



Talking Teaching

Spring 2016

PLEASE SAVE THE DATES & JOIN US FOR GREAT CONVERSATIONS . . .

Talking Teaching is a series of informal discussions of teaching-related topics—suggested by faculty members—over food. Talking Teaching provides an opportunity to build community and to pause & reflect on our teaching, on the design of our curriculum, and on our students' learning experiences.

This semester's Talking Teaching series again focuses on "Making Connections"—creating & refining the components of our new Connections Curriculum, as well as implementing & integrating its various components. All events are co-sponsored by the Connections Steering Committee, as well as the Office of the Dean of the College.

Topics are listed below, with times and preliminary descriptions. *We are looking for discussants for these events.* For each conversation, eight to ten discussants will bring a question or an idea to spark the collective exchange of ideas. Imagination, not extended preparation, is the only requirement to be a discussant.

Please contact Ruth Grahn (regra@conncoll.edu) or Dave Chavanne (dchavann@conncoll.edu) if you are interested in attending or serving as a discussant. We hope to see you at these events!

What Do We Know about Our First-Year Students?

MONDAY, 8 FEBRUARY, 11:50 AM to 2:00 PM

HOOD in BLAUSTEIN

Now that we've gotten to know the Class of 2019 for a semester, what do we know about them that can help us do our work most effectively as faculty, staff, and administrators? Faculty and staff from across the campus who have been working with this year's entering class will share their insights and experiences, and we will also review some of the more interesting results of the Freshman Survey that was conducted last fall. Come join colleagues who worked intensively with first-year students last semester in FYs and 100-level courses to discuss why this information matters and what we can do with it to improve our students' experiences and learning.

Discussants include Leslie Brown, Sarah Cardwell, Stan Ching, Amy Dooling, Noel Garrett, Makayla Grays, Claudia Highbaugh, Jill Marshall, Emily Morash, John Nugent, Andrea Rossi-Reder, & Bryana White.

Recognizing Individual Student Strengths to Ensure Full Participation

PART OF THE "TALKING TEACHING TOO" SERIES

TUESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY, 8:30 AM to 10:30 AM

HOOD in BLAUSTEIN

It is a common pattern in introductory courses: some students excel and others struggle and sometimes fail. Are the traditional structures and practices in our courses impeding the progress of some students? Is this pattern inevitable, or can we avoid it by changing our approaches to teaching? Can we promote better performance in every student? Join members of the Full Participation Working Group, introductory course instructors, peer mentors, and representatives from the Academic Resource Center to explore ideas for addressing the needs of a wide range of students at the introductory level.

As part of CTL "Talking Teaching Too" this event will include student participants and will emphasize the exchange of ideas about teaching & learning between and among students and faculty members.

Integrative Pathways: The Next Wave

TUESDAY, 8 MARCH, 8:30 AM TO 10:30 AM

HOOD in BLAUSTEIN

While the first five Integrative Pathways are fairly far along in the development process, we will still need to develop ten more Pathways over the next few years to accommodate all the students at the College. The current Pathways under development are: Sustainability & Social Justice, Public Health, Liberal Arts, Peace & Conflict, and Global Capitalism & Its Consequences. Our colleagues who are involved in their development are exploring ways to help students to integrate what they are learning in their courses. They are also considering how to make their Pathways flexible and appealing to a wide range of students and how best to provide each student with the opportunity to demonstrate their own expertise as they reach the end of the Pathway. Please join us to discuss the logistics of Pathway design, how the pathways are ensuring full participation and integration, and to share ideas for possible new Pathways. Participants will include both current Pathways designers and faculty who are new to Pathways.

What has been Happening in ConnCourses?

TUESDAY, MARCH 29, 8:30 AM to 10:30 AM

HOOD in BLAUSTEIN

During the 2015-2016 academic year, twelve ConnCourses have been introduced into the curriculum and offered to students. Now that some faculty members have taught, or are currently teaching, a ConnCourse, what can the rest of us learn from their experiences? What advice do they have for colleagues who are considering whether to create a ConnCourse from scratch or convert an existing course into a ConnCourse? This session will allow faculty members and staff to hear firsthand about the specific successes and challenges that ConnCourse instructors have faced so far.

Global Learning Across the Curriculum & Co-Curriculum: Effective Practices

PART OF THE "TALKING TEACHING TOO" SERIES

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 11:50 AM TO 2:00 PM

HOOD in BLAUSTEIN

A key element of our new curriculum is for students to develop the ability to understand others and to engage diverse communities and cultures, whether in a domestic or international context. In this session, we will hear from students, staff, and faculty members who are putting this goal into action. How have members of our community been integrating the study of languages and cultures with practical applications, both at home and abroad? What can be done across the curriculum to enhance full participation and help more students make these connections? How can technology, guest scholars, and research in languages besides English be used to introduce multiple perspectives and engage the local and global dimensions of diverse communities, deepening students' work in their majors and Pathways?

As part of CTL "Talking Teaching Too" this event will include student participants and will emphasize the exchange of ideas about teaching & learning between and among students and faculty members.

When We Say "Capstone" ...

MONDAY, APRIL 25, 11:50 AM TO 2:00 PM

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... what do we mean? Capstone projects exist in many forms at Connecticut College: the Centers have the Senior Integrative Project, most departments sponsor Individual Study or Honors Study projects, and some departments have a specific course that seniors are required to take. What makes these time-intensive projects valuable? Some of our students engage in multiple forms of integrative learning, while some have avoided it altogether. How accessible are they to all students? As a feature of the Connections curriculum, the Senior Reflection seminar is meant to serve as an opportunity for every student to integrate their experiences in their Pathway and other elements of their curriculum, such as Study Away or an internship. Join your colleagues who have attended the AAC&U's Institute on Integrative Learning, colleagues who are developing Pathways, center directors, and others to learn more about the benefits and challenges of structuring an integrative capstone experience.