

# The V. James Renda Faculty Resource Center for Academic Excellence

"Committed to quality programs to enhance teaching and learning at N.C.C.C."

## NOVEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

### Faculty Spotlight

#### "Finding My Own Way": Exploring the Academic Experiences of First-Generation College Students through Stories of Success

Dr. Marissa Pytlak-Surdyke, Division of Business, Technology and the Arts



Marissa recently earned her PhD in Curriculum, Instruction and the Science of Learning from the University at Buffalo.

Marissa's dissertation research qualitatively explores the experiences of first-generation college students (FGCS) through

stories of success. While the majority of research surrounding FGCS frames their experiences from a deficit approach, Marissa's research highlights the experiences of FGCS who are successful completers of postsecondary education and are now pursuing graduate education, a feat generally uncommon for this population. This sociological research sheds light on the tensions within the FGCS experience in relation to challenges, opportunities, motivations, and factors they attribute to their success. Using the Bourdieuan frameworks of social and cultural capital, findings revealed that although race and gender did impact the students' lived experiences; socioeconomic status exposed the most distinct differences for the FGCS of this study. Those who identified with working-class backgrounds most strongly identified with the FGCS identity and experienced the challenges frequently attached to this population.

This research also revealed the importance of faculty relationships for all students, but even more so for FGCS who typically lack the first hand experience from their parents on how to navigate college life. Notably, all participants in the study identified instructors as a factor that contributed to their success, emphasizing the relational aspect of these connections as more important than their instructors demonstrating expertise/knowledge. Students often discussed their most influential instructors as being "human," which they described as approachable, caring, real, and kind.

### Recent Workshops

Thank you to all those who were able to attend our most recent workshops:

- *Promotion & Tenure-Track Procedures* (Wednesday, October 21)
- *Portfolio Development* (Thursday, October 22)

If you were not able to attend these workshops and would like the materials discussed, please contact Brad Wingert ([bwingert@niagaracc.suny.edu](mailto:bwingert@niagaracc.suny.edu)).

### Assessment Practices

"Assessment, Measurement, & Evaluation: Characteristics of a Good Assessment" is a 25 minute video presentation available on the FRCAE Blackboard page. In this presentation, you will learn about:

- The differences between assessment, measurement, and evaluation
- Reasons to assess
- Types of assessment for application in your classes (formative, summative, normative, ipsative)
- Objective scoring
- Subjective scoring
- Writing test items
- Benefits and disadvantages of test items
- Methods of estimating reliability (test/retest, parallel forms, internal consistency, and rater consistency)

### The Academic Center for Excellence - ACE

#### ACE Offers Blackboard Learn Support: Have YOUR Students Sign-Up Today!

The Academic Center for Excellence now offers **one-on-one Blackboard Learn support services**. We can meet with you in-person or on ZOOM to review things like:

- How to navigate through your courses
- How to submit an assignment
- How to participate (& respond) in a group discussion
- How to get Office 360 (for FREE) to submit assignments

Have your students make an appointment today by going to the link below and clicking on the link in the

**"Blackboard Learn Support"**

[www.niagaracc.suny.edu/ACE/AcademicSupportAvailability](http://www.niagaracc.suny.edu/ACE/AcademicSupportAvailability)

## Online Learning

### N2OL: Create, Revise, Refresh: Training Course for Faculty Teaching Online, Hybrid, or Courses Facilitated by Lisa Dubuc & Donna Simiele

Instructional Method: Blended (weekly live zoom sessions and online activities through the N2OL course) Zoom sessions will be recorded in case you miss them.

Begins Wednesday November, 4th – December 16th  
**Training Series Schedule -**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zFbk1vJtcmM3FBUTbCyA5KMj3eoE\\_X1f/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zFbk1vJtcmM3FBUTbCyA5KMj3eoE_X1f/view?usp=sharing)

This course is for all full-time or part-time faculty who are thinking about teaching online, new to teaching online, needing a refresher in teaching online, and anyone who is teaching hybrid or blended courses. Each week we will cover best practices and instructional design tips to help you create a course that is engaging for students, meets quality standards, compliant with Middle States requirements, and fun to teach! **You will receive a certificate for completion from the Online Learning Department!**

We hope you will take this opportunity to enhance and improve upon your online, hybrid, and blended instruction. We look forward to being your guides!

### New Zoom Etiquette Guidelines for Faculty and Students

The Office of Online Learning, Online Learning and Teaching Advisory Council "OLTAC", Academic Affairs, and Student Services are pleased to share the following Zoom guidelines for both faculty and students. If you use Zoom in your course, please share this with your students. We also added the link to the Online Learning college website pages, and both links reside in the NCCC Resources & Policies module in each course in Blackboard.

[Zoom Etiquette for Students](#)

[Zoom Etiquette for Faculty](#)

## Reflection

"We became faculty in part because we are intrinsically motivated by academic pursuits, and we cannot assume our students have this common. Constantly demonstrating relevance, making connections to interesting ideas and information, and inspiring study remain some of the most important strategies a professor can adopt."

—José Bowen, author of *Teaching Naked*

## HG Lewis Library

### Library Resources for Blackboard Courses

#### Integrating Library Resources Directly Into Your Courses in Blackboard

Friday, November 20, 2020

Zoom Meeting: 2:00 -3:00 pm

Facilitators: Jean Linn, HG Lewis Library & Lisa Dubuc,  
Online Learning

In this session, we will showcase the new LTI integration in Blackboard with NCCC library resources. In our demonstration you will see how easy it is to embed library guides, database content, and much more into your courses in Blackboard. In addition, we will share the new library basics instructional guide. Make finding quality, academic sources easier for your students.

#### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98806685379?pwd=d3dEZOdRRHZUWkNLTXNGWkFTZUpCUT09>

Meeting ID: 988 0668 5379

Passcode: 847172

### Library Resources – Films On Demand Database

Did you know you have access to over 43,000 academic video titles through the Lewis Library's Films on Demand database?

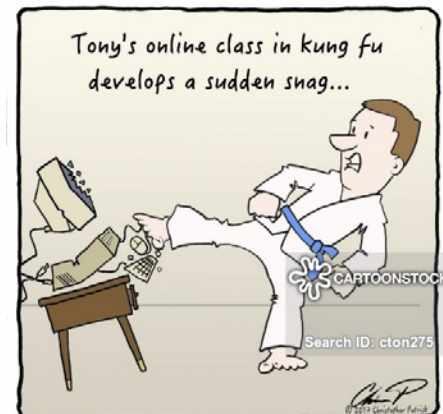
Many PBS, HBO, and BBC specials are included. Subjects are varied and include: allied health, anthropology, art, biology, business, computer science, education, engineering, philosophy, psychology, and science. These videos can be embedded in Blackboard. Instructions on how to do that are here:

<https://libguides.niagaracc.suny.edu/BB/videos>

They are captioned and have built-in citation tools.

If you would like assistance searching for video titles to be included in your classes, please contact Jean Linn at [jlinn@niagaracc.suny.edu](mailto:jlinn@niagaracc.suny.edu)

## Humor



## NCCC's Equity and Diversity



Will Brinson applies his passion for diversity and students to his work as the Advisor to the Black Student Union which, according to Brinson, “Serves as a conduit of communication amongst diverse minded students and diverse minded institutional employees.

The goal is that through a host of discussions, programming, multicultural activities, and guest speakers, we will attain and spread a certain level of respect for cultural diversity, peaceful coexistence, and inclusivity.” When asked what his favorite part of his job is, Brinson responded, “I love it all. In particular, the students.”

### Highlights

- Anti-Racist Training was provided for all full-time faculty facilitated by the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee trainers during this year’s All Faculty Meeting.
- New Faculty Orientation presentations provided for new Faculty partners to acquaint them with our campus community.
- Students and staff attended the UB Speaker Series featuring speaker, Angela Davis, an American political activist, Academic, and former Black Panther.
- NCCC had the honor of hosting Keith Boykin, as a guest speaker for a workshop on the importance of inclusiveness in higher education, the workplace, and society.
- National Coming Out Day was celebrated with students in the Learning Commons in collaboration with the Office of Student Life.
- The Committee organized a series of ‘Brown Bag Lunches’ with employees to discuss topics such as “Diversity in the Workplace,” “Are Diverse companies really more innovative?” “How to Deconstruct Racism, One Headline at a Time” and “Color Blind or Color Brave”.
- A Diversity Panel Discussion took place during NCCC’s Professional Development Days to address EDI on the NCCC campus.

### FRCAE Contact

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## Teaching Tips

### Ask Students to Create Analogies

Having students create analogies is a great assignment. We all learn new things by comparing them to things we already know. When we are confronted with something truly foreign or different, it means nothing. We have no context for understanding. Have you ever said, “This tastes like chicken,” to describe some unfamiliar food? Why don’t you say, “This tastes a bit like snake”? Because you know that if you don’t already know what snake tastes like, this information has no meaning. We all use analogies to explain things as we teach, but students often have a different context. If you use legal analogies, your engineering students may be baffled. And do not ever appeal to popular music or pop culture references from your own adolescence unless you first clarify how many of your students know this particular “oldie.”

After introducing students to Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, and Sarah Vaughan, José asks them to compare the three singers and explain the differences to a friend using an analogy that that person will understand. He learns new things as this tells him about their world, but it also reveals if they listened carefully. Some favorites include:

- If Fitzgerald is like hardwood floors and Vaughan is like shag carpet, then Holiday is stained concrete.
- If Fitzgerald is like champagne and Vaughan like cabernet, then Holiday is whiskey.

Ask students to explain the contents of the reading to their roommate, a Martian, or their mother. This works on an index card or as a video assignment.

(From *Teaching Naked Techniques: A Practical Guide to Designing Better Classes* by José Antonio Bowen and C. Edward Watson, 2017.)

## Teaching Tips

### Techniques to Check for Understanding

#### “One Minute Essay”

At the conclusion of a lesson or reading, ask students to write a brief (one-minute) essay summarizing their understanding of the key idea or ideas presented. Collect and review.

(From *Understanding by Design* by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe)