

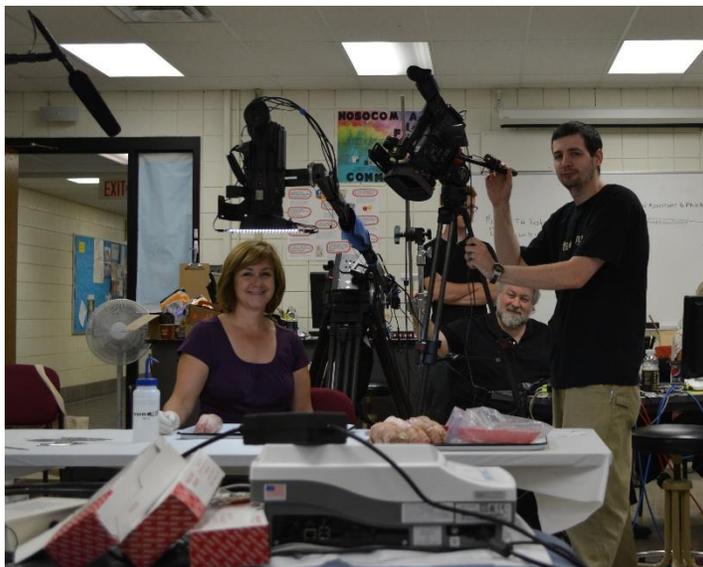
The V. James Renda Faculty Resource Center for Academic Excellence

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

DECEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

Faculty Spotlight

Yvonne Szymanski, Professor of Biology



Pearson Education recently published 39 videos that were produced at NCCC in one of the largest video production projects that Pearson has participated in to date. All 39 videos are about anatomy lab topics. This project was initiated by Yvonne Szymanski who identified areas in the human anatomy and physiology (A&P) curriculum in need of teaching and learning resources. She submitted a prospectus to Pearson that outlined the need for these digital lab teaching resources and defined the scope of her proposed video project. Yvonne authored the storyboards (i.e., narrative script and planned visual content) for each video. In addition, she wrote student assessment items for each video so that instructors could use them as gradable assignments. The peer reviewed storyboards were produced at NCCC by Robustelli Media Group, Connecticut. Bob Bucella and Justine Jacobi were significant contributors to this project. Many of the published videos demonstrate landmarks on human bones, and some of the videos deal with the microscopic appearance of human tissue. Once produced, the videos were narrated by voice artist, Dale Allen, and edited by Academy Award winner, Don Wiley. All of the videos were published on a digital learning environment called [Mastering A&P](#) (MAP). MAP houses Pearson's digital A&P resources from textbooks to laboratory simulations. The videos are especially useful during this unforeseen pandemic because they provide a visual means of teaching lab content remotely. The videos are also being used as pre lab preparation assignments and as student study tools. Here's two sample videos, [The Fetal Skull](#) and [The Microscopic Appearance of Simple Columnar Epithelium](#). Enjoy!

The Academic Center for Excellence - ACE

ACE Reflection: March 13th, 2020 by Madison Ebsary

March 13th, 2020 is a day I will soon not forget. Aptly, this was a Friday the 13th, and with news of the COVID-19 pandemic making its way across the world an unspoken sense of anxiety filled the air. The news was like wildfire across campus – “All SUNY schools are moving remote!” Confusion and a mild panic filled the learning center staff. We had expected to not return to campus the next week, as this was our scheduled spring recess time, but now returning to campus seemed unknown. One of our tutors welled up in tears at the thought of not being able to walk across stage to receive her diploma. She was returning adult student that had put forth an incredible amount of grit and perseverance to get to this point in her life. We comforted her with sentiments like “That’s still some time away!” and “I’m sure you’ll get to walk across stage!”

How wrong we were.

I can't tell you why or even how it came about, but we took a group photo of the ACE employees on campus this day. We had never taken a single group photo in the past and looking back it seems rather odd that we did, but I'm so thankful for it. I look at this photo now and see a world before masks were mandated, before Clorox wipes were coveted, and certainly before any of us knew any better than to stand side-by-side. This photo was taken over eight months ago, and while so much has changed from then to now, what remains are the people and our sense of comradery. I don't believe I can accurately express in words the amount of gratitude I have for the ACE staff and how understanding, flexible, and adaptable they've all been throughout the last eight months. I am, and will continue to be, so grateful for the people I work beside; especially during this time.



ACE Staff (Pictured left to right): N. Ambrusko, S. Haner, A. Saunders, S. Chandler, M. Ebsary, E. Welch-Ruth, L. Kowalczyk, J. Strong, D. Brown, J. Tedesco, M. Kozar, & O. Handley. **ACE Staff (not pictured):** L. Bey, V. Bilotta, K. Brown, S. Christ, J. Hall, C. Hewitt, D. Kitterman, S. Lytle, D. Mitchell, D. O'Brien, S. Schnure, R. Sessman, C. Walker

What She's Doing Now...

In 2019, Dr. Kathy Gerbasi, Professor of Psychology and former Coordinator of FRCAE, retired from NCCC. We caught up with “Dr. G” to see how she’s doing.
(Picture from FurScience)



What do you like best about being retired? Top two things... not having to grade papers and being able to get up in the morning whenever I want to. I also like being able to spend time landscaping my yard, taking walks and spending more time on preparing healthy meals.

Is there anything you dislike about being retired? I miss seeing my colleagues and meeting new students.

How do you spend your time? I am still active with my research team <http://www.furscience.com> and I am preparing a chapter on the history of anime for a book the team is writing. I am sadly not very interested in that particular topic, so I can relate to students having to write papers that are assigned on topics that don't particularly interest them. I also do word puzzles every day (Jumble, Cryptquip and various crosscode puzzles online. Crosscode looks like crossword, but there are no clues other than a few letters. Each letter of the alphabet has one number and you have to fill in all of the spaces to make words. I do peer reviews of articles submitted to journals when asked to. I have spent a lot of time this summer on gardening and landscaping. I volunteer at Messinger Woods in Holland, NY in the summer and care for orphaned and injured wildlife.

Do you miss anything about working? I miss keeping up with colleagues and meeting new students. My dogs miss coming on campus to do their demonstrations on classical and operant learning for Intro to Psych!

What is the most fun thing you have done since retiring? My husband, our three dogs and I rented a small house on the ocean in South Carolina “Low Country” in January 2020, just before Covid-19 shut everything down. We explored Savannah Georgia, Charleston SC and lots of parks, including Congaree National Park in SC and beaches for about 10 days.

In what ways if any has COVID-19 impacted your retirement? We have not been able to visit our children, and grandchildren who live in Boston, Ma. We have a grandson who is now 5 months old whom we have only seen once in person. I also was very excited when our church got a new choir director who happens to be Brad Wingert, but disappointed that we cannot have choir during COVID. I had been singing in choir for years.

What are your future goals? I want to get better at playing the guitar and the steel drums, those goals were on hold while I waited for my cataract surgery, which finally happened. I also want to work on writing dog stories and learning to draw cartoons to accompany them. Travel is on the list but not until COVID is under control in some way.

Reflection

Remember What You Know **From *The Teacher's Toolbox for Differentiating Instruction* by Linda Tilton**

As teachers, it is critical that we help our students understand how most people retain information. This has an impact on how we teach but also in how students take responsibility for their own learning. Most likely you are already familiar with the numbers that follow but you may also want to share them with your students.

Without immediate review of material, we forget much of what we have just learned within 24 hours. How the material was presented has an enormous impact on how much we will retain.

- When we learn by *lecture*, we retain 5%
- When we learn by *reading*, we retain 10%
- When we learn by *A-V presentation*, we retain 20%
- When we learn by *answering questions*, we retain 30%
- When we learn by *discussion*, we retain 50%
- When we learn by *immediate use*, we retain 90%

When learning becomes a hands-on experience for students with practical opportunities for immediate use, retention is much greater over time. As students discover how presentation in different ways affects retention, they can make choices that support their own learning preference.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Inclusion Initiatives

The NCCC Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee was created in September 2016. It serves as an initiative to actively engage the whole college community in recognizing the importance of diversity for assuring the success of all members of our college community, including students, staff, faculty, and administration, in an ever-increasingly global environment. <https://www.niagaracc.suny.edu/edi/>

Check out the highlights from our first two Diversity Dialogues sessions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGGZSIRH-nM&feature=youtu.be>



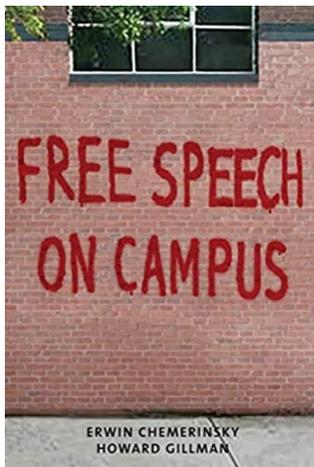
John Strong,
Chief Diversity and Equity Officer
Phone: 716-614-5900
Email: jstrong@niagaracc.suny.edu
Location: H-162

New Book Available in FRCAE

Free Speech on Campus

By Erwin Chemerinsky and Howard Gillman

Hardly a week goes by without another controversy over free speech on college campuses. On one side, there are increased demands to censor hateful, disrespectful, and bullying expression and to ensure an inclusive and nondiscriminatory learning environment. On the other side are traditional free speech advocates who charge that recent demands for censorship coddle students and threaten free inquiry. In this clear and carefully reasoned book, a university chancellor and a law school dean—both constitutional scholars who teach a course in free speech to undergraduates—argue that campuses must provide supportive learning environments for an increasingly diverse student body but can never restrict the expression of ideas. This book provides the background necessary to understanding the importance of free speech on campus and offers clear prescriptions for what colleges can and can't do when dealing with free speech controversies.



Assessment Practices

Student Learning Outcomes Reporting

Reporting your results.

1. Be sure that your Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) on your syllabus match those of the master syllabus in your department.
2. Align your assignments, activities, and assessment to your SLOs. (You may include other assignments for teaching and learning purposes, but be sure you have at least the methods used to measure your specific SLOs). Ask: **What is the purpose of this assessment?**
3. Pace your assessment strategies so that not everything is being measured at the end of the semester.
4. Document your outcomes by using the JotForm link found in the NCCC Faculty Assessment Resource Center in Blackboard.

Important You do not need to have perfect results. The purpose of assessment is to find areas that need improvement and then to improve them. In *some* cases poor results are direct correlation to a poor assessment (i.e. directions, wordy test items, etc.). We don't really know what works and how to do a better job until we embrace a culture of assessment.

Course Syllabus

Preparing Your Course Syllabus for the Semester

As you prepare your syllabus/first day handouts, be sure to include the following items:

- Course contact information (modality, location, days, times, etc.)
- Course description (taken from the master syllabus or college catalog)
- Student Learning Outcomes. Check with the master syllabus on file for accuracy and the most current version. (Include the General Education student learning outcome if your course is designated for a General Education area.)
- Attendance policy
- Grading policy (point system, percentage, weights, assignments, etc.). Include how the course grades will be converted to letter grade.
- Instructor contact, office hours and location. (Full-time faculty are required to have at least 5 office hours per week)
- Required materials and texts.
- Course requirements and expectations
- Detailed description of assignments and activities counted toward course grade
- Information for students who may be eligible for accessibility services
- Information for the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE)
- Computer usage policy
- Course schedule, calendar or outline of topics
- Important dates

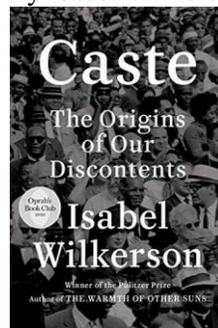
Watch for more details in the system message, or contact Brad Wingert, Interim Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs, for more information (bwingert@niagaracc.suny.edu)

Reading Matters

The Reading Matters Group has chosen the next book for discussion during the January 2021 Professional Development Days Workshop Sessions

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents

By Isabel Wilkerson



Hosted by Dr. Suzanne Buffamanti, Professor of English

The Pulitzer Prize–winning, bestselling author of *The Warmth of Other Suns* examines the unspoken caste system that has shaped America and shows how our lives today are still defined by a hierarchy of human divisions.

Teaching Tips

Making Learning Active. How am I doing?

From “Why Didn’t I Learn This in College: Teaching and Learning in the 21st Century” by Paula Rutherford

Mark each item: W for Working Well, G for Goal of the Month, or N for Not Yet

- _____ I encourage students to express varied opinions as long as they support those opinions with data.
- _____ I encourage students to think about how the information they are learning relates to other subjects and their lives beyond the class.
- _____ My students think critically and creatively because I ask questions that have more than one answer.
- _____ I encourage students to think and discuss answers with a partner or a small group before answering in the larger group.
- _____ I encourage my students to reflect on their experiences when learning something new and they often “mess with” new ideas before lectures or reading.
- _____ I help students examine their own thinking and build on their ideas.
- _____ I ask students what they already know about a unit before introducing it.
- _____ I use essential questions and key concepts to help students organize new information in ways that make sense to them.
- _____ Students share responsibility for generating their own vocabulary lists and the questions they want answered.
- _____ Students resolve their differences by discussing their thinking.
- _____ Class time spent on practice exercises and learning the facts leads to meaningful use of the skills and facts in the near future.
- _____ I encourage students to try solving difficult problems, even before they learn all the material.
- _____ Students are allowed to explore topics that excite or interest them.
- _____ I design assessments around real-world applications.
- _____ Students help determine how they demonstrate learning and how they are assessed.

FRCAE Contact

Watch the NCCC System Messages and NCCC Events Calendar for upcoming workshops

FRCAE - D106 Suite
Maureen Winters, Stenographer
716-614-6790; winters@niagaracc.suny.edu

Brad Wingert, Interim Coordinator, FRCAE/Interim
Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs
bwingert@niagaracc.suny.edu

Sudoku

							8	
7	1	6	9		8		4	
	4			5	1			
	5	4						9
8			4				2	
4			7		6			8
			5		9	3		1
							6	5

HG Lewis Library

Ask a Librarian

Your students can get research help with a librarian all day, every day! The Lewis Library subscribes to a virtual reference chat service, which connects patrons with librarians 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. NCCC librarians staff the chat service during the workday. After-hours, it is staffed by librarians from around the country.

The “Ask a Librarian” reference chat is available through the Library website, course LibGuides, and through this webpage: <https://libguides.niagaracc.suny.edu/Ask>

This page also includes Lewis Library FAQ such as “How do I choose a database?” and “Can I use a study room in the library?”

To guarantee a response from an NCCC Librarian, students can submit a ticketed question here:

<https://libguides.niagaracc.suny.edu/SubmitAQuestion>

Library Research Skills Tutorial

The Lewis Library provides access to millions of scholarly sources for research. The newly created Library Research Skills Tutorial will help students navigate the research process. They can complete the tutorial in its entirety or skip around to relevant sections.

There are tips on developing a topic, search strategies, evaluating sources, and citing sources.

The tutorial is located here:

<https://libguides.niagaracc.suny.edu/RST>

It can be embedded into Blackboard using the LibApps LTI integration or added as a web link.

If you have any questions on the tutorial, how to add it in Blackboard, or are interested in ways you can incorporate it as extra credit or as a required assignment, please let us know at refdesk@niagaracc.suny.edu.