 1980. George had doctorates in economics, education and philosophy. He authored several economics textbooks, articles and research studies on economic education. A room is named in his honor at the LIC. Jeff Sussman, longtime mentor at the Long Island Region said: "George was the consummate professional, a *mensch,* a terrific guy who knew how to deal with all kinds of people. For me, he was a mentor who helped me immensely. He was the fairest and nicest man I ever met."

William "Bill" Dodge (1927-2015) was one of the founders of SUNY Empire State College, serving first as dean of administrative services. He had previously been SUNY's acting university dean for continuing education. In 1972, Bill received founding President Jim Hall's support to establish the Center for Statewide Programs as an alternative to regional learning centers that were located in major urban centers such as Albany, Manhattan and Rochester. As dean of the center, Bill added units in such places as Plattsburgh, Watertown, Binghamton and Utica. He also created a home for Extended Programs, the progenitor of the Center for Distance Learning. As longtime ESC colleague Bob Carey (for whom Bill Dodge served as his first dean) described Bill: "He had a terrific sense of humor which he used to good effect in helping us sort through what mattered in developing a working program.

Behind the twinkle in his eye as he talked about the comings and goings in Saratoga at our monthly meetings was a deep commitment to public education and the people it served." Excerpts from Richard Bonnabeau's 1991 interview with Bill appear in this issue of *All About Mentoring.*

George McClancy (1930-2014) was mentor emeritus in philosophy and art in the Metropolitan New York Region. From 1976 until he retired, George coordinated the Studio Semester Program, originally established by Mentor Irving Kriesberg, which linked art students from around SUNY to artists in New York City. George earned a B.A. in art, and master's degrees in philosophy and in painting. The college published a booklet of his drawings in 1995. Mentor Betty Wilde-Biasiny, who became the program's director when George retired, described him this way: "For over 30 years, George created an oasis of studios in the middle of New York City for regular SUNY students, many with limited means, from across the state. … [He wanted to] give an emerging artist a shot at an art career. He also envisioned the program as one that would deepen a student's knowledge of the liberal arts. … When George retired, he was so kind and generous in helping me to navigate the art world that he was so close to, both in finding visiting artists and, like with the students, to transmit the strong message that 'you are entitled.' As a new professor awaiting to spread my wings, George was one of the ESC mentors who will always be 'a mentor's mentor.'"

Jay Putt (1943-2015) '85, '88, was a former mentor with the Long Island Region and the Center for Distance Learning. As a student at Empire State College, Jay studied economics under George Dawson, and business and policy studies under Ed Todd, and was one of the first graduates of the college's M.A. in Business and Policy Studies program. His mentoring career started at the Hauppauge location and continued at CDL. Mentor Ed Todd said of Jay, "Jay exemplified the learning spirit of the college, first as a B.S. and an M.A. student and then as longtime mentor." Jay engaged in Ph.D. studies at Stony Brook, and taught in its graduate program. He was also a founding member of the Boyer Society. "He was a tireless student recruiter advocating not only for Empire State College, but for adult education as well," said Maureen Winney, ESC's director of alumni and student relations.

Rae Rohfeld (1936-2015) served as director of academic review for the Center for Distance Learning, and mentor with the Central New York Region and with CDL. Rae held a B.A. in Psychology, an M.A. in History and a Ph.D. in American History. She was a lead contributor and respected researcher on subjects related to women in social justice, an innovator in prior learning assessment and a strong advocate for the profession of adult learning. Said our colleague, Meg Benke, "Dr. Rohfeld epitomized the important role of the practitioner scholar and a consistently engaged community advocate."

Elizabeth "Betsy" Steltenpohl (1930-2015) was a former Long Island Region mentor of teacher education who, along with colleague Jane Shipton (d. 1998), also designed and taught a "college-entry" study at the college, IIE: Introduction to Individualized Education, a version of which is still being taught. They edited a book together with Mentor Emerita Sharon Villines titled, *Orientation to College: A Reader on Becoming an Educated Person* (2nd ed., 2003: Wadsworth Publishing), which some use in educational planning today. Betsy had a B.A. in English, an M.A. in Education, and a doctorate from Teachers College, Columbia University. Mentor Barbarie Rothstein said Betsy was " … someone who was committed to finding ways to improve the mentoring process, and was totally dedicated to teaching. … She was truly a mentor's mentor."

Amy Stock (1966-2015) was an adjunct lecturer of environmental studies with the Center for Distance Learning for 10 years, as well as a committed volunteer, a freelance writer and avid traveler. Amy had a B.S. in Biomedical Computing, an M.A. in Environmental Studies, and was pursuing her doctorate at the University at Albany. Former CDL Dean and current Vice Provost for Academic Programs Tom Mackey said, "She will be remembered for her commitment to sustainability issues and environmentalism, her collaborative work with colleagues and dedication to our learners." Amy's memoir, *River Stories: Healing Through Nature and Rivers,* was published posthumously in October 2015.

Core Values of Empire State College (2005)

The core values of SUNY Empire State College reflect the commitments of a dynamic, participatory and experimenting institution accessible and dedicated to the needs of a richly diverse adult student body. These values are woven into the decisions we make about what we choose to do, how we carry out our work in all parts of the institution, and how we judge the outcome of our individual and collective efforts. More than a claim about what we have already attained, the core values support our continuing inquiry about what learning means and how it occurs.

We value learning-mentoring goals that:

- respond to the academic, professional and personal needs of each student;
- identify and build upon students' existing knowledge and skills;
- sustain lifelong curiosity and critical inquiry;
- provide students with skills, insights and competencies that support successful college study.

We value learning-mentoring processes that:

- emphasize dialogue and collaborative approaches to study;
- support critical exploration of knowledge and experience;
- provide opportunities for active, reflective and creative academic engagement.

We value learning-mentoring modes that:

- respond to a wide array of student styles, levels, interests and circumstances;
- foster self-direction, independence and reflective inquiry;
- provide opportunities for ongoing questioning and revising;
- reflect innovation and research.

We value a learning-mentoring community that:

- defines each member as a learner, encouraging and appreciating his/her distinctive contributions;
- recognizes that learning occurs in multiple communities, environments and relationships as well as in formal academic settings;
- attracts, respects and is enriched by a wide range of people, ideas, perspectives and experiences.

We value a learning-mentoring organization and culture that:

- invites collaboration in the multiple contexts of our work;
- fosters innovation and experimentation;
- develops structures and policies that encourage active participation of all constituents in decision-making processes;
- advocates for the interests of adult learners in a variety of academic and civic forums.

Submissions to *All About Mentoring*

I f you have a scholarly paper-in-progress or a talk that you have presented, *All About Mentoring* would welcome it. If you developed materials for your students that may be of good use to others, or have a comment on any part of this issue, or on topics/concerns relevant to our mentoring community, please send them along.

If you have a short story, poem, drawings or photographs, or have reports on your reassignments and sabbaticals, *All About Mentoring* would like to include them in an upcoming issue.

Email submissions to Alan.Mandell@esc.edu.

Submissions to *All About Mentoring* can be of varied length and take many forms. (Typically, materials are no longer than 7,500 words.) It is easiest if materials are sent via email to Mandell as Microsoft Word attachments. In terms of references and style, *All About Mentoring* uses APA rules (please see the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association,* 6th ed. [Washington, DC: APA, 2010] or http://image.mail.bfwpub.com/lib/feed1c737d6c03/m/1/BSM_APA_update_2010.pdf).

All About Mentoring is published twice a year. Our next issue, #49, will be available in the summer of 2016. Please submit all materials by April 15, 2016.

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