



The Joy Shechtman Mankoff
Center for Teaching & Learning presents ...

Talking Teaching Spring 2012

PLEASE SAVE THE DATES & JOIN US FOR GREAT CONVERSATIONS! DISCUSSANTS NEEDED!

Take some time away from your routine, meet up with colleagues, enjoy a good meal, and participate in a Talking Teaching discussion this semester. Topics—suggested by our colleagues—are listed below, with times and preliminary descriptions.

Please consider serving as a discussant! For each conversation, eight to ten individuals will bring a question or an idea to spark the continuing exchange of ideas. Imagination, not extended preparation, is the only requirement.

Contact MaryAnne Borrelli (mabor@conncoll.edu) if you are interested in attending or serving as a discussant. We hope to see you often throughout the semester!

“DO I REALLY HAVE TO TAKE THAT COURSE?” TEACHING STUDENTS NEW (OR RESISTANT) TO YOUR DISCIPLINE

Friday, 10 February 2012: 8:45 AM to 10:30 AM

Hood Dining Room

How can you energize students who are unfamiliar with, or uninterested in, your field?

A liberal arts education provides breadth and richness, which means that it requires study in disciplines that a student might otherwise avoid. Once “stuck” in a course to fulfill requirements, some students can become intellectually disengaged in the classroom, studio, lab, and office hours. How can we respond to and engage these students so that we enhance teaching and learning? What can a student who is new or resistant to your discipline contribute to your course? This conversation will capitalize on the expertise of faculty who regularly teach required and General Education courses across the College.

COMPETITION & TEAMWORK IN THE CLASSROOM

Wednesday, 15 February 2012: 11:50 AM to 1:30 PM

Ernst Common Room

How can you foster teamwork and channel competition so that all students are challenged to realize their full potential?

Competitive and collaborative teaching strategies, such as debates, simulations, negotiations, and peer critiques, often receive favorable student reviews; they are described as facilitating a deeper engagement with concepts and readings, and fostering deeper learning relationships. Competition in the classroom can also be a powerful counter to grade inflation by revealing the differences in student performance. How can you use competition to enhance learning and rigor in the classroom? This conversation will draw on the wisdom of faculty members who use competitive course assignments, who organize juried shows and performances in the fine arts, and who coach athletic teams.

“I WORK HARDEST WHEN I HAVE A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PROFESSOR”

MOTIVATING STUDENTS, ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS & SETTING BOUNDARIES

Friday, 24 February 2012: 11:50 AM to 2:00 PM

Hood Dining Room

What do students mean by having a “personal relationship” with faculty? What does it involve for faculty members?

Research suggests that Connecticut College students work harder and learn more when they know that a professor cares about them as individuals. More generally, evidence suggests that the student-faculty relationship provides a foundation for effective teaching and learning. What are the best ways to establish and maintain this important pedagogical relationship? Carefully chosen readings, thoughtfully prepared lectures, and extensive feedback on student work all depend, to a significant extent, upon the qualities of this relationship. But what are the boundaries for this association? This conversation will draw on evidence from several surveys conducted at the College and will feature the insights of faculty colleagues who have taken a relational approach to teaching, even in larger courses.

NEGOTIATING STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

GENDER, FACULTY IDENTITIES, PHILOSOPHIES & STRATEGIES

Co-Sponsored with the Committee on the Status of Faculty Women

Friday, 2 March 2012: 8:45 AM to 10:30 AM

Blaustein 203

How does a faculty member’s gender affect student expectations? How can faculty members manage these expectations?

Student expectations of faculty members have many sources, including the students’ prior experiences with teachers, coaches, parents, and mentors. No less significant are student values and ideologies around gender, which are often influenced by the faculty member’s age and race. As a result, a young woman of color and an older white male could encounter very different student expectations, even while teaching the same course. How can you appropriately anticipate and manage student expectations, especially those related to gender and other facets of your own identity? How can you respond to students’ intellectual and emotional needs, establishing boundaries that facilitate teaching and learning? This conversation will feature faculty members who have devised effective strategies to manage power and authority issues related to their gender identity.

DISCUSSIONS THAT TEACH & LEARN

Friday, 30 March 2012: 11:50 AM to 2:00 PM

Hood Dining Room

How can you teach well, with students doing (most of) the talking?

When there are facts to be learned and arguments to be mastered, discussion may seem a poor choice with its emphasis on shared perspectives and nonlinear thinking. Or discussion may be the best method of engaging students’ attention and revealing hidden complexities. How do you decide when to rely on discussion? How do you define an effective discussion? How can you plan discussions so that students come prepared to class? How can you design a discussion that has wide participation and develops critical thinking skills? Most challenging of all, how can you achieve these goals without saying too much? This conversation will be facilitated by faculty members whose courses utilize discussions in various ways, and to various extents, throughout the semester.