



WASHINGTON CENTER

FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Creating Rich Learning Environments on Campus



FALL 2004

CREATING
RICH LEARNING
ENVIRONMENTS
ON CAMPUS

FALL 2004

Published by the
Washington Center for Improving the
Quality of Undergraduate Education
The Evergreen State College
2700 Evergreen Parkway
Olympia, WA 98505
Tel. 360-867-6611
www.evergreen.edu/washcenter

CO-DIRECTORS

Emily Lardner
Gillies Malnarich

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Emily Lardner
Gillies Malnarich
Sharilyn Howell

LAYOUT

Sharilyn Howell

COVER DESIGN

Owen Freeman

COVER PHOTO

Sharilyn Howell

CONTENTS

- 4 **In This Issue**
Emily Lardner and Gillies Malnarich
- 5 **Introducing the Framework for Diversity Assessment and Planning:
A Collaboratively Designed Catalyst for Change**
Emily Lardner and Rhonda Coats
- 9 **The Framework for Diversity Assessment and Planning**
- 15 **Developing a Diversity Requirement:
First Steps at South Puget Sound Community College**
*Michael Beehler, Rhonda Coats, Steve Dickerson,
Lisa Aguilera Lawrenson, and Marcia Somer*
- 16 **Remembering Rachel**
Anne Fischel and Lin Nelson
- 24 **Teaching Civic Engagement and Responsibility:
A Year-long Seminar for Faculty, Staff, and Administrators**
Diane Douglas
- 25 **Confessions of Four Bibliophiles:
Faculty Learn to Collaborate in Genuine Ways**
Susan Preciso, Joli Sandoz, Joe Tougas, and Sandy Yannone
- 28 **Teaching with Your Mouth Shut:
A Faculty Learning Community at Western Carolina University**
John Habel
- 30 **“Seeing the Unseen” at Belmont University:
An Inquiry-Based Mathematics Workshop for Faculty**
Mike Pinter
- 32 **Faculty Mentoring Faculty on Quantitative Literacy:
An Update from Pierce College**
Mary Russell, Karen Harding, David Lippman, Lynn Olson
- 33 **Revision, Sleeping Lady**
Sandy Yannone
- 34 **Washington Center Publications**
- 36 **Washington Center Events**
- 37 **Washington Center’s 17th Annual Conference**
- 38 **7th Annual National Summer Institute on Learning Communities**

IN THIS ISSUE

In this Fall 2004 newsletter, we introduce the reader of the Washington Center's newsletter to the Framework for Diversity Assessment and Planning. This campus guide represents a unique, statewide collaborative effort. It was designed and developed by representatives from two-year colleges, endorsed by leading state educational bodies, and is now being used by two- and four-year institutions.

We hope that educators who do not 'specialize' in multicultural work will find the framework to be a useful tool for making their campus a more equitable place of learning and work. The framework, along with the Critical Moments

Co-Directors' Message

project (see Washington Center publications in this issue), are two practices that inform the Washington Center's annual Campus Equity and Engagement Retreat.

Engaged campuses embrace learning for both students and faculty. The article, "Remembering Rachel," is a tribute to a remarkable young woman, Rachel Corrie, and all members of her learning community, Local Knowledge, that two members of the faculty from The Evergreen State College, Anne Fischel and Lin Nelson, described in the last issue of the newsletter. We thank them for their 'courage to teach.'

The quality of the learning opportunities afforded to students on our campuses depends in large part on the quality of the learning opportunities afforded to faculty, staff and administrators on those same campuses. *In How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience and School* (1999), John Bransford, Ann Brown and Rodney Cocking (eds.) make the case that the new science of learning identifies four perspectives which are critical in assessing the quality of learning environments—the degree to which these environments are learner-centered, knowledge-centered, assessment-centered, and community-centered.

No matter who the learners are—students, faculty, staff, or administrators—high quality learning environments will reflect these four dimensions. This issue also includes articles from post-secondary institutions inside and beyond Washington state which focus on a variety of grassroots efforts to develop high quality learning environments for those charged with creating such environments for students. We hope you will be inspired to create learning environments that best support your learning, and that of your colleagues. By creating rich learning environments for ourselves, we increase the likelihood that we will regularly create rich learning environments for the students on our campuses.

For readers interested in highlights from the May 2004 National Learning Communities Project Dissemination Conference, a special edition of the newsletter will be published in Winter 2004 on future directions, including leading edge work from Washington Center consortium members.

Emily Lardner and Gillies Malnarich

A Collaboratively Designed Catalyst for Change

Introducing the *Framework for Diversity Assessment and Planning*

Emily Lardner, Washington Center
Rhonda Coats, South Puget Sound Community College

In 1996, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges embarked upon a two-year Multicultural Efforts Project. The Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education became a co-sponsor of this project. Between February 1996 and November 1997, all of the community and technical colleges in the state were involved in a process of assessing, planning, and implementing projects to foster and improve academic success for students of color. As this project came to a close in the spring of 1998, the staff of the State Board decided to involve campus diversity leaders in the development of what would be the State Board's next state-wide diversity project. The State Board issued invitations to about seventy-five people, representing the various sectors of the colleges, to attend a two-day planning workshop designed and facilitated by the Washington Center.

In June 1998, a group of forty-three faculty, administrators and staff members from across the community and technical college system in Washington state met at Seabeck Conference Center to discuss this question: *What can the community/technical college system do to help students of color achieve more academic success?* The group included nine faculty, ten multicultural affair directors, ten student services staff, four academic officers, six State Board staff members, and four presidents and trustees.

By the end of the two-day workshop, participants had generated ideas for many projects that would help students of color achieve more academic success, but a clear future direction for the work had not emerged. Participants agreed that data distributed by the State Board, on which the Multicultural Efforts

Project was based, demonstrated clearly that students of color, particularly students with limited proficiency in English, do not enter and proceed through college transfer and vocational programs at the same rate of progression as do white students. Since the community and technical colleges serve as the entry point to higher education for a large proportion of students of color, every small success opens paths for people who might otherwise be denied access.

At the same time, however, as one participant wrote, the way forward to system-wide or even campus-wide change is not obvious: "As we moved through the days of retreat time, we tended to repeat our frustrations and feelings of fragmentation and alienation, even loneliness, that many of us feel in our daily work. We may not see how our everyday tasks are contributing to change, or fear that they are not contributing to change fast enough. More importantly, we may not see how small incremental changes that we do have the capacity to control can be part of larger organizational change. These are the leadership roles that we are called upon to learn more about, whether we are in a formal position of authority or whether we learn how to make our own less prestigious work site a position of power."

The group agreed to reconvene to finish the work of the retreat, specifically to produce a list of strategies that could be carried out by the state system. A smaller group, about twenty-five, met in July 1998, to develop and prioritize possible strategies.

Recommended Strategies

The final recommendations to the staff of the State Board, listed in order of priority, were:

Improving the
academic success
rates of students of
color on a campus
requires a campus-
wide effort.

1. *Retention: Address the issue by developing a plan based on careful listening to students' voices.* The first step of this system-wide, campus-based project would be to conduct focus groups with students to find out what makes them stay and what makes them leave. Use the information gleaned from those conversations to develop a campus-wide retention plan. From the beginning of the project, aim for wide campus participation to better address the underlying issue about retention—namely, whose job is it to do anything about it?

2. *Professional Development: Offer staff/faculty-training workshops on specific topics on a regional basis.* These workshops would address the concern that many people do not understand what it takes for students of color to succeed. In particular, the workshops would be designed for staff members who are first line people working with students of color, and would address the multiplicity of students of color.

3. *Link diversity to accreditation: Work with the accreditation liaisons.* This long-term goal drew mixed reactions. Participants thought this work could happen regionally, if a small group wanted to find out what other states in the accrediting region are doing with diversity and then they could build a coalition. An alternative would be to propose that Washington state colleges be held to a diversity standard in their accreditation processes. Another route would be to propose a diversity performance funding goal/indicator for the system, or at least collect information about how many campuses already value their diversity work in this way.

4. *Clarify system goals related to diversity for use by individuals and by institutions.* Clarify State Board's current language about diversity to initiate action among system-wide groups. Emphasize and publicize good practices, recognize work that is already going on, and disseminate that information across the system via a newsletter and/or web site.

5. *State Board staff convene groups to share ideas and training.* For example, one group might meet around strategies

for folding diversity action plans into campus strategic plans. Other potential topics could be curriculum infusion/development, assessment resources and results, and sharing best practices in a number of areas.

Statewide Initiatives

In response to the first recommendation, the "Transfer Transitions" project was launched in November 1998. Teams from two- and four-year campuses conducted focus groups with students who were planning to transfer, or who had already transferred. Several efforts (regrettably unsuccessful) were made to find system-wide funding to continue the project. In 1999, the Washington Center began working with others on the *Critical Moments* project. In June 2004, the Center published a comprehensive report on *Critical Moments* work on four campuses. More information about this project is available at www.evergreen.edu/washcenter/cmproject.htm.

In response to the second recommendation, from 1999-2001, the Washington Center and the State Board organized seven retreats on cultures and the process of learning held around the state.

The response to the third recommendation, that diversity efforts be linked to accreditation, emerged in 2000 and eventually resulted in the development of the Framework for Diversity

Assessment and Planning. During the fifth annual Faculty and Staff of Color Conference, at one of the most well-attended sessions at the conference, a team of experts from the Commission of the States, including Dr. Mildred Ollee, reported on efforts in other regions to link diversity with accreditation. During the discussion, a suggestion was made for Washington state to explore ways to link diversity with assessment on campuses. A group of people who had helped shape the recommendations from the Multicultural Efforts Project, including staff from the State Board and Washington Center and multicultural affairs directors, organized a meeting with Mildred Ollee to further discuss the idea of linking diversity efforts to accountability and accreditation.

"Conversations about campus diversity efforts are often based in an emotional perspective deeply rooted in a sense of social justice. Developing the framework offered an alternative perspective, a way of looking at diversity issues differently, still rooted in a passion for educational and social justice, but grounded in quantitative evidence."

Rachel Wellman, Multicultural Services Director, Olympic College

Developing the Framework

Based on the outcomes of those two events, the State Board in collaboration with the Washington Center, Dr. Ollee, and representatives from the Multicultural Student Services Directors Council, the Student Services Commission, and the Instruction Commission began work to develop a framework for assessing diversity efforts on campuses. After the first meeting of this community and technical college system committee in July 2001, the group met regularly to identify the areas of a college where diversity should be present. (Residence halls were omitted, given the campuses participating in the initial development of the framework.) In 2002, the committee invited campus institutional researchers to join the group to assist in identifying methodologies for data collection.

The collaborative process used to develop the framework became a powerful professional development opportunity for those involved. Many multicultural affairs professionals do not have a strong background in assessment, while many assessment experts have scant background in multicultural education. The collaboration across roles and expertise affected the learning of everyone, and resulted in a tool that is becoming a catalyst for similar rich conversations on campuses.

Support for the Framework

Several colleges volunteered to pilot the instrument during winter and spring quarters 2003 to provide feedback to the committee on the framework's usability and feasibility. In September 2003, at its final meeting, the committee modified the framework based on the recommendations of the pilot campuses. At its October 2003 quarterly meeting, the Student Services Commission endorsed the instrument and it was subsequently endorsed in November 2003 by the Educational Services Committee of the Washington Association of Community and Technical Colleges (the presidents' group). In May 2004, the Instruction Commission endorsed the framework as an instrument to guide colleges in identifying and effectively addressing issues related to diversity on college campuses.

Campuses that have already piloted the framework find it a valuable tool. For instance, at Everett Community College, Christina Castorena and Darryl Dieter organized one of the most systemic and wide-ranging projects with significant consequences for the campus and wider community. Positions at Everett were reorganized to more easily provide support and accountability

for equity efforts, and Everett's president, Charles Earl, testified to the legislature about the negative impact of imposing higher fees for adult basic education services, using data gathered from the framework to support his view.

Currently, several residential colleges are considering adapting the framework for their campus contexts. Washington Center's Campus Equity and Engagement retreat in November 2004 includes a session on the framework, creating an opportunity for campus teams to share their experiences. In addition, early in 2005, Washington Center will convene a meeting of stakeholders throughout the system, along with members of the original development group, to consider how as a state-wide system, we can support an approach to diversity that is grounded in data available on campuses.

Purpose of the Framework

The framework is based on two assumptions: first, that achieving educational equity for *all* students will remain one of higher education's primary goals; and, second, that colleges are taking steps to become more accountable. The framework has been designed for use by campus teams to assess and improve their *own* institutional efforts; it has not been designed as a basis for comparison with other institutions.

The purpose of the framework is to provide campuses with a tool they can use to assess their efforts in promoting and supporting the academic achievement of students of color. Research shows that the success of students of color is tied to efforts made in all areas of the institution. Furthermore, research shows that when campuses successfully organize to support the academic achievement of students of color, all students benefit.

The framework approaches diversity planning by using data gathered about the external and the internal environment of the institution. This approach has a strong quantitative focus, and it is designed to use information that campuses are likely to have access to. Campuses may choose to develop new methods for gathering information that will enable them to assess their diversity efforts, but because time and resources are so often an obstacle for campus-wide work, the framework relies on "data on hand" as a place to start the conversation. For Rachel Wellman, Multicultural Services Director at Olympic College, the most useful consequence of focusing on institutional data is that when the question of retention comes up, she can now say, "Let's see where we are with instruction. Let's see where we are in terms of

community outreach. Let's see where we are in terms of faculty and staff hiring." Moving multiculturalism from an emotional "feel good" sense to a phenomenon based in tangible data gives campus wide efforts a specific focus. For Ron Leatherbarrow, Executive Dean of Instruction at Bellevue Community College, adopting the framework is a way to build on previous campus diversity efforts, focusing particularly on how diversity work can become part of everyone's work. For instance, Bellevue faculty, staff and administrators are working to make their pluralism initiative part of their strategic plan.

Improving the academic success rates of students of color on a campus requires a campus-wide effort. As the retreat participants in 1998 pointed out, retention (and achievement) have to be everybody's responsibility. Consequently, from its origins, the framework was designed to be used by a team that represents all the divisions of a college with the understanding that the whole team will become involved in both collecting data and planning campus strategies for change.

In practice, the ways campuses have worked with the framework varies. At Olympic College, for instance, Wellman teamed up with Kristy Anderson, the institutional researcher, to gather the data and each worked to understand how the other thought about issues of multiculturalism, institutional change, and responsible data sampling and interpretation. As a result of their intense work, each has developed the ability to consider assessment and multiculturalism as inextricably linked. Together, they have presented data to relevant campus groups, and Wellman notes that her colleagues at Olympic are primarily interested in discussing the implications of the results, rather than the process of gathering the data. Olympic College plans to update its assessment results once every two years to ensure that it continues to make progress.

In order to help teams collect data and information about diversity efforts in a systematic way, the framework divides the work on campuses into eight major categories: access; student progression and achievement; student goal attainment and completion; hiring and retaining staff, faculty, and administrators

"It is not enough to use this framework as a general guide, given the history of privilege in this country and in higher education. We have to move from what we can do to what we must do. We need to hold ourselves and our campuses accountable."

Ron Leatherbarrow, Executive Dean of Instruction, Bellevue Community College

of color; instruction; student services; institutional/administration; physical environment.

Campus teams may elect to collect data and information within one or two of these major categories, but the benefit of the framework as an analytical tool is its comprehensiveness: it crosses divisional lines. Since each category is also com-

prehensive, campus teams need to select an appropriate starting place for data collection within each category, clarifying terms so they make sense within their campus context. To make the process of data collection within a category more manageable, each major category is further divided into sub-categories. Campus teams are invited to focus on those sub-categories that seem most appropriate for their institutions. Wellman points out that a possible source of resistance to using the framework is the fear that it will indicate a campus is not doing something it could be doing. In response, she notes the framework can help make clear why certain approaches are likely to be promising. Furthermore, on her campus, conversations about data gathered through this process have led to more realistic considerations about what can be accomplished given current campus resources.

Gathering information across a range of categories is the first step campus teams take towards developing an action plan. The next step is for teams to examine the data they have collected and talk about what the data means. Based on this discussion, teams move into planning appropriate action, including a plan for assessing the effectiveness of these steps. Ultimately, this approach to planning can lead to the development of an action plan that should be aligned and integrated with other college plans and strategic directions, as is the case at both Olympic College and Bellevue Community College. That alignment is critical. The degree to which the action plan developed through this process is consistent with the college mission, vision and values is an important factor in determining whether the plan will be implemented successfully.

For more information, Ron Leatherbarrow can be reached at Bellevue Community College at 425-564-2305 or rleather@bcc.ctc.edu; Rachel Wellman can be reached at Olympic College at 360-475-7681 or rwellman@oc.ctc.edu. ♦

Framework for Diversity Assessment and Planning

| Subcategories | Purpose (what you want to know; questions or issues to consider with respect to the subcategory) | Scope (type/source of data) | Measures (where we would get the data) | Results (what are your findings? What does the data say?) | Recommendations for Action |
|---------------|--|-----------------------------|--|---|----------------------------|
|---------------|--|-----------------------------|--|---|----------------------------|

1. Access for Students of Color

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| Student Enrollment | Proportional representation: Compare composition of current student body with the composition of the college's service area. Is the overall enrollment at the college proportional, given who could be present on campus? | Get demographics for state, city/town, service area. Get demographics of students (state and contracted students, excluding international and continuing ed.) | Possible data sources · County · Zip code · Census | | |
| Student Enrollment by Program | | Collect information about enrollment in transfer, professional/technical programs, developmental/ABE/ESL programs over a five year period. | | | |
| Financial Aid Assistance | Look to see who is getting financial assistance, how much they are getting, and what types of aid. Is the distribution of financial assistance proportional? How does financial aid assistance impact access and enrollment in programs at the college? What is the pattern of applications for and awards of financial aid? | Identify all forms of financial assistance including scholarships (institutional and outside organizations' scholarships), foundation support, grants, loans, work-study, Work First and Worker Retraining. | Financial Aid database Coco/SAFERS | | |

2. Students of Color Progression

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| Eligibility for Program/Course Placement | Provides assistance with identifying processes that may be barriers to student enrollment and progression. What are the ways a student is placed into a course or program and what options do students have for appealing placements? Are students actually enrolling into classes based on their placement results? Is there a role for professional judgment in placement procedures and who can make the judgment? | Determine whether placement tests are mandatory or voluntary, and whether placements are mandatory or recommended. Collect information on the nature of placement procedures for programs and courses. Collect information on the number and percentages of students eligible for program and course placement at and below college level. Collect information on the nature of students' ability to retake placement tests or appeal placements. Collect information on placement test fees. | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <p>Retention</p> | <p>Look for patterns in student retention and compare with majority population.</p> <p>Where are the points in a quarter when students are leaving the college?</p> <p>Why are people choosing to leave or stay?</p> | <p>Collect information on retention rates: first to second quarter retention rates; second to third quarter; and fall to fall.</p> <p>Collect aggregate data on withdrawal dates within the quarter.</p> <p>Collect information on five-year trends in college retention.</p> <p>Find out what kind of information the campus collects about students who leave, e.g. student follow-up and exit interviews.</p> | <p>Follow a cohort as a standard measure (SBCTC) for progress.</p> <p>Use Intent Codes</p> <p>Start with 97-98 cohort 1st time college</p> <p>Transfer Professional/ technical</p> | |
| <p>Transitions</p> | <p>Look for patterns in student movement across programs—places where groups of students seem to “get stuck.”</p> <p>Look for patterns in SOC transitions compared to majority population. Are SOC disproportionately present in dev ed?</p> | <p>Collect information on transitions: from basic skills to developmental education; from dev ed to college; through levels of ESL to dev ed and/or college-ready; from basic skills and/or dev ed to professional/technical.</p> | <p>Follow a cohort through an educational pathway (e.g. developmental writing, Eng. 101, Nursing).</p> | |
| <p>Critical filter courses</p> | <p>Most colleges have “barrier” courses, courses that many students have to take but that have high failure rates.</p> <p>Identify which courses are acting as barrier courses over the course of several years.</p> | <p>Collect information on single courses over a five year trend that serve as prerequisites for many programs and areas of study (e.g. writing 101, intermediate algebra).</p> <p>Collect information on patterns of student success and failure in these courses over five years.</p> | | |
| <p>Professional/ technical progression</p> | <p>The goal is to get information on patterns of professional/ technical goal attainment.</p> <p>Are students stopping out because of professional opportunities or are they dropping out?</p> | <p>Collect information on patterns of student achievement by checking student records at predetermined credit hour intervals over five years.</p> | | |
| <p>Transfer-ready progression</p> | <p>The goal here is to get information on patterns of student progression towards transfer-ready goal-attainment.</p> | <p>Collect information on student progression at appropriate credit intervals, e.g. 30, 40, 75 credit hours, to monitor progress toward degree.</p> | | |
| <p>3. Students of Color goal attainment and completion</p> | | | | |
| <p>Student completion of degrees and certificates</p> | <p>Who is getting degrees and certificates?</p> <p>Are students who are getting degrees and certificates getting their licenses?</p> | <p>Collect information on certificates and degrees granted.</p> <p>Identify programs that keep data on licensing rates.</p> | | |
| <p>Goal attainment by intent and purpose to attend</p> | <p>Comparing goal attainment with student intent allows the campus to collect information for those who attend college for general skill development, rather than a degree or certificate.</p> | <p>Compare success rates based on student intent as one measure of success.</p> | <p>Collect info on cohorts.</p> | |
| <p>Transfer rates</p> | <p>This allows the campus to account for students who are “succeeding” in that they have transferred, although without finishing the programs on campus.</p> | <p>Collect information on cohort students who transfer to other institutions without completing degrees or certificates.</p> | <p>Collect info on cohorts. UWA Mobility Report</p> | |

4. Hiring and Retaining Staff, Faculty and Administrators of Color

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Staffing | <p>Provides a profile of institution's staff. Who is in what position at the college?</p> | <p>Collect information on staffing by employment classification over a five year period.</p> |
| Recruitment and hiring process | <p>To determine the degree to which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · hiring committees are prepared to think about gender, race and cultural biases in interview questions and assessment of applicants; · multiple points of view are represented on hiring committees; · hiring committees are diverse and reflect the student population; · job announcements ask for evidence of experience and/or support of diversity; · application questions, interview questions, teaching demonstrations, and other aspects reflect institutional commitment to fostering a diverse community; · hiring committees are informed of the institution's commitment to diversity; · candidates asked to demonstrate ability to support campus commitment to diversity. <p>Does the institution have an established threshold for determining whether a hiring pool is diverse enough?</p> <p>Are positions attracting diverse applicants?</p> <p>Are positions advertised in places likely to reach diverse applicants?</p> <p>Does the hiring process support campus strategic initiatives on diversity?</p> | <p>Collect information on the placement of job announcements.</p> <p>Collect information on the content of job announcements.</p> <p>Collect information on the screening process.</p> <p>Collect information on the campus practices with regard to determining whether a hiring pool is sufficient to continue with the hiring process.</p> <p>Collect information on the diversity of the applicant pools over a five year period.</p> |
| Retention of staff | <p>Identify the nature of retention issues.</p> <p>Discover why employees of color are staying or leaving.</p> | <p>Collect information over a three to five-year period by category of employment for the retention of staff.</p> <p>Collect available information from staff who have departed (e.g. exit interviews through Human Resources).</p> |

Professional development

Are professional development opportunities offered to create a positive climate?

Identify programs offered that promote a positive climate and career progression.

Does the campus require diversity training for all its employees?

Collect information on numbers and types of diversity training offered to employees (voluntary, mandatory, content, scope).

On and off campus and how the college/employee uses the training information.

% of number (unduplicated) of employees who participate in training.

5. Instruction and Its Relationship to Students of Color

Curriculum

Does the curriculum allow students to see themselves and their histories accurately reflected in the curriculum?

Collect information on the college-wide learning outcomes.

To what extent do college-wide learning outcomes reflect the institution's commitment to diversity?

Collect information on diversity/multicultural requirements toward degree/certificate programs including the listing of classes that meet the requirement.

What is the nature of college diversity requirements/to whom does it apply?

Collect the standard procedures for classes to be designated as a multicultural or diversity course.

Does the curriculum allow students to have opportunities to develop multicultural competencies—the skills necessary to work and live in a multicultural world as socially responsible citizens?

Collect information on professional development opportunities related to diversity/multicultural curriculum transformation.

To what extent does the curriculum reflect local, regional, national and international issues and concerns?

To what extent does the curriculum reflect racial and ethnic diversity?

To what extent does the curriculum reflect equity and social justice perspective in relation to race, class and gender identities?

What professional development opportunities support curriculum transformation or integration related to diversity/multiculturalism?

Pedagogy

What kinds of professional development opportunities are helping faculty and staff support diverse learners?

Collect information on professional development opportunities provided to faculty on creating inclusive classrooms, supporting multiple ways of knowing, practicing culturally responsive teaching and assessment, and honoring diverse histories, backgrounds and perspectives.

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Library resources | To what extent do the resources support learning outcomes and students' ability to live and work in a diverse world? | Collect information on the number of volumes, visuals, and other material that reflect racial and ethnic diversity by curriculum areas. | | | |
| Instructional support services | <p>Are instructional support services equally accessible to all students?</p> <p>Are they provided in appropriate places, at appropriate times and in ways that support a diverse student population?</p> | <p>Collect information on the kinds of instructional support offered at the institution, including instructional technology (e.g. media support services).</p> <p>Collect information on which students use instructional support services at the institution.</p> | | | |

6. Student Services and Its Relationship to Students of Color

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Student support services | <p>What are the programs and activities on campus that are designed to promote development and academic achievement?</p> <p>What is known about their effectiveness?</p> | <p>Collect information on programs and activities that support development and academic achievement, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · recruitment and retention programs, advising and educational planning support; · programs specifically developed to support the academic achievement of students of color; · programs with a component aimed at supporting and promoting the success of students of color; · programs developed in partnership with Multicultural Services. | | | |
| Co-curricular Services | How do co-curricular programs support diversity/multiculturalism in the curriculum? | Collect information about co-curricular programs and efforts that support diversity/multiculturalism in the curriculum. | | | |
| Outreach | <p>How does the Student Services division hold itself accountable to communities of color off and on campus?</p> <p>Where are recruitment efforts focused for ESL, transfer, and professional/technical programs?</p> | Collect data on student services efforts to provide information to communities of color both on and off campus regarding programs and services. | | | |

7. Institutional/Administration Related to Students of Color

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| College marketing/public information | <p>How do college materials reflect the diverse campus population and the service area?</p> <p>How do marketing efforts reach out to diverse people on campus and in the service area?</p> <p>How are students of color portrayed in marketing materials?</p> | Collect information on campus materials and marketing efforts—content and distribution. | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Community Relations/Outreach | What partnership efforts connect the campus with communities of color? | Collect information on campus/community partnerships and regular community outreach efforts. |
| | How does the work of the Foundation strengthen relations with communities of color? | Collect information on the campus foundation efforts. |
| | To what extent does the college cultivate and engage in strong partnerships and relationships with communities of color and insure that the college is viewed as a key player within communities of color? | Collect information on the make-up of the college advising committees that includes community members. |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Mission statement, values, strategies plan, and policies | What is currently being done with your public spaces (e.g. reception areas, student study spaces, and the buildings) that reflect and support the college's commitment to diversity? | Conduct an environmental audit. Take pictures of public spaces, including the outside of buildings to assess the potential messages being sent to students, faculty, and staff of color. |
| | Do the areas reflect the students you serve? | |

8. Physical Environment Audit

| | | |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Public Spaces | What is currently being done with your public spaces (e.g. reception areas, student study spaces, and the buildings) that reflect and support the college's commitment to diversity? | Conduct an environmental audit. Take pictures of public spaces, including the outside of buildings to assess the potential messages being sent to students, faculty, and staff of color. |
| | Do the areas reflect the students you serve? | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Office space, departmental outer areas, and work space | Does the artwork or other décor reflect diversity? | Conduct an environmental audit. Take pictures of the office areas to assess the potential messages being sent to students, staff, and faculty of color. |
| | How is the artwork selected? | |
| | Do students of color see themselves represented in the pictures on the walls? | |

| | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Campus Grounds | What do you observe about the campus grounds that reflect and support the college's commitment to diversity? | Conduct an environmental audit. Take pictures of the campus grounds and assess the potential messages being sent to students, staff, and faculty of color. |
| | Does the artwork reflect the community you serve? | |
| | How is artwork selected? | |

Developing a Diversity Requirement

First Steps at South Puget Sound Community College

Michael Beehler, Rhonda Coats, Steve Dickerson, Lisa Aguilera Lawrenson, and Marcia Somer
South Puget Sound Community College

In February 2004 our team decided to embark on a journey to create a diversity requirement for degree-seeking students at South Puget Sound Community College. Although we were a small team, we represented a wide range of areas on campus: Dr. Michael Beehler, Vice President for Instruction; Dr. Rhonda Coats, Vice President for Student Services; Dr. Stephen Dickerson, Dean of Humanities; Marcia Somer, Professor of Early Childhood Education and Coordinator of Parent Education Program; and Lisa Aguilera Lawrenson, Professor of Humanities and Writing.

We began the Campus Equity and Engagement Retreat with three goals:

- create a rationale for a diversity course requirement;
- create criteria for a diversity course; and
- formulate a timeline for implementing the diversity course requirement.

Before we discuss our progress, it is imperative to first emphasize the importance of the composition of a successful team. We found the following elements to be critical when creating an effective team:

- recruit members that represent various job classifications and areas of expertise;
- select members that possess varying viewpoints and experiences with regard to identity development theory and diversity; and
- consider previous positive collaborative working relationships focused on diversity in higher education.

Many members of our team previously collaborated, facilitated, and participated in our grassroots effort on diversity needs and issues called Best Practices for Diversity and Equity.* Based on the recommendations that came out of this work, our president, Dr. Kenneth Minnaert, provided leadership in the development of a diversity action plan for our campus. The proposal to create a diversity course graduation requirement was included within the curriculum area of the diversity action plan.

The Campus Equity and Engagement Retreat provided the perfect opportunity for our team to continue its ongoing diversity work.

The intensity and depth of the conversations we had at the retreat directly resulted from our previous working relationships. With many hours of intellectual discussion, playful bantering, and serious confrontation, we felt confident about our next steps. We left the retreat with a clear framework for the necessity of a diversity course requirement for students; clear criteria for that diversity course requirement; and a strategic timeline for the introduction and implementation of this requirement, along with the preparation to explain and advocate for this requirement.

Returning to campus, we organized five sessions for faculty, staff and administrators to introduce and discuss the diversity course requirement. We were met with support, questions, and concerns about the course criteria; we clarified the rationale and revised the language. We then moved into the formal implementation process by presenting the course criteria to the Instructional Council, the body at our college that establishes curriculum policy and makes recommendations to the president. The presentation was another opportunity for the college community to raise additional issues and concerns. This fall, we will return to the Instructional Council for the vote on the nature of the criteria.

We hope our work increases the campus community's diversity and equity awareness and contributes to the ongoing diversity efforts at South Puget Sound Community College. ♦

*The Best Practices for Diversity and Equity effort came out of our colleges' work on the Washington Center supported *Critical Moments* project. *The Critical Moments Project* includes an account of South Puget Sound Community College's diversity work. (For a copy of the *Critical Moments* publication, see page 36 for order information.)

Remembering Rachel

Anne Fischel and Lin Nelson
The Evergreen State College

Photos left by grieving parents...a grinning ten-year old girl...a pensive young woman looking out into the world for answers. Notes and remembrances from close friends, acquaintances, passers-by. A collage of “hopes for peace” artwork from a nearby elementary school. Fabric and paper mache shaped into doves for a community procession. News clippings. Letters. Posters. Albums. Anguish, in abundance. A story to be told.

We will try to tell our story—one rendering—of Rachel Corrie. She was our student at the Evergreen State College, someone we continue to learn from and about.

On March 16, 2003, Rachel was killed in the Rafah refugee camp in Gaza. She was standing in front of an Israeli army bulldozer, trying to prevent it from demolishing the home of a Palestinian family. The Israeli government declared her death a “regrettable accident,” and issued a report absolving the army of responsibility. While U.S. groups pressed for an independent investigation, Congress refused to act; as one writer commented, “where is the outrage?”

In the months following her death, Rachel’s name, face, and writings circulated nationally and internationally. The young woman we knew has become a political symbol whose meanings are hotly debated. Journalists, activists, and bloggers have constructed her as an icon of courageous resistance—or illegitimate meddling; of committed political action—or massive political irresponsibility.

Rachel’s life and death are now highly encoded, written and re-written daily in a matrix of nano-communications that throw messages around the world. The Middle East conflict, terrorism,

martyrdom, anti-Semitism, national independence and national security—these are some of the backdrops and interpretive frames for arguing the meanings of her life. If you journey to Rachel’s life via Google or other techno-searches, you find it etched in 55,000+ sites. We think Rachel would have understood this contest of interpretations from her studies and critique of the media. She had chosen to place her life in a broader context, and was allowing herself to be vulnerable in a troubled and troubling world.

Yet to us, Rachel’s teachers, it is hard to observe this process and harder still to enter into the public debate. The image of Rachel-the-martyr seems as distorted and far from the mark as Rachel-the-terrorist. Instead, we choose to remember her learning and growing, finding her voice, testing out her capabilities and figuring out what mattered to her. We remember her in the context in which we knew her best—as part of a learning community of students with whom we worked during the academic year 2001-2002. Those students have struggled with the loss of a friend and colleague and with the need to honor Rachel’s memory while finding their own distinctive ways in the world.

We are reminded of the lessons we shared and poked and prodded with Rachel. So many

words and ideas, so many acts and attempts at discovering our own ability to act, and collaborate, and build and discuss.¹

Remembering Rachel also raises a broader set of questions about the rewards and perils of engaged learning—questions that can only be answered through ongoing practice and through the larger conversations we seek with our colleagues at Evergreen and elsewhere. We are living through a time in which our ability

Rachel was participating in the construction of a more accurate geography, in which the lives and struggles of the people of Rafah are intimately linked to our lives and policies in the United States.

as citizens to critically participate in the decisions affecting our lives is being eroded and subverted. In such a context how do we learn with our students about challenging conditions and struggles? How can we create supportive learning moments and journeys, while at the same time keeping the classroom porous and permeable to the world? What are the implications and possible consequences of encouraging students to actualize their learning in the communities they are a part of, or seeking to become part of? How do we serve as guides and witnesses to our students as they learn to contribute their skills and vision to a troubled world that sorely needs them?

Rachel's work as student, activist and citizen exposed her to terrible risk. She was not the first; 40 years ago three young civil rights workers in Mississippi were murdered while participating in a voter registration drive. In Mexico, El Salvador, South Korea and many other countries around the world the right of students and teachers to act on what they have learned by taking positions on public issues has frequently come under violent attack. Our classrooms are not exempt from the pressures of public life; the boundary between theory and practice, classroom and community is not neatly or "safely" drawn. As teachers and citizens we are struggling with a two-fold task: the need to remember and honor Rachel as a brave young woman who was both more and less than the icons that have been made of her, and the equally compelling need to raise questions about the implications of teaching as a public act in a repressive political climate.

Rachel joined our class, "Local Knowledge: Community, Media Activism and the Environment," in September 2001. She was a writer, an artist, a student and a counselor at a local center for low-income disabled adults. Local Knowledge was a 3-quarter full-time team-taught program drawing on our individual disciplines (environmental studies and documentary filmmaking) as a foundation for working with local communities. Our program activities included research on local community

Our students worked together, taught each other, and supported one another in implementing community-based projects reflecting their diverse commitments and interests.

history and seminars on case studies of environmental activism initiated by ordinary citizens. We learned about early labor struggles and educated ourselves about the work of regional

organizations involved in community education and organization. We collectively developed a skill-set that included documentary video, survey construction, accessing and utilizing government documents, and corporate research. We organized field trips to local history museums, historical murals, superfund sites and other markers of community interest and struggle. We worked with community mentors and, through our research, sought models for democratic and respectful engagement with communities in crisis.

We began our work two weeks after the bombing of the World Trade Centers, and a week before the invasion of Afghanistan. The realities of global conflict and a nation in crisis crashed in on a program designed to work in small scale local settings. As a group we struggled to respond to this challenge. Rachel was particularly focused on connecting local history, experience and activism with the exploding reality of war. As the year progressed the students' involvement in the global expanded to include studies of neo-liberalism and alternative models of sustainable economic development. We also explored the possibilities of community-to-community networks and connections through the example of a local organization which has a sister-city relationship with Santo Tomas, Nicaragua.

Although Local Knowledge became a rewarding and even extraordinary experience, it was never an easy one. We were trying to simultaneously validate and critique historical memory, connect issues that are atomized in public discourse, and develop a framework for articulating relationships between diverse constituencies and communities. As Americans, we have been asked to discount what we know of the past and present, of our neighbors, communities and regions. We are giving up our ability to critically interrogate media pronouncements and the self-serving rhetorical flourishes of our policy-makers. We are encouraged,

Community members took our work

seriously and spent time with our students
in the field and in the classroom, serving
as mentors and advisors, and offering
reality checks to our fledgling efforts.

as Rachel wrote, to “become fractured in our knowledge of our actions.” It was the urgent need to connect ourselves with local knowledge without romanticizing it, learn from one another, and develop analytical frameworks and strategies for responding to community-identified issues that drove the participants in this program and made our work together so rewarding and so difficult. We embarked on this exploration, not as experts or neophytes, not as “teachers” and “students” in the conventional sense, but as co-learners. The stakes were high and the work often seemed ambiguous and frustrating.

As the year progressed our program developed a coherent framework and structure. We preserved our focus on the local, while moving towards the development of a global context. We found intellectual building blocks in the traditions of participatory and community-based research, liberation pedagogy and popular education. Our students worked together, taught each other, and supported one another in implementing community-based projects reflecting their diverse commitments and interests. Community members took our work seriously and spent time with our students in the field and in the classroom, serving as mentors and advisors, and offering reality checks to our fledgling efforts.

Much of the conceptual material we tackled emerged from projects the students created and worked on throughout the year. Rachel was a thoughtful observer and participant in these projects, which engaged a range of issues, including food security, homelessness, public responses to war, globalization, public art, sustainable economic development, and the environmental consequences of industrial and corporate practice. One of the first things we noticed about Rachel was her ability to observe and reflect. She was quiet, serious, her forehead often creased in wrinkles. We got to know her through her writings, which were distinctive in their searching analysis, intensity and humor. She was always searching for the unexpected, appreciating things that were not apparent to others. She wrote a paper, in critical response to a more staid “ode to the forefathers and luminaries” approach,

examining the economic injustices and emergent working class culture in regional timber towns. With one eye on regional history and the other on the global present, Rachel cultivated a sense of the injustice of lives forgotten

or taken for granted, communities struggling for their place and voice, people working against great odds to create a life for themselves.

Studying the history of this area roots me. It makes me more conscious of the land and more conscious of myself and of the people around me as actors in history... We’ve certainly waded in the same water and wandered on the same beaches as some very brave people.²

In fall quarter Rachel critically analyzed media coverage of the war in Afghanistan and the local newspaper’s responses to anti-war activities. She studied everything, even the letters to the editor. She became a “participant-observer” of the local anti-war movement and its epicenter, the Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace. She attended meetings and helped plan demonstrations, but she was also critical of political acts which she felt were directed at the community rather than created with the community. She was forging a framework for activism based on grassroots participation, on what people bring and shape themselves rather than what they are told.

Rachel was a humble and gentle person; she did not see herself as “larger than life,” much less a hero or martyr in the making. Her friends say she would be bemused to find so much attention directed to her, so much story-telling that often doesn’t get it right and glosses over her human frailties. A local peace activist said, “she was always the last one to leave a meeting. She stayed to talk with newcomers and clean up; to do the small things that make a movement. She was never seeking notoriety or glory. She was just doing the work of being a citizen.”

In the aftermath of 9/11 we were told that being a citizen meant participating in the war against terrorism; in the words of President Bush, “You are either with us or with the terrorists.”

The students of Local Knowledge were actively and urgently engaged in learning to be a different kind of citizen. They believed that local communities possessed within their history possibilities for justice, compassion and respect for difference which are notably and shockingly absent in our public discourse. As the Palestinian Ambassador to Cuba said following Rachel's death, she represented "the beautiful face of America" to a world grown all too familiar with America's ugly face.

Rachel's work grew out of this rejection of the official face and pose of America, full of bully and bluster, and out of a collectively developed commitment to democratic participation and decision-making. She had many interests and a striking ability to see connections. Like many of our students, she often appeared to be moving in multiple directions at once. She continued to be drawn to local history and community work. She also struggled to understand the connections between local communities and the global context. In winter quarter, she wrote,

We live in a curious geography where...we have instantaneous access to products, information and currency from anywhere on earth. On the other hand, we are often separated from the consequences of our actions by thousands of miles, strings of subcontracts...and a long parade of...ATM machines. This fracture deserves further examination. Its relationship to the way we form knowledge, and how we act on that knowledge is relevant to ...our ability to function in a democracy.³

Democratic participation, critical thinking, the ability to see connections and understand the consequences of our actions—the undoing of the fracturing of self-knowledge and experience—we saw these themes becoming central to Rachel's work. Drawing on the writings of Stuart Ewen, Noam Chomsky, and Myles Horton, she wrote, "Only as we understand the power dynamics of knowledge acquisition...can we...devise more democratic means of informing our actions. And only with well-informed actions can we hope to affect positive change in the world."⁴

Rachel's focus on community participation and democratic engagement culminated, in spring quarter 2002 in a project to make peace doves for Olympia's annual celebration, the Procession of the Species. Joshua Hammer, in his problematic *Mother Jones* article, derisively referred to this project as "verging

on new-age parody." This is a basic misunderstanding of the Procession and of Rachel's astute reading of the community's public pulse. Having observed the local anti-war demonstrations, she concluded many community members would not participate, even if they questioned the war. She created a way to send a message of peace, using materials and strategies our community has endorsed for over a decade. Almost everyone in Olympia turns out for the Procession of the Species, which features hundreds of adults and children costumed as fish, birds, plants or animals. Many of the costumes are made by elementary school children and coordinated with classroom studies; still others are family projects and hundreds more are made by individuals in the Procession studio. With the assistance of experienced Procession members, paper mache, recycled cardboard and fabric are alchemized into wildly imaginative costumes. Rachel's project linked 50 people "aged 7 to 70". They made doves together and marched through downtown in a community festival in which no words or signs are ever used. Rachel loved this process and wrote about it,

Ignoring all other factors, I would choose to spend 8 hours a day for the rest of my life making things in a giant room full of other people, of various skill levels...Collectivity around art...a room full of people helping each other make things. I was startled by how much I felt at home.⁵

It is a long way from Olympia, Washington to the warzones of Gaza. Many have questioned the process of decision-making that took Rachel to Rafah in January 2003. Yet remembering the trajectory of Rachel's learning, the attention she paid to community sovereignty and voice, her passion for social justice, her interest in community-to-community networking and concerns about the effects of U.S. foreign policy, we believe her choices were not reckless or farfetched. Rachel was participating in the construction of a more accurate geography, in which the lives and struggles of the people of Rafah are intimately linked to our lives and policies in the United States. "I am here [in Rafah]," she wrote, "because I recognize that as a citizen of the United States I have some responsibility for what is happening."⁶

We are not outside. I think it's important that human rights and resistance to oppression be included in the way we define ourselves as a community.⁷

Rachel joined the International Solidarity Movement and was prepared to use the privileges of her international status to take nonviolent action to protect people who could not protect themselves. She stood in front of army bulldozers as they sought to demolish peoples' homes, and for several nights she slept at a community well to protect it from Israeli army fire. It was terrifying, risky work. But she also initiated correspondence with Israeli peace activists and refuseniks, made contact with Palestinian groups interested in a sister-city relationship with Olympia, and laid the groundwork for pen-pal relationships between Palestinian kids and kids from two Washington state communities. She played soccer with teenagers and danced at festivals, stayed in residents' homes and shared meals with them, held endless conversations in her fractured Arabic, and wrote letter after passionate letter to her community in Olympia so we would know, care, and support her new community in Rafah. She saw herself as an emissary, "Rachel See" (her e-mail name), Olympia's eyes and ears in Rafah; building bridges and linking our communities.

Olympia could gain a lot and offer a lot by deciding to make a commitment to Rafah in the form of a sister-community relationship. Some teachers and children's groups have expressed interest in e-mail exchanges, but that is only the tip of the iceberg of solidarity work that could be done.⁸

Rachel went to Rafah to offer support and solidarity, but she also went to learn. Her growing closeness to people in Rafah and her appreciation of acts of resistance by peace-loving Israelis contributed to a larger picture which she faithfully shared with us—a picture of people struggling to preserve a humanity their governments have abandoned.

When I am with Palestinian friends I tend to be...less horrified than when I am trying to act in a role of human rights observer, documenter, or direct-action resister. They are a good example of how to be in it for the long haul...I am...amazed at their strength in being

able to defend such a large degree of their humanity—laughter, generosity, family time—against the incredible horror occurring in their lives and against the constant presence of death.⁹

Reading Rachel's e-mails, it is clear that the margin of safety gained through her identity as a white American was slipping away. The bulldozers were increasingly aggressive; soldiers fired on her and others as they tried to protect the city's remaining wells; the U.S. embassy offered no protection or support. On February 27 she wrote,

I'm witnessing this chronic, insidious genocide. And I'm really scared, and questioning my fundamental belief in the goodness of human nature...So when I sound crazy, or if the Israeli military should break with their racist tendency not to injure white people, please pin the reason squarely on the fact that I am in the midst of a genocide which I am also indirectly supporting, and for which my government is largely responsible.¹⁰

On March 16, 2003, as the news of Rachel's death circulated through Olympia, her friends and colleagues made an altar and brought it to a downtown candlelight vigil. In June 2003, in

preparation for Evergreen's graduation, faculty, staff, students and community members expanded the altar into an on-campus memorial of Rachel's life and work. People came with pictures, news clippings, e-mail messages and other writings, posters from Palestine, banners, doves. They brought flowers, candles, bits of driftwood and shell, precious things to honor a person who was precious to us.

There are many ways to memorialize a person, to sustain and act in the memory, and continue to create it, as a community struggles with its grief, shock, anger and despair. Rachel's parents had to face the grim and unnatural challenge of losing their child. Rachel's community faced the devastating loss of a young life

We definitely feel more attuned to the urgent dilemmas that are part of the examined life of teaching and learning. We feel a more somber and weighted sense of the connections that bind our classroom to the world.

In our community, Rachel's death spurred movement and quiet forms of action.

that was flourishing, searching and passionate. For us, Rachel's teachers, the memorial, like this writing,

has been a complex but compelling way to honor the memory of a beloved student. The memorial is not unified; on its walls pictures of a smiling child and a teenager ready for a dance recital crowd up against Palestinian posters of "the martyr" and anguished notes from friends and visitors. For several months the memorial housed posters brought by Rachel's parents that documented the violent deaths of Palestinian and Israeli children.¹¹ The memorial is also not permanent; in April 2004 a new building opened on our campus. As many of us moved our offices, we also took the memorial apart and moved it in boxes to the new building, where it is now stored. We intend to reconstruct it, this time with more permanence and clarity, but the task of sorting through the materials of memory and designing an appropriate site for future reflection is intimidating.

In our community Rachel's death spurred movement and quiet forms of action. More students are intently engaged in studying the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A speaker series on Israel and Palestine, co-sponsored by Evergreen and local community groups and held downtown at a local church drew an average of 300 audience members to each session. Some Olympia community members have journeyed to Palestine and Israel. Finally, a dedicated network of community activists are building the Olympia-Rafah Sister City Project that Rachel envisioned.

The Olympia-Rafah Sister City Project seeks to create community exchanges and build solidarity with the beleaguered community of Rafah. Their work has become even more urgent and difficult since Rachel's death, as the Israeli government intensified its campaign of home demolitions and indiscriminate military attacks. Recently, the Sister City Project sponsored a performance by a Palestinian youth dance troupe and raised money for four Olympia residents to visit the region. One of the visitors was allowed into Rafah for one hour, but the others were turned back at an Israeli checkpoint. The Sister City Project seeks to obtain medical equipment and supplies for Rafah, build cultural exchanges and pen-pal relationships, and support a center for disabled persons. It is also working with a local fair trade store

which is exhibiting and selling artwork made by members of the Union of Palestinian Women.¹²

The message of peace with justice that Rachel worked and died for is understood and echoed by countless Palestinians and Israelis. Jeff Halper, Coordinator of the Israeli Committee Against Housing Demolitions, wrote, "It was not the bulldozer but Rachel who was making Israel safer. I believe she made her own country safer too."¹³ Thousands of Israelis have refused military service in the occupied territories¹⁴, rejecting their government's policies of violent suppression and exclusion. Palestinians, Israelis and internationals together have demonstrated against the Separation Wall and tried to prevent the bulldozing of Palestinian olive groves. Palestine community centers and newborn children bear Rachel's name. Rachel and her parents have also been honored with numerous awards, not the least of which is the "Rachel Corrie Award for Courage in the Teaching of Writing." We think Rachel, always a passionate and careful writer, would have relished this acknowledgement.

Rachel's parents are becoming international figures in their own right. They took on their new roles reluctantly but with grace and a clear sense of mission. As Cindy Corrie said at Evergreen's graduation, "Parents can be awakened by their children." In August 2003 the Corries traveled to the Middle East to connect with Israeli and Palestinian peace activists. They visited Rafah and amidst the escalating tension and violence, found moments of quiet support and celebration with families Rachel knew.

What of us, Rachel's teachers? Can teachers be awakened by the loss of a student? How have our lives and work been changed by Rachel's life and death? For both of us the last year has been fraught with anguish. We definitely feel more attuned to the urgent dilemmas that are part of the examined life of teaching and learning. We feel a more somber and weighted sense of the connections that bind our classroom to the world. Yet we are committed to teaching our programs and working actively in our communities. If anything, our sense of urgency about the need to link classroom and community feels stronger and more imperative.

In September 2004 we began teaching Local Knowledge for the second time. Our conversations about curriculum, workshops, learning opportunities, and community projects have

been lively and thought-provoking. Many of our conversations have been about Rachel—what we learned from her, what we witnessed her doing in our classroom and in the community. We know she will be a presence in our class. We have talked about a text Rachel particularly valued, a learning game she devised, a paper she wrote that we might share with our students. Rachel's colleagues from Local Knowledge will also be visiting us to share their experience and accomplishments. They can help us teach our new students—and each other—about loss, memory and most of all, dedication to meaningful work in the world.

She was willing to sacrifice everything she had been taught by popular culture to cherish – comfort, blind faith, complacency – and elevate herself to a place of transformation and compassion. She died, but we still have each other, the impact of her presence and commitment, the lessons we shared, and so much work to do.¹⁵

Rachel's life and death cannot be reduced to a “take-home lesson,” a homily or a clear-and-ready sense of mission. As Rachel's teachers we have resisted this. We will not narrow the discussion to a choice about whether or not to go to a place that is dangerous and polarized. Instead, we are inspired by Rachel's fellow students who are responding to the challenge of “so much work to do” by participating in local food co-ops, making videos, creating community gardens, writing, getting involved in public schools, and doing anti-poverty work. They are forging their own place and path, acting in their distinctive ways on the lessons they learned and shared with Rachel. As teachers we feel more than ever a determination to support, critique, guide and witness our students as they put themselves into the world and try to shape it.

Acting on one's convictions, joining one's life and work to the lives and work of an endangered community makes one vulnerable. Most of our students will not choose a pathway that involves the level of risk Rachel took. But the fact that Rachel died, horribly, under a bulldozer obscures the multi-leveled richness of the work she was trying to do in Rafah. That work, in and of itself, carried risks, but it also created possibilities that cry out to be discussed and enacted.

We cannot come to terms with Rachel's death without paying close and respectful attention to Rachel's life and to what we can learn and understand of Rachel's work. We knew her as a student struggling to grapple with the world and its perils, who demanded

a relationship with history and place. She did not issue this demand in histrionic, dramatic ways. Much of her attention was riveted on the small, invisible, ignored features of everyday life – the local history forgotten, the local ecology forsaken. She lingered with things in order to build her own style of learning. She wrote movingly of going beyond “fractured knowledge” and “separation from responsibilities.” She worked hard to develop this sensibility, here at home and then later in a demanding community-to-community connection. She and those she worked with were determined to understand what connects people and what can wall them off from each other. Rachel's work had weight and importance that the discussions of martyrdom have obscured; her example reminds us, urgently, of the contribution young people have made and are continuing to make. Our experience with her has led us to renewed commitments to support our students in seeing that their learning matters and to help them develop “staying power” for their work.

The world Rachel sought and served will continue to be with us, in our classrooms, in our seminars, in our reflections and research. It will be with us in the experiences our students bring to their learning and the presence that community members have in our class, in the questioning and critique of local, national and international events, the self-doubt, the confusion in the face of community mores, the sifting of multiple perspectives and social positions, and in the tensions, conflicts, and bonds our students create, with us and with each other. It will be present as we learn to be courageous in confronting the risks of intellectual engagement and community work. It will be present in the myriad ways we express our engagement with one another and our evolving sense of collective responsibility, as Rachel said, “to do right” by our world.

Learn and speak, turn to each other and organize, right where your community needs it most. This is how to honor the humility of [her] death, not with banners and songs and slogans, but with strength, intelligence and critical compassion ...she was extraordinary and ordinary; she cared about the world and threw herself into it, she was one of us.¹⁶ ♦

Notes

¹ “Why is the Measure of Love, Loss?” a statement delivered by Evergreen students from the Local Knowledge program to a memorial service for Rachel Corrie, March 22, 2003.

- ² Rachel Corrie, "Thurston County by Trivia," June 2002.
- ³ Rachel Corrie, "The Anti-Hortons," March 2002.
- ⁴ Rachel Corrie, "Thurston County by Trivia."
- ⁵ Rachel Corrie, "Thurston County by Trivia."
- ⁶ Rachel Corrie, "E-mail from Rafah," February 7, 2003.
- ⁷ Rachel Corrie, "Thurston County by Trivia."
- ⁸ Rachel Corrie, "E-mail from Rafah," February 28, 2003.
- ⁹ Rachel Corrie, "E-mail from Rafah," February 27, 2003.
- ¹⁰ Rachel Corrie, "E-mail from Rafah," February 27, 2003.
- ¹¹ Reproduced from Remembering These Children, Jews for Peace in Palestine and Israel.
- ¹² Information about long-term collaborative projects and the mission of the Olympia-Rafah Sister City Project is available at www.orscp.org
- ¹³ Jeff Halper, "Dismantling the Fortresses of Fear," *Yes!*, #26, Summer 2003.
- ¹⁴ www.refusersolidarity.net
- ¹⁵ Statement by Local Knowledge students, March 22, 2002.
- ¹⁶ Statement by Local Knowledge students, March 22, 2002.

Fulbright Scholars-in-Residence Bellevue Community College

Bellevue Community College began an international scholar-in-residence program in 2003, with Nawang Dorjee, Director of Education for Tibetan Children's Village. During 2003-2004, Bellevue hosted its first Fulbright scholar-in-residence, Dr. Stella Williams, from the Department of Agricultural Economics at Obafemi Awolowo University in Osun State, Nigeria. In 2005, Bellevue Community College is hosting another Fulbright scholar-in-residence, Dr. Eduardo Gomes, Associate Professor of Political Science, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Dr. Gomes will be the keynote speaker at the Washington Center's pre-conference symposium on globalizing the curriculum.

Cascadia Community College

Cascadia Community College is hosting a day of learning on December 3, 2004. The theme is "America and the World: Human Rights in International Affairs." The program includes a number of panel discussions and presentations involving faculty and community leaders and is free and open to the public. Contact Nader Nazemi at 425-352-8156 or nnazemi@cascadia.ctc.edu for more information.



Project ACCESS is a mentoring and professional development initiative for two-year college mathematics faculty. The project seeks to provide experiences that will help new faculty become more effective teachers and active members of the broader mathematical community. Each year the approximately thirty Fellows selected, receive support to attend three professional meetings, to participate in specially designed workshops, and are linked through an electronic network to each other and a group of distinguished mathematics educators. For further information, see www.amatyc.org/projectaccess/. Application deadline: July 1, 2005.

Teaching Civic Engagement and Responsibility

A Year-long Seminar for Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

Diane Douglas
Bellevue Community College

In 2003-04, Bellevue Community College's Center for Liberal Arts launched an initiative entitled "Hands On Democracy." Intended to focus attention on teaching and learning civic engagement skills, the initiative included a student-driven voter registration campaign and a year-long series of talks on timely political and social justice issues locally, nationally and internationally. Its final element—co-sponsored with the college's Faculty Professional Development Committee and Service Learning Program—targeted instructional philosophies and strategies. Workshops were conducted on service learning and on classroom techniques to foster democratic debate and deliberation followed by a three-part faculty seminar on teaching civic engagement.

The seminars featured articles by John Dewey, Martin Luther King, and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi followed by critique and discussion on their implications for building a campus culture to model and teach civic responsibility. Participants included faculty from diverse disciplines and administrators with responsibility for instruction, student activities, and experiential learning.

The results were positive in both tangible and intangible ways. It introduced faculty and administrators to one another while providing them with a forum to imagine programs that cross disciplinary boundaries and link classroom instruction with related extra-curricular opportunities. The participants agreed that these conversations represented a vital step toward building the campus culture we desired—one in which instructors and staff would become more familiar with one another's professional and academic strengths, affiliations, attitudes and interests, and feel more comfortable brainstorming innovations and initiating collaborations. Within this context, we discussed instructors' prerogatives to be role models for civic engagement, citing the delicate boundaries between expressing conviction and involvement in a cause versus inappropriate advocacy or persuasion. We addressed how the college could further demonstrate the value it places on its faculty and staff's civic

engagement activities. We resolved to initiate a monthly campus-wide roundtable in which faculty and staff will present informal talks on their research, community involvement, and professional activities. We also brainstormed the creation of an internal speakers' bureau—a roster of faculty and staff with diverse content and experiential expertise willing to present topical guest lectures across the curriculum that could provide pluralism, context, and personal depth to enhance the academic materials presented. Finally, we discussed the need to bring these questions to a larger cohort of peers so that questions about political activism, enhancing pluralism, and instructors' roles and constraints can be overtly recognized and aired.

In addition to these outcomes that affect campus climate for faculty and professional staff, there were also important participant recommendations that address curriculum and pedagogy. We discussed the development of a series of discipline-based case studies on ethics and civic responsibility that could be introduced to complement courses' technical and academic content. We imagined creating a large cohort of all students taking service learning classes—providing them with common seminar readings and reflective self and group assessments that link their classroom and community work. We considered developing linked assignments for classes that would encourage students to observe the diverse questions and solutions to be considered in broaching a common dilemma from divergent disciplinary lenses.

In Fall 2004, the collaborators who initiated this year-long focus on teaching civic responsibility will review the many suggestions that came out of the initial seminar. Some participant recommendations will be implemented immediately. Others will be sent forward for consideration by larger groups of Bellevue Community College faculty and staff.

For more information, see Bellevue Community College's Center for Liberal Arts website at www.bcc.ctc.edu or contact Diane Douglas at 425-564-2550 or ddouglas@bcc.ctc.edu. ♦

Confessions of Four Bibliophiles

Faculty Learn to Collaborate in Genuine Ways

Susan Preciso, Joli Sandoz, Joe Tougas, and Sandy Yannone
The Evergreen State College

With refreshing vigor, the word “collaboration” has moved into the mansion of academic discourse, but how many teachers at traditional and non-traditional teaching institutions have had a genuine opportunity to meet the new roommate?

While we practice collaborative learning in our teaching at Evergreen, each of us agreed that identifying the conditions for collaborative learning has remained an elusive box in storage. Examining collaborative teaching and learning continues to challenge us because our academic training rarely allowed us to practice this approach to teaching.

Consider the often unspoken rules for entering the academy. The first mark of ascension is to receive a teaching assignment where one has absolute autonomy over course content. In graduate schools across the country, the necessity for mastery creeps higher as the quest for a tenure-track position becomes increasingly more competitive. Once in the door, one needs to stay strong to receive tenure. For most of us, therefore, gaining the privilege of academic freedom has meant embodying the most extreme form of rugged individualism. A classroom at its best is a sealed chamber. Because collaborating requires a negotiation of deeply-rooted disciplinary and pedagogical practices, inviting collaboration also might give an impression of weakness none of us perceives we can afford.

In her essay “Commencement,” Terry Tempest Williams speaks of the “open space of democracy” (*Orion*, March/April 2004). How can we reconcile this idea with our closed-in academic training? How can we begin to imagine our classrooms as

collaborative, open spaces when teaching with others seems unnatural?

Together we started unpacking assumptions, fears, and joys. Here is our journey.

We were preparing a session for the National Learning Communities Conference in May 2004. As our group talked about our task—a presentation on the collaborative, participatory classroom—we soon turned to a discussion of books we often used, books that were profoundly important to us. We talked about how we used the books and a couple of hours flew by as questions emerged, as we shared ideas about how someone else’s favorite might fit into our programs. The talk was rich, perhaps because each of us came to our next meeting with a few specific books. We had the real things right there. The heft and texture, the ability to pass the book across the table, to point to lines of sections, contributed to the vitality of the work we had begun.

One thing became clear, something we do not usually notice—a primary collaboration is between the book and the reader. And this quickly moves to a collaboration with other readers of the same book, and with other books and their authors, too. We recognized that while we might not be trained to work collaboratively, we all come with this very real experience of collaboration, of

working with someone else’s thinking. We come from different disciplines—literature, writing, social psychology, and philosophy—and as we shared our experience, ideas flew about how a book of poetry might work beautifully as a text in an

To stick with collaborative work, faculty (and students) must experience a sense of safety rooted in the educational values of change and growth, rather than in the usual values of familiarity and stability.

American history program, or how the ideas in an early 19th century novel fit with a study of gender and culture.

The storage box labeled “Collaboration—Misc.,” though rather haphazardly packed, contained qualities and practices we recognized as essential to our task, things that were of immediate and practical use in our teaching and learning. The variety of books on the table illustrated our individual passions and points of view. The conversation they sparked was truly generative. We created something new—a different knowledge than any one of us could have created alone. We experienced an “open space for democracy” right there in the Faculty/Staff Lounge, surrounded by books, lunch, and coffee cups.

One of the things we imagined together that day was, not surprisingly, to use the experience we had just had as a structural model for our conference workshop. We would invite our experienced academic colleagues who were interested in using collaboration in the classroom to meet together. We would provide them with a collection of books which we knew from our pooled experience were likely to be familiar and beloved of college teachers from a wide range of disciplines. We would set a series of simple tasks for small groups—tasks which would begin from genuine shared questions and problems facing all of us as teachers, and which could only be effectively answered by drawing on the pooled expertise present in the group.

Designing the workshop forced us to reflect on the details of our own collaboration. We tried to be aware of the qualities that made our discussion alive and interesting. In the case of our planning group, it was clear that we were all (perpetually) struggling with genuinely shared questions: What books should I put on my syllabus? What do I do when a book falls flat in seminar? How do I balance coverage with nurturing broad intellectual growth? These are questions which obviously get better answers from several experienced teachers working together. We assumed these would also be live questions for the conference participants. As it turned out, the presence of the books provoked other genuine questions and led to unexpected collaborations.

We also recognized that we valued our different perspectives—disciplinary, experiential, and personal. We really listened to each other and we pushed each other with attentive, respectful questions. It was this generative quality that allowed

us to construct a new knowledge together. We were people from different backgrounds in genuine collaboration to accomplish a common task. That task pushed us to recognize a third quality—recognition of a shared reality. The attention and energy we give to trying to understand the ideas and perspective of others gives the lie to the popular relativism which holds that, since we do not have access to a universal and definitive “objective reality,” we are stuck with individual subjective realities. In fact, we are constantly engaged in an ever-expanding intersubjective reality which serves all the purposes of objectivity. In our classrooms, and in our planning, this means that we are constantly checking with others for confirmation of our limited “take” on our purpose and progress. We noted that it was challenging for us to overcome the individualistic habits of competition, comparison, and judgment. Opening the door made us vulnerable.

That is the implicit and essential quality underlying all our work: a willingness to trust, to be vulnerable.

In our first years at Evergreen, each of us experienced the transition from the rarefied air and close confines of individualism and autonomy in our professional lives, to full seminars of 25 people held literally in hallways and restaurants, or on patches of grass, stadium bleachers or plastic chairs in the front room of the campus farmhouse. Not one of these locations provided a pedestal for the professor. The culture of a learning community-based institution—and our students—forced us out of the safe zone between the blackboard and the podium, into the open spaces not only of democracy, but also of generative relationship.

Frankly, at the time much of this was terrifying. What motivated us to continue, as faculty new to cooperative work, was a simple desire to learn. After all, before the exams and the papers and the competitive seminars of grad school, that is what had encouraged us to become educators. And teaching in a collaborative setting required that we learn how to learn—and how to teach—in a new way. Our personal learning was no longer a private affair, and the act of teaching no longer belonged to us, with public learning being shunted to our students. Every person in our classrooms, in fact everyone everywhere (on campus and off), was now someone to be engaged and taken seriously, a compatriot with whom one could discover knowledge new and valuable.

What personal qualities are necessary for this kind of relation-

ship to the world and what is in it? It is easy to create a list: flexibility, openness, trust, curiosity, and enthusiasm; recognition of dependence on others; appreciation of the value of other perspectives; the ability to communicate across differences of background and experience by asking and answering clarifying questions; and the ability to trust others, even when they make us uncomfortable. The willing-ness, as Sandy said during one of our conversations, to be surprised. We think what worked for us as a team planning a conference session was the conviction, based in the continual surprises we have received as learning community faculty, that each person in our group—and eventually, in our conference session—would have something different and interesting to offer.

Such openness to experience has its complications. “Democracy,” Williams tells us, “is built upon the right to be insecure. We are vulnerable. And we are vulnerable together” (2004, 22). That is accurate in the political context her article invokes, and also in the academy where she first delivered these words as part of a commencement address. Vulnerability, fear, anxiety, failures: these accompany surprises.

It has been our experience that collaborative learning, in particular, makes participants uncomfortable in certain specific ways. In answering questions about the way we experience the world, for example, we often come up against assumptions we have never questioned, and which seem less plausible when we need to spell them out to someone who has not grown up taking them for granted. This discomfort dictates changes in approaches and practices connected to teaching and learning. One way we have changed our collegial (and classroom) practices is to make time for quite a bit more talking. The more genuine the collaboration, the more participants actually will be *dependent* on the perspectives of others; there is additional work to be done, in other words, in translating and interpreting—asking questions for clarity, articulating experiences and positions—for each other.

The more genuine the collaboration, the
more participants actually will
be dependent on the perspectives
of others...

Enough trust to sustain inquirers through discomfort becomes a key. Joe made a useful distinction: All participants need to be aware that being *uncomfortable* is not necessarily a sign of being *unsafe*. To stick with collaborative work, faculty (and students) must experience a sense of safety rooted in the educational values of change and growth, rather than in the usual values of familiarity and stability. This was corroborated during the conference session, when

one participant noted that the group was able to talk openly about our teaching because as teachers familiar with learning community concepts, we “trust the process and ourselves.”

So, in May, we arrived, if not to the hallowed halls of academe, at least to the bustle of a big academic conference. In the midst of a sea of conference attendees, most toting a tasteful, professional bag or case, came Sandy, pulling her red Radio Flyer wagon. It was piled high, full to overflowing with stacks of books. Sandy’s red wagon stood out, but Susan’s bulging canvas grocery bags got a few nods as well. Joli’s and Joe’s piles of books added to what became a quickly constructed, eclectic, delightfully diverse library. When our session ended, the room was disheveled, books were strewn about, chairs were out of line, and teachers were still talking. Session participants came up with several ways faculty can encourage trust, including viewing others as colleagues, reflecting directly on what is happening in learning relationships and settings, willingness to be vulnerable, and narrativizing and personalizing, not specific comments, but concepts and ideas—in other words, relating through story.

We know. In the world of on-line sources, e-texts, and the riches they can bring us, books might seem a trifle mundane. But they are what got most of us here. Workshop participants began where we had begun, talking about books, sharing ideas, and walked out into the hall still talking about what made their collaboration work. The room was a mess, and we parked the wagon in the hall, but the door was still open. ♦

Teaching With Your Mouth Shut

A Faculty Learning Community at Western Carolina University

John Habel
Western Carolina University

Early in fall semester 2003 I was a member of a group of about 20 full- and part-time members of the faculty at Western Carolina University (WCU) who decided to investigate ways to teach with our mouths shut. We had responded to an invitation from the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at WCU to form a “Readers’ Roundtable” and select a book about teaching and learning in higher education to read and discuss. The members of our group considered a number of current books, and after some debate we reached consensus and selected Donald Finkel’s, *Teaching With Your Mouth Shut* (2000). Finkel taught at The Evergreen State College from 1976 until his death in 1999, shortly before the publication of his book.

Our Readers’ Roundtable was too large for freewheeling discussion, so we divided into two subgroups, each with about 10 members. During the 2003-04 academic year the subgroup of which I was a member made its way through Finkel’s book, meeting every two to three weeks to discuss our reading. As we came to know each other and were drawn into “conversation about education”—one of Finkel’s stated goals for his book is to stimulate conversation about education—we came to refer warmly to both the book and to our reading group as *TWYMS* (rhymes with “whims”).

Late in April 2004, with the end of the academic year approaching, we members of *TWYMS* devoted some meeting time to taking stock of what we had accomplished. We were unwilling to say goodbye to Finkel’s book and reluctant to see our collaborative inquiry into *TWYMS* conclude. We were convinced that Finkel’s invitation to take ourselves out of the center of our students’ learning, to “let the students do the talking,” so as to produce “experiences that teach” could transform our teaching and enrich our students’ learning. None of us are committed lecturers; we all promote various forms of active learning in our courses and appreciate the limits of “teaching as telling.” In

addition, we appreciate that *acting* on Finkel’s ideas is a daunting undertaking and recognize the value of continuing our multidisciplinary collaboration in the safe space we already had created in our Readers’ Roundtable. Therefore, we decided to establish a “faculty learning community” (FLC) at WCU for the 2004-2005 academic year and to limit the FLC’s membership to members of the two subgroups of the Readers’ Roundtable who had read Finkel’s book the previous year.

Faculty Learning Communities at Western Carolina University
Miami University of Ohio is the leader of the FLC movement in colleges and universities in the United States and its program of FLCs serves as a model for our university’s FLC initiative. As it states on Miami’s FLC web site,

A faculty learning community is a cross-disciplinary faculty group of 8 to 12 members engaging in a yearlong program with a curriculum about enhancing teaching and learning and with frequent seminars and activities that provide learning, development, and community building. In the literature about student learning communities, the word student usually can be replaced by faculty and still make the same point (“Faculty Learning Communities: What Are They?”).

Furthermore, “Faculty learning communities are more structured and intensive than most approaches that gather together a collection of faculty to meet and work on teaching and learning issues” (ibid.). At WCU, among the commitments members of FLCs make are to:

- meet regularly throughout the academic year;
- identify a particular course to become the focus of one’s work in the FLC;
- design a teaching and learning project that will be applied to one’s focus course;

- share one's focus course syllabus with FLC members;
- go public with the work of the FLC in some way: share what the members of the FLC have learned in an on-campus workshop or in a publication of some kind.

We began the work of the *TWYMS* FLC this fall semester. Our FLC consists of two members of the Department of Physical Therapy; a full-time and a part-time member of the Department of Psychology; a member of the Department of English, who also is the Director of WCU's First-Year Composition Program; and the Associate Director of WCU's Faculty Center, who teaches math courses part-time. According to Finkel's preface,

TWYMS is not intended as a manual for teachers. It aims to provoke *reflection* on the many ways teaching can be organized. The book engages its readers in a conversation about education. Thus, its purpose is not so much to reform education as it is to provoke fruitful dialogue about teaching and learning about people who have a stake in education (xv).

We are acting on Finkel's counsel. Each of us has selected a course to become the focus of our efforts to teach with our mouths shut. As a group, we are experimenting with and sharing what Finkel refers to as "a host of concrete teaching possibilities" (10). ♦

References

- Finkel, D. 2000. *Teaching with Your Mouth Shut*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton-Cook Publisher's Inc.
- "Faculty Learning Communities: What Are They?". Retrieved September 10, 2004, from www.units.muohio.edu/flc/what.shtml.

For Girls: A Math, Science and Engineering Summer Academy

Simone Gates-Wiggins, age 13, attends the Tacoma Girls School where she is the lead Teen Teacher assistant. She teaches Robotics at McIlveagh Middle School with a team of faculty and students from The Evergreen State College-Tacoma campus. Simone sent the Washington Center the following article for our newsletter.

The Summer Academy at Evergreen is a great program for teenage girls in the community. It brings math, science, and engineering to life, and it doesn't even cost any money. We take classes with three inspirational teachers and are exposed to all sorts of hands-on experiences. In the first two weeks, we have already learned about pH, eutrophication, robotics, binary codes, lake studies, how to shoot a video camera, and so much more. Through this program, not only do we learn a lot, but we have a good time, too. The teachers are fun, being around peers is great, and we even got to go swimming. Girls Math Science and Engineering Summer Academy is a very positive and beneficial program, and I am glad that it is available.

For more information on this project, please contact Luversa Sullivan, sullivlu@evergreen.edu.

The Power of One

Central Washington University is hosting a tri-state Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered Leadership Conference, *The Power of One*, April 22-23, 2005. Elizabeth Birch, former director, Human Rights Campaign is the keynote opener.

For more information, contact:

Leslie J. Webb, Director, Diversity Education Center, Central Washington University, 400 E. University Way, Ellensburg, WA 98926-7448 Tel. (509) 963-1685 or email at webble@cwu.edu

“Seeing the Unseen” at Belmont University

An Inquiry-Based Mathematics Workshop for Faculty

Mike Pinter
Belmont University

The Belmont University Teaching Center recently provided several classroom inquiry-based learning workshops led by Belmont faculty for their colleagues in May and August 2004. The idea for these workshops grew out of several contexts at Belmont.

Within the last year, the overall general education program has undergone extensive changes. Among these, we revised the general education core component to include a quantitative reasoning experience for all students. During the discussions that led to this change in the mathematics core, as the Director of the Teaching Center, I invited the Director of General Education (an English Department faculty member) to visit one of my general education mathematics classes where I use inquiry-based learning methods. Excited about students’ response to inquiry-based learning, the two of us decided to organize opportunities for our faculty to experience inquiry-based learning. The workshops coincided with the first phase of implementing the new general education program.

We invited faculty members across disciplines who used inquiry-based learning in their teaching practice. Eventually we ended up with workshops in the disciplines of mathematics, religion, science, philosophy and communication studies. The workshops, first held in May 2004, received very positive feedback from both workshop leaders and faculty participants and we decided to offer a subset of the workshops again as part of the Teaching Center’s August Faculty Workshops and New Faculty Orientation.

What follows is a discussion of the mathematics workshop for faculty that I led.

Experiencing Mathematics as Discovery

The invitation to Belmont faculty included the following workshop description:

Experience the spirit of problem solving embodied in mathematics by discovering some mathematical results for

yourself. The session will be filled entirely with hands-on collaborative activities that will help with “seeing the unseen.” No prerequisite mathematics background is needed – only a willingness to explore!

The goal was to attract faculty from across many disciplines, including mathematics faculty members who teach general education courses.

The two-hour workshop experience was designed so participants would have a mathematics classroom experience of discovery of some numerical patterns associated with a few carefully selected problems. During the first 90 minute portion of the workshop, participants worked collaboratively in pairs or small groups on the problems. During the final 30 minutes, faculty reflected on their experience and considered ways they could incorporate inquiry-based learning in their own courses.

To provide a metaphor for the workshop activities, we looked at an editorial by Keith Devlin (1997), “Making the Invisible Visible” and also referred to a Harold Edgerton photography exhibit, “Seeing the Unseen” (Bruce, 1994). Both the short editorial and a few images from the exhibit set the stage for discovery.

The problems chosen for the workshop had several features in common: they were easily understood and did not require any specific mathematics background; they were associated with games, toys, or hands-on activities of some sort; they were “large” enough that solutions would not be reached quickly; and they yielded interesting number patterns that could be discerned in the amount of time given for the activity (for specifics about the problems, contact the author). A crucial goal was that every participant would feel they were capable of doing some mathematics. As is the case with students in my general education classes, I wanted everyone to perceive that mathematical/quantitative problem solving is a doable, learnable skill. Without some personal success, that point is generally not internalized.

Several features of solving problems were addressed along

the way, typically in response to the specific efforts of participants as they worked in small groups. One feature that occurs with every problem is the need to have the problem clarified; as given to the participants, there is potential for ambiguity until questions and assumptions are addressed. For example, one problem involves a tray of children's blocks that can be arranged in different ways. The question posed is relatively straightforward: how many ways can the blocks be configured. There are several nuances in the "problem" that usually become clear only after people "play" with the problem. This experience emphasizes the importance of having a clear and precise understanding of the problem at hand, and that clarifying questions is an essential part of the problem-solving process.

Another feature is that participants typically attempt to solve problems using some mix of three qualitatively different approaches that I refer to as a "brute force" approach, a linear approach (which I compare to accessing information on a VHS tape), and a "random access" approach (which I compare to accessing information on a CD). Each of the approaches has its own appropriate usages and its own limitations. More specifically, "brute force" is generally only good for looking at a very small version of the problem; "random access" is essentially a formula that likely will lead to little understanding unless it is arrived at with careful reasoning, while the linear approach generally provides the deepest level of understanding about the problem and about mathematics as the "science of patterns."

With regard to the linear method, one of the most important features (which became identified as an important general strategy for solving problems) is the notion of "starting small." That is, problem-solving likely will be successful if instead of tackling the problem as stated, they first attempt the problem on a much smaller scale. Working on problems in a small scale, "brute force" becomes a useful strategy for developing the beginnings of a number pattern. For example, one of the problems (referred to as the Tower of Hanoi problem) involves restacking a stack of seven graduated disks from one post to another; there are specific rules identified and the task is to restack in as few moves as possible. To solve the problem, it is important to "start small" with only two or three disks instead of trying to restack all seven. After starting small, by adding back in one disk at a time and generating data on the number of moves required, a pattern emerges.

In both of the problems mentioned above, the answers ultimately are very large numbers. This provides an opportunity

to talk about the relative sizes of numbers. In doing so, participants grapple with their "number sense" and come away with an enhanced quantitative literacy experience.

My role of workshop leader (and classroom teacher) is to appropriately formulate and communicate the problems, to answer clearly and precisely questions that are raised about "rules of the game," to provide hints or provocative questions that lead participants to determine rules from context, to guide their efforts, provide feedback, to make brief demonstrations, and to affirm their incremental successes. My experience working with faculty during the workshops has been very similar to the interactions I have with students in my classes save for one difference: faculty members are more likely to argue with me about some aspect of the problem, and in that regard, it is more difficult to keep faculty participants directly on task.

Of the various inquiry-based learning workshops offered to Belmont faculty, the mathematics sessions had the smallest attendance (probably indicative of broad attitudes about being placed in a mathematics classroom setting). During the May workshops, eight faculty members from a variety of disciplines (sciences, English, history, psychology) participated in the mathematics sessions along with two mathematics faculty members who were not experienced with teaching a "problem-solving" general education course. So that the mathematics faculty members would not be relied upon as the experts in the small groups, they were paired together which allowed them to work at their own pace and to discuss using these problems in their own classes. For the New Faculty Orientation sessions, nine new faculty from nursing, music education and religion attended.

Feedback from the inquiry-based mathematics workshops has been very positive: "Loved the examples. I am really thinking of how to incorporate the process but not the specifics"; "Made math more concrete; showed how problem solving methods apply to different kinds/categories of problems"; and "Though I work with texts, I think I could use some of the techniques in class. I now appreciate how students learn in different styles/modes."

For more information on Belmont's inquiry-based mathematics workshops, Mike Pinter can be reached at pinterm@mail.belmont.edu. ♦

References

- Bruce, Roger R., ed. 1994. *Seeing the Unseen*. The MIT Press.
- Devlin, Keith. 1997. "Making the Invisible Visible" in *FOCUS*. Mathematical Association of America. August.

Faculty Mentoring Faculty on Quantitative Literacy

An Update from Pierce College

Mary Russell, Karen Harding, David Lippman, Lynn Olson
Pierce College

This past year, non-math faculty members at Pierce College brought Quantitative Literacy (QL) into their classrooms—and both they and their students actually enjoyed it! Inspired by earlier work, a team of faculty members designed a QL mentorship program for non-math faculty that we have previously likened to creating a quilt (Wittman-Grahler, Harding, and Russell, 2003). We gathered together instructors from diverse disciplines with interests in a variety of QL skills and began teaching QL across the curriculum. This year we will expand our mentoring program so that we can address the needs of faculty members who want to incorporate QL into their classes but who cannot or do not want to commit to the year-long program.

Just before the 2003-04 academic year began, the two mentors met with four non-math faculty members who volunteered to participate in the program. The non-math faculty represented a wide spectrum of the college: Early Childhood Education, Criminal Justice, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Social Anthropology. During fall quarter, mentors led a series of workshops designed to help participants identify QL opportunities already existing in their courses, create assignments to teach QL, and develop assessments of student learning. At the first workshop, the participating faculty quickly recognized content in their course that was already oriented toward teaching QL. Each instructor then consulted with the mentors to create student projects and assessments. These projects included drawing a playground to scale and calculating the costs of equipping it (Early Childhood Education); projecting the extent of a bomb explosion in an urban area and calculating the number of police officers needed to secure the area (Criminal Justice), reading a bus schedule and map to navigate in an urban area (ESL); and, graphing information from a table and using symbols to chart relationships (Anthropology). The students found these projects challenging but engaging. Furthermore, many did not realize the

quantitative significance of what they were learning until it was pointed out to them afterwards by the instructors.

The mentorship program succeeded for several reasons. First, and most important, the program is designed to meet instructors where they are, not to restructure their courses. Mentors said from the outset that they would not alter individual teaching styles or course emphases. When instructors shared their ideas about how they might teach QL, the mentors worked with the instructors to be sure that the ideas easily fit with the existing course content. It was also important to the mentors and the participants that QL activities be integrated into the existing curriculum, not relegated to a “QL week.” Participants found that this approach to teaching QL validated their own ideas and instructional goals.

Mentors did expect to be asked to provide help with mathematical content as well as provide support and encouragement. During the recruitment process the previous year, participating faculty members expressed math anxiety. The mentors found, though, that they were not needed as much as they anticipated. Instead, the participants soon realized they would not need to teach advanced mathematical concepts, and since they knew that mentors were available to explain the math if needed, the participants’ confidence in teaching QL increased. Thus, in large part the program succeeded because participants knew that the mentors were available to provide any level of help they might need. Mentors reviewed assignment designs, explained mathematical concepts, suggested strategies by which to assess student learning, and inspired confidence overall. The mentorship program helped non-math faculty recognize whether and how their students were thinking quantitatively. As the participants worked with QL more explicitly in their courses, they sometimes discovered that in the past they had made erroneous assumptions about the level at which students were processing quantitative material.

Still another reason for the program's success is the community-building aspect. Participants discussed their ideas and assignments with one another, sometimes trying one another's assignments and providing feedback. This made the program fun and interesting for the faculty as they got to know each other and learn about disciplines different from their own. Learning about the variety of QL skills being taught—and the array of activities used to teach these skills—generated even more ideas among the participants as they recognized further QL opportunities in their own courses.

A final reason the program is successful has been the emphasis and time devoted to planning. At Washington Center workshops on quantitative literacy, the team had several days to focus on the project, brainstorming and examining our ideas—knowing that a written plan was expected at the end of the four-day period. During this time the team also defined roles for each of its members based upon his or her expertise and interest areas. The team also consulted with a variety of experts invited by the Washington Center for this purpose. The workshop design allowed the team to structure the mentorship program for the entire academic year. The structure that the team developed proved to be most important, as it effectively guided all participants as they entered and completed each stage of the process.

At the end of the academic year, participants were delighted that they had been teaching significant quantitative reasoning skills without stretching beyond their existing curricula. Indeed, participants reported feeling more comfortable with their own quantitative skills and having an increased awareness of QL: the "QL state of mind." When discussing their first time teaching a QL skill in the classroom, faculty realized that helping students learn these skills was very much within their grasp. Looking back at the mentoring process, the team realized that it had not met as often as it had expected to, yet the meetings did not seem necessary. Team members began to wonder if perhaps the elements of the mentoring program could be extended to other non-math faculty without requiring a long-term commitment from them. The team will offer one-on-one mentoring again this year, but has decided that it will also organize workshops and roundtable discussions for the faculty at large. As a professional development option, faculty members can choose from various levels of engagement, ranging from discussing how to teach QL to discussing the role of educators in promoting an informed citizenry. ♦

References

- Wittman-Grahler, Vauhn, Karen Harding, and Mary L. Russell. 2003. "Creating the Quilt of Quantitative Literacy," *Washington Center News*, Fall 2003.

News of the fire spreads, revising the original
paint-by-number scene. I have more
questions than answers, and
I'm learning that language
alone can't fuel my curiosity.
In the pool, I tread
water among mathematicians, fabricate
equations for my awe.
The fire spreads. I don't know
the rate of speed
or how many fire fighters will lose sleep
or life.
To keep my mind off the news,
I tread water in the timeless creek.
I begin to allow figures to wash over me
like my comfort with words. What poet hasn't
counted on syllables, beats,
or lines to create order?
In the valley of the Sleeping Lady, smoke
hovers over me,
everywhere fires are spreading.

Sandy Yannone
The Evergreen State College

WASHINGTON CENTER PUBLICATIONS

Gillies Malnarich and Diane Gillespie, Co-Editors

The Critical Moments Project

When students of color and other underrepresented students in higher education tell their stories about their experiences at college, often a single remark or incident is the tipping point that leads them to think about leaving college. *The Critical Moments Project* in Washington State—a collaborative initiative sponsored by the Washington Center in partnership with Seattle Central Community, Tacoma Community College, The Evergreen State College, and South Puget Sound Community College—highlights these “critical moments” in students’ lives. Students are interviewed; their experiences are written as case stories; and these case stories are brought into the public realm to prompt discussion on difficult topics and lead to problem solving that reflects multiple perspectives.

Case stories offer educators many entry points for rethinking institutional and pedagogical practices, but *Critical Moments* is primarily intended for students. In essence, *Critical Moments* is a pedagogical strategy that uses case teaching to promote student empowerment through the development of students’ critical thinking and advocacy abilities.

This new publication, funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation Pluralism and Unity Grant, introduces the essentials of *Critical Moments* work to a broader audience of educators and includes: the grounding of the method in Paulo Freire’s work on “generative themes”; the seven-step model; guidelines for writing and facilitating case stories; and in-depth accounts of how campuses have adapted the *Critical Moments* model to meet their own campus needs.

To order: Contact the Washington Center at 360-867-5611 or email washcenter@evergreen.edu.

Paperback: 108 pages 2004

NATIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES PROJECT MONOGRAPH SERIES

Learning Communities in Community Colleges \$18

includes an extended analysis of how learning communities meet the multiple purposes and pressures of community colleges, and brief profiles of eighteen programs that fit various college goals (e.g., general education, basic skills, and community partnerships). Tips on getting started, a selective list of print resources, and names and email addresses offer additional information specifically for learning communities in community colleges.

Authors: Julia Fogarty and Lynn Dunlap with Edmund Dolan, Maria Hesse, Marybeth Mason, and Jacque Mott.

Learning Communities in Liberal Arts Colleges \$18

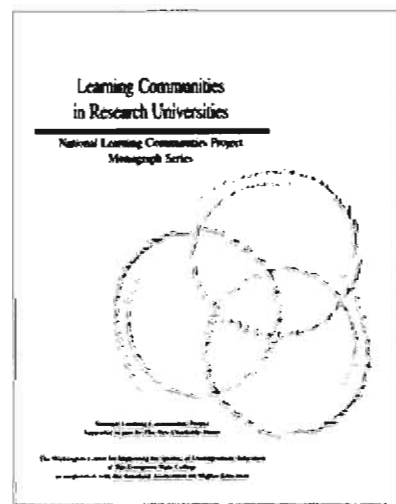
begins with a history of learning communities’ roots in liberal arts education. Four case studies examine different goals for learning communities (e.g., recruitment and retention, curriculum development), and snapshots of four other distinctive programs show the range of models for liberal arts colleges. A list of websites and publications and names of contacts are additional resources.

Authors: Karen Spear with J. David Arnold, Grant H. Cornwell, Eve Walsh Stoddard, Richard Guarasci, and Roberta S. Matthews.

Integrating Learning Communities with Service-Learning \$24

Introduces the common features of service-learning and learning communities and how each movement can enhance the other. Eight case studies follow, focusing on different kinds of service-learning integration in various kinds of institutions, plus a chapter on getting started. Additional resources include publications and web sites on service-learning, learning communities, community-based research, and reflective practice.

Authors: Jean MacGregor with Marie Eaton, Richard Guarasci, Maria Hesse, Gary Hodge, Ted Lewis, Marybeth Mason, Judith Patton, Lin Nelson, John O’Connor, Penny Pasque, and David Schoem.



Learning Communities in Research Universities \$18

includes an extended introduction surveying the history, appeal, and current issues of learning communities in research universities. Five case studies of different learning community models and brief descriptions of programs at sixteen other universities provide practical, specific examples of implementation. Websites, a publications list, and names of contacts are additional resources for information about learning communities in research universities.

Authors: John O'Connor with James A. Anderson, Jodi Levine Laufgraben, Karen Oates, David Schoem, Nancy S. Shapiro, and Barbara Leigh Smith.

The Pedagogy of Possibilities: Developmental Education, College-Level Studies, and Learning Communities \$30

invites developmental educators and learning community practitioners to create challenging and supportive learning environments for academically underprepared students. Research-based best practices in developmental education provide a rationale for adopting an approach to learning communities for developmental students that intentionally targets high-risk curriculum. Nine case studies and numerous examples illustrate this approach. Websites and additional resources for developmental education and learning communities are also included.

Authors: Gillies Malnarich with Ben Sloan, Phyllis van Slyck, Pam Dusenberry, and Jan Swinton.

Learning Community Research and Assessment: What We Know Now \$30

addresses the question "do learning communities really work?" by reviewing previous assessment studies, highlighting some single institution studies and some notable research studies. It suggests areas for further research and assessment. Appendices include annotated bibliographies, a matrix of research studies, and some commercially available assessment instruments.

Authors: Kathe Taylor with William Moore, Jean MacGregor, and Jerri Lindblad.

Doing Learning Community Assessment: Five Campus Stories \$24

focuses on five colleges and universities (Temple, Iowa State, South Florida, Skagit Community College, Portland State) and their assessment programs, which offer examples of varying goals, methods, and outcomes.

Authors: Jean MacGregor with Michelle D. Cook, Lynn Dunlap, Shari Ellertson, Doug Epperson, Teresa L. Flateby, Mary E. Huba, Phil Jenks, Yves Labissiere, Jodi Levine Laufgraben, William S. Moore, Judy Patton, and Les Stanwood.

Learning Communities and the Academic Library \$24

provides a history and analysis of the learning community movement in higher education and examples of academic librarians' involvement in learning communities ranging from structured, credit courses to more informal arrangements within courses. It considers the place of information literacy and interdisciplinary general education by briefly describing and categorizing fourteen learning community programs. Additional information includes the Association of College and Research Libraries' Information Literacy Competency Standards and a selective list of references.

Author: Sarah Pederson

Learning Communities and Fiscal Reality: Optimizing Learning in a Time of Restricted Resources \$20

reviews the critical issues facing learning communities in a time of limited resources. Different approaches to designing learning communities are discussed in terms of their educational and fiscal implications. Considerations in designing sustainable learning community programs are described.

Authors: Al Guskin, Mary Marcy, and Barbara Leigh Smith

Diversity, Educational Equity, and Learning Communities

Describes the powerful possibilities of intentionally integrating two communities of practice, learning communities and the rich history of diversity work on campuses. Six campus stories illustrate the complexities and the benefits of turning classrooms and campuses into places where under-represented students experience academic success and all students develop the habits of mind necessary to help shape a more democratic society.

Authors: Emily Lardner with Charles Ryan Brown, Catherine Crain, Grace Dillon, Celine Fitzmaurice, Carol Hamilton, Greg Jacob, Heather Keast, Yves Labissiere, David Leaman, Antonia Levi, Cherry Muhanji, Charles Pastors, Debora Barrera Pontillo, Jane Lister Reis, Candyce Reynolds, Jack Straton, Phyllis van Slyck, and Barbara Williamson.

To order monographs, please contact:

The Evergreen State College Bookstore, 2700 Evergreen Parkway NW, Olympia, WA 98505
360-867-6215; 360-867-6793 (Fax)

WASHINGTON CENTER EVENTS

Campus Equity and Engagement Retreat

November 18-19, 2004

Dumas Bay Retreat Centre, Federal Way, WA

This planning retreat brings together teams who want their campuses to become known for culturally responsive and inclusive practices from the classroom to the boardroom. The retreat is designed so that each team decides how best to use their time together.

Pre-conference Symposium and 17th Annual Conference

“Education for a World Lived in Common:

Environmental, Economic, and Social Justice”

February 17-19, 2005

The Evergreen State College, Olymipa, WA

What does it look like when we put the idea of a world lived in common at the center of our work as educators? Washington Center’s annual conference in 2003 focused on the power of small doable acts that make a big difference over time. This year’s conference theme builds on that conference by asking us to share our visions of what we are hoping to create together.

Registration forms are available at www.evergreen.edu/washcenter/events.

Curriculum Planning Retreats

April 21-22 and May 12-13, 2005

Rainbow Lodge, North Bend, WA

The Washington Center Curriculum Planning Retreats are designed for faculty teams who anticipate working together in a learning community of one sort or another—from coordinated studies programs, to clustered courses, to linked or paired classes. The retreats are structured so that teams can choose to participate in workshops or plan on their own with visits from experienced learning community practitioners. The grounding for all the workshops at the retreat is a commitment to create curriculum that engages students and faculty, leading to learning that lasts. Some teams may elect to use the occasion of the retreat to sequester themselves for an extended planning session, with or without the assistance of a resource person from another school. Based on previous experience, those teams will find the setting restful and meal-time conversations with colleagues at other institutions stimulating.

Check www.evergreen.edu/washcenter for event details, registration forms and the conference call for proposals.

EDUCATION FOR A WORLD LIVED IN COMMON: ENVIRONMENTAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Washington Center's 17th Annual Conference
The Evergreen State College
February 17-19, 2005

Thursday, February 17, 2005

Symposium

The spirit of this symposium is grounded in a critical appraisal of international education as practiced in the United States over the past several decades. The intention behind the symposium is to discuss the possibilities for building on and going beyond international education as we know it. We will ask ourselves what education for global literacy and global citizenship should look like in practice today. The symposium includes an opening and closing plenary, and a series of concurrent sessions whose purpose is to create opportunities for participants to learn about the work that is occurring across campuses to develop the requisite capacities of global citizenship.

Registration for the symposium is \$40 and includes lunch.

Student Book Seminar

on *Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities* with Rebecca Solnit

6:00 - 8:00 pm TESC Longhouse

Admission is free.

Friday - Saturday, February 18-19, 2005

Conference

At the foundation of this conference is the work of two writers. Rebecca Solnit's recent book, *Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities* will be the focus of the student book seminar on Thursday evening. Her Friday morning plenary is tentatively entitled "Hope as an Act of Defiance: Global Restlessness and the Extraordinary Power of Imagination." Greg Cajete's book, *Look to the Mountain: An Ecology of Indigenous Education*, will be the basis for his plenary address on Saturday morning that focuses on the transformational nature of Indigenous education. Cajete's book, *Igniting the Sparkle: An Indigenous Science Education Model (1999)*, will be the focus for a workshop on Saturday afternoon. Both speakers are fearless in recognizing the need to work for justice, drawing on the legacies we have for hope. Each will invite us to develop strategies for sustaining ourselves and our students as we work to transform our shared world.

Registration for the conference is \$150 postmarked before 1/28/05.

Call for Proposals (due December 3, 2004)

Pre-conference Symposium

We invite session proposals that focus on: global human rights in the interdisciplinary classroom, global literacy in math and natural sciences, humanities, social sciences, local communities, students' perspectives on global literacy, and from multiculturalism to global literacy.

Conference Sessions

What do we want students to understand about the intertwining strands of environmental, economic and social justice? *How* do we help students appreciate that they are the inheritors of our collective past and shapers of our collective future? *What* are the key concepts and ways of knowing that your disciplines and interdisciplinary learning communities have to contribute to the core knowledge needed for a world lived in common? *How* do you invite students to engage deeply with these concepts and ways of knowing? *What* are the core pedagogical practices that transform classrooms into inclusive and dynamic learning environments for *all* students, particularly those from groups under-represented in higher education? *How* do we encourage the habits of mind and openness of heart that lead to persistent inquiry into complex problems? *How* do we sustain hope, within ourselves, among our colleagues, with our students?

(Sessions will be 60 or 90 minutes for both the symposium and the conference.)

7th Annual National Summer Institute on Learning Communities

June 21- 26, 2005

The Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA

Application deadline: December 3, 2004

Helping campuses start or strengthen learning community programs to enhance student learning is the primary aim of this institute. Teams leave with a campus plan in hand, specifically designed for what will work best in their circumstances.

Experienced institute resource faculty, drawn from across the country to meet the needs of campus teams, work to support your planning efforts. Colleges and universities selected for this institute also have the option of a follow-up site visit by a team of consultants who offer in-person expertise while your campus team is implementing its plan.

Designed to honor and use the practical wisdom of learning community practitioners throughout the country as well as the growing educational research on what makes learning community programs effective, the institute offers teams a mix of plenaries, focused workshops designed around practical problems, and ample team time with support from institute resource faculty. Through dialogue, reflection, consultation, and dedicated planning time, each team is supported while it creates an action plan for learning community development on its campus.

The institute admits between 15-20 teams each year. Any two- or four-year college or university may apply. Because we are committed to helping institutions successfully start and strengthen their learning community programs, teams may be at any stage in learning community development. Each application will be reviewed for team composition and clarity of project focus. Teams should include a lead academic administrator, a student-affairs professional, and an individual who will be responsible for assessment. The rest of the team should be constructed based on the team's goals: likely candidates include faculty members, librarians, counselors, students, and directors of teaching/learning centers.

More information on the institute, application procedure, and selection criteria can be found at www.evergreen.edu/washcenter.

ABOUT THE WASHINGTON CENTER FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

We are for the academic success of *all* students.

“By working together across traditional boundaries of educational politics we can maximize the benefits of sharing and adapting the best ideas from each arena.”

- Booth Gardner, Governor, State of Washington
Excerpt from 1987 letter to Washington Center

We work at the local, regional and national levels with faculty members, staff, and administrators to share good practices and carry out collaborative projects aimed at improving undergraduate teaching and student learning. Through workshops and conferences, publications and technical assistance, the Washington Center promotes inter-institutional and cross-disciplinary dialogue and projects aimed at enhancing the learning of all students.

The projects we organize favor interdisciplinary and collaborative learning, support the reform of mathematics and science teaching, and embrace developmental education as an essential component of higher education.

Our assumptions

Because we work within one educational system, three major assumptions inform our practice: 1) cross-disciplinary, inter-institutional, and system-wide collaborations need to be promoted; 2) good educational practices are scattered throughout the system and need to be recognized; and, 3) systemic long-term change results from small-scale, locally determined changes in practice.

Regular funding

In the 1987-89 biennium budget allocation, the Washington State Legislature established Washington Center as a public service center of The Evergreen State College, with a mandate to work with two and four-year higher education institutions and other educators throughout the state.

Consortium members and staff

Participating institutions include 33 community and technical colleges, six public four-year institutions, one tribal college, and eleven independent colleges. Our core staff includes two co-directors and two support staff.

Guidelines for practice

We ground our work in the value of including many voices; projects have inter-institutional advisory committees and resource teams. We measure success by increased access to significant learning experiences for students, especially those under-represented in higher education.

Teaching and learning networks

The Center participates in many regional, national and international educational reform initiatives. Over 6,500 people receive our newsletters and we often serve as a broker for connecting people, projects, and resources.

Statewide and national initiatives

We raise grant funds for our projects. The National Council on Education in the Disciplines, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the PEW Charitable Trust, the National Science Foundation, the Mathematical Association of America, the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Fund for Improvement of Post-Secondary Education have supported Washington Center's work.



WASHINGTON CENTER

FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

The Evergreen State College
Olympia, WA 98505

■ Established in 1985 at Evergreen as an inter-institutional consortium, the Center focuses on low-cost, high-yield approaches to educational reform, emphasizing better utilization and sharing of existing resources through collaboration among member institutions. Established with funding from the Exxon and Ford Foundations, the Center is now supported by the Washington State Legislature.

■ Includes 51 participating institutions: all of the state's public four-year institutions, community colleges, technical colleges, one tribal college and ten independent colleges.

■ Supports and coordinates the development of interdisciplinary "learning community" programs, inter-institutional faculty exchanges, curriculum reform initiatives in science, mathematics and cultural pluralism, and offers conferences, seminars and technical assistance on effective approaches to teaching and learning.

Participating Institutions: Antioch University, Bates Technical College, Bellevue Community College, Bellingham Technical College, Big Bend Community College, Cascadia Community College, Central Washington University, Centralia College, City University, Clark College, Clover Park Technical College, Columbia Basin College, Cornish School of the Arts, Eastern Washington University, Edmonds Community College, Everett Community College, Gonzaga University, Grays Harbor College, Green River Community College, Heritage College, Highline Community College, Lake Washington Technical College, Lower Columbia College, North Seattle Community College, Northwest Indian College, Olympic College, Pacific Lutheran University, Peninsula College, Pierce College, Renton Technical College, Saint Martin's College, Seattle Central Community College, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle University, Shoreline Community College, Skagit Valley College, South Puget Sound Community College, South Seattle Community College, Spokane Community College, Spokane Falls Community College, Tacoma Community College, The Evergreen State College, University of Puget Sound, University of Washington, Walla Walla Community College, Washington State University, Wenatchee Valley College, Western Washington University, Whatcom Community College, Whitworth College, Yakima Valley Community College

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Olympia, WA
Permit No. 65