



The V. James Renda Faculty Resource Center for Academic Excellence

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

April 2021 Newsletter

Faculty Spotlight

Laura Scarpelli, Instructor of Computer Science,
Division of Business, Technology and the Arts



Laura recently earned a Master of Science degree in Educational Technology and Learning Design from Buffalo State College. This allowed her to explore the use of various technologies in course development which was timely given the need for creative instructional methods as a result of the pandemic.

As part of her master's research project entitled "The Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation of an Online Course in Principles of Computer Security," Laura analyzed computing curriculums made up of both online and face-to-face courses in community colleges specifically related to computing security. Other community colleges have had success with combined delivery methods just as we have in our Computer Science and Computer Information Systems programs.

Laura's project resulted in an online course, "Principles of Computer Security," that has been added as an elective to our Computer Science and Computer Information Systems programs. The addition of this course provides students with the foundational skills necessary to pursue a career in the field of cyber security. With the rapidly changing technology landscape, providing a strong computer security foundation for students interested in a career in cyber security is imperative.

Laura incorporated our existing technologies with computer labs developed using virtual machines. Using an Internet connection, students log into machines and carry out activities allowing them to experience security related tasks first hand. Initial feedback from the students has been positive.

Reflection

"Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire."
- William Butler Yeats



Professional Development

SUNY Center for Professional Development

If you are interested, now is the time to sign up for SUNY CPD. Please go to

<https://sunycpd.eventsair.com/CEPortal/programs/portal> to view the programs available. Sign up by July 1, 2021 and all programs must have an end date before August 31, 2021.

Work in FRCAE

Faculty and Administrative Colleagues:

The Faculty Resource Center (FRCAE) is an integral part of the college's professional development and faculty professional growth efforts.

Since September 2020, FRCAE has been without the direct guidance of a faculty member. As a result, we are recruiting faculty to lead the center as co-program coordinators. Each faculty co-coordinator would be granted a 6-hour load reduction/overload for the academic year beginning August 2021 and will be responsible for innovating new and creative ideas to assist FT and PT faculty in professional growth with student success at the center through such activities as:

- Actively serving on the Professional Development Committee
- Co-Chairing the FRCAE Advisory Board
- Planning programs/events/workshops in the content and pedagogical areas of the college's faculty with the goal of providing meaningful professional growth.
- Work with faculty and administration to plan professional growth opportunities for faculty in area school districts

If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact Brad Wingert (bwingert@niagaracc.suny.edu), administrative supervisor of FRCAE, and feel free to ask any questions you might have. All applicants should a letter of interest by Friday, April 16.

HG Lewis Library



Library Graduation Display

Come visit the library's latest display, dedicated to past and upcoming NCCC graduates and their commencement ceremonies. It is anchored by a book display featuring titles of inspirational life and career advice. Take a fun look at photos through the years of previous graduates and ceremonies. There is also a digital display celebrating past graduation ceremonies and featuring information for this year's graduates.

On display now until the end of May. Located on the 2nd (main) floor of the library.

NCCC Authors

The Lewis Library is working on an initiative to organize and promote faculty scholarship. Acquiring faculty works has always been a collecting focus of the library. Now, you can view them as a digital collection here: https://suny-nia.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/collectionDiscovery?vid=01SUNY_NIA:01SUNY_NIA&collectionId=8125309990004845

Recent additions include: Professor Emerita Sophie Knab's "Polish Herbs, Flowers & Folk Medicine" and NCCC alum and former faculty member, Eric Gansworth's "Apple: Skin to the Core." Check them out in the Library!

We are also compiling a master bibliography of faculty articles and entries in serial publications. **Please send us your citations from academic journals, magazines, newspapers, and literary anthologies for inclusion.** Send citations and suggestions to [Jean Linn](mailto:Jean.Linn).

Teaching with Primary Sources

The New York Public Library (NYPL) produces a weekly programming series, Doc Chat, that digs deep into the stories behind the NYPL's most interesting collections and highlights ways instructors can incorporate them into the classroom. Each episode of Doc Chat pairs a NYPL curator or specialist and a scholar to discuss evocative digitized items from the Library's collections and brainstorm innovative ways of teaching with them. Sign up for upcoming sessions, such as *Manuscripts of Eminent Women* and *History in the (Zine)*

Making, here: <https://www.nypl.org/events/calendar?keyword=&target%25B%25D=cr&city%25B%25D=si&location=&type=&topic=&audience=&series=575718>

Library Learning Lunch

The Lewis Library is launching a programming series for summer 2021. More information forthcoming. Is there a topic you would like to see presented, or are you willing to present on a topic? Let us know! The sessions are virtual and will be recorded. Topics do not need to be directly library-related. Email jlinn@niagaracc.suny.edu or aquino@niagaracc.suny.edu

Supporting Transgender Students in the Classroom

July 25, 2016

[Sherry Zane, PhD](#)

As the higher education community continues to work to create a more inclusive learning environment, the needs of our gender-variant students are too often overlooked. This article outlines a few ways faculty can create an atmosphere that supports trans-identified and gender-nonconforming students.

Title IX protections

Our comfort zone as academics, regardless of discipline, is often built on basic academic assumptions and research that adhere to a male-female binary, which silences and invalidates transgender, gender nonconforming, nonbinary, and intersex individuals. Recent interpretations of Title IX

legislation by federal and state institutions now require us to think and act beyond our comfort zones so we can protect our students' rights.

Title IX is part of the Federal Education Amendments of 1972, and all educational institutions (K-12 and postsecondary) must comply with this law. Many people are familiar with Title IX protections against sexual harassment and sexual violence, but few people are aware that Title IX also prohibits gender-based harassment "including acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature" (Office of Civil Rights, 2011).

Gender diversity

As educators it is our responsibility to reflect on and challenge our gender assumptions so we can create more gender-inclusive spaces where all students are free to be who they are. As a student reminded me last semester, "We must learn to be comfortable with being uncomfortable" to create change.

Below is a list of strategies I use in my classrooms to support gender diversity. I hope they can help you shape more gender-inclusive spaces where you teach.

Set the tone

Create guidelines in your syllabus and communicate them on the first day of class:

- Syllabus: Write your name and what pronouns you use.
WGSS 1105 Gender and Sexuality in Everyday Life
Dr. Sherry Zane
She/her/hers
- In class: Introduce yourself and state what pronouns you use.
"My name is Dr. Sherry Zane, and I use "she, her, hers."
- Syllabus: Include your school's community mission and principles and connect those to written requests that students practice civility and inclusion of all perspectives, which includes students' names and correct pronouns. All students should be referred to by the names and pronouns they use (e.g., she, he, they, ze).
- Request that students contact you if they have names that differ from the roster: "If you have a name that differs from the one that appears on the roster, please inform me before the second class period so that I can use your correct name and pronouns."
- Find out where the gender-neutral bathrooms are in your building. List them in the syllabus and point out their locations during the first class.

Model desired behavior

To support our gender-variant students, we need to rethink roll call, become familiar with the importance of names and pronouns, and be willing to be advocates:

- Avoid taking attendance aloud until you have given students a chance to contact you with their correct names in case different names appear on the roster. Instead, pass out index cards, handouts, or a seating chart and ask the students to fill out name and pronoun information. You can also provide a form on your Learning Management System electronically if you do not want to do it in person.

Name on the roster:

Name you use:

Pronouns you use:

Major/minor:

Commuter: Yes or no

What are some of your favorite activities?

- If you have to take attendance verbally on the first day, use last names. Avoid making assumptions based on what the roster indicates or a student's appearance. Oftentimes, a student who uses a name that differs from the roster will contact you via email or in person to let you know. The student will not want to experience any uncomfortable situations such as being "outed" in the classroom or misgendered by the instructor or peers.
- When facilitating a group discussion, ask everyone to identify their names and pronouns when they introduce themselves. If students do not wish to use pronouns, they can simply request that people use their names in place of pronouns.
- There will be times when you hear people make name/pronoun mistakes. Please correct them in a polite manner, even if the person being referring to is not present. For example, "I believe Sam uses 'they, them, their' pronouns."

Preserve confidentiality

A student might have revealed a previous name and/or pronouns to you before changing it, or you might know what it is because you saw it on the roster. Do not reveal it to others. Comments such as "I knew Lisa when she was Dan" can be damaging to the student and also make the student vulnerable to possible ridicule.

- It is never appropriate to disclose to anyone the gender identity or sexual orientation of another person without the explicit permission of that person. If you do, it can be considered a violation of Title IX.
- Refrain from asking transgender students any questions you would not ask anyone else. For instance, you would never ask seemingly cisgender persons (people whose gender identity matches their biologically determined sex) personal questions about their anatomy.

Adopt more inclusive language

Incorporate new, more inclusive phrases to your vocabulary:

- Instead of using references to “men” and “women,” try “individuals of all gender identities” or simply “people.”
- Use “partner” or “significant other” instead of “boyfriend/girlfriend” or “husband/wife.”
- Avoid titles such as “Mr.,” “Mrs.,” and “Ms.”
- Instead of calling the class “guys,” use “folks,” “everyone,” “you all,” or “you.”
- Acknowledge the limits of the texts and research you use: “This study only focuses on cisgender heterosexual men and women” or “This study only focuses on cisgender women.”

Finally, if students talk to you about their gender identities, listen in a respectful and nonjudgmental way. Try not to show skepticism and/or disapproval. Instead, support the students by listening to what they have to say, especially when they may be offering constructive feedback for your classroom. It can be challenging to train ourselves to use new names and pronouns, but it is important to make a concerted effort and even make mistakes. Let students see you make mistakes, and then apologize and correct yourself. If students see that you are comfortable with being uncomfortable, they will learn to be, too!

This past year I worked with several transgender and gender non-conforming students to create an educational video meant for university instructors, administrators, and staff. It's titled “Transcending Difference: Recognizing and Understanding Gender Diversity in the Classroom.”

References:

Dear Colleague Letter from Office of the Assistance Secretary for the Office of Civil Rights. U.S. Department of Education – April 4, 2011.

http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104_pg3.html

Dr. Sherry Zane is an assistant professor in the Women's, Gender, and Sexual Studies Department at the University of Connecticut.

Crucial Two Minutes of Class

April 24, 2019

[Maj. Wolfgang S. Weber, JD](#)

As an educator, I have an embarrassing confession: When I was younger, I was an incredibly difficult student. Read

something? On a good day, maybe I'd do some skimming. Prepare ahead of time? Nah, another student will do the talking. Pay attention in class? What for? Why does this even matter to me?!

There within that last cringe-worthy question lies the problem. For anyone who has been at the front of a classroom, you know that one of the greatest obstacles to learning is student apathy. To help overcome this barrier, I recommend the “motivation step,” a brief, introductory discussion designed to articulate why the material is significant to a student's real-world success.

In the academic community, student apathy stems from various causes. One primary reason is students have dozens of different obligations and consequently must prioritize their time. On a regular basis, they are subconsciously selecting which responsibilities deserve their focus, and which do not.

Hence, the painful truth—if they aren't prepared or engaged in our class, then maybe at least part of that's on us.

Admittedly, the first reaction is to take the easy route and quickly write off these students: “If they don't want to learn, that's their problem!” The reality, however, is that inaction is rarely a case of animosity toward us or our subject. As young adults, the task of properly prioritizing academic responsibilities is incredibly daunting. Many students are simply lost.

That's where we come in.

As educators we are also leaders; and the best leaders help guide people when they are lost. With far more education and experience, it may be glaringly obvious to us the significance of what we teach and how all the different parts fit together. For our students, however, these connections may not be so clear and they're often left wondering why we're asking them to do certain things.

So, what can be done to fix this problem? We must promote student interest in the material, early and often: “being interested in a topic is a mental resource that enhances learning” (Harackiewicz & Hulleman 2009, 43). As a step in the right direction, I recommend including a two-three minute motivation step in most lessons. Simply put, a motivation step is an educator's conscious effort to take a moment near the beginning of each class to explain why the day's material is meaningful to the students. Not just because it may be on an exam, but rather because it will have real life, lasting consequences. It is a practice that immediately addresses that elephant in the room: Why the material matters.

To implement this, I take considerable time reflecting on how I am going to sell the lesson to the class. Essentially, I imagine myself as the subject's hype-man, answering a variety of questions: What is useful about this material? How does this relate to them? Why should they be excited to learn this?

As an example, on the first day teaching the First Amendment, I premise the lesson with the following dialogue:

I want you all to imagine living in a country where it is illegal to speak negatively about the government. How would you feel when the government starts passing laws that are detrimental to you and your family laws that negatively impact your happiness? What would you do? (Engage in class discussion, parse out the difficulties of being unable to speak out against one's government).

These are difficulties that people actually face in the world today the inability to vocalize when they feel oppressed. How fortunate are we to be in a country with laws that prevent this?! Olivia, if you had an issue with the way our government's acting, what would you do? Brendan, what about you? (Discuss Olivia and Brendan's responses).

For the next handful of classes, we are going to delve into your right to free speech. We are going to analyze what you can say, and what you still can't say even with these protections. We are going to equip you all with the knowledge necessary to know when you have a voice today, tomorrow, and throughout the rest of your lives!

While I can't be sure that these initial hype-sessions reach every student, I can report with certainty an added energy enveloping the classroom—lackadaisical stares turn to intrigued gazes. Within the first few minutes, I have initiated a dialogue that they want to be a part of because I have made it abundantly clear why it matters to them. This creates greater interest, greater conversation, and most importantly—greater learning.

When you have an entire semester worth of classes, it can be easy to get into the habit of diving straight into the required content you need to cover. In doing so, however, it is also easy for students to lose sight of the bigger picture. Instead of falling into this trap, remind yourself to be relentless about relating the material to the students' future success beyond the classroom. This repetition will act as a constant reminder that there is value in your teachings. Over the span of a semester, this can make an enormous difference to a student's motivation to properly prioritize your class.

References

Harackiewicz, Judith & Chris Hulleman, 2009. "The Importance of Interest: The Role of Achievement Goals and Task Values in Promoting the Development of Interest." *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 4:42–52 (Volume 4, Issue 1)

Major Wolfgang S. Weber is an assistant professor of Law at the US Air Force Academy.

Catching Up

**An Interview with Professor Emerita Pat Evans
by Kathy Gerbasi**

When did you retire? 2006

What courses did you teach? Primarily Human Services courses. Prior to getting the Human Services Degree Program established, I taught Developmental Psychology courses at various off site locations (e.g. Lockport, NT, Medina) as well as on campus.

What do you like best about retirement? Fewer schedules to meet. I have greater control over my time and what I do with it.

Is there anything you dislike about being retired?

No. I can honestly say that I thoroughly enjoy being retired. Although I found my career and the years at NCCC rewarding, I was ready to leave and begin a new journey in life.

How do you spend your time? Getting together with family and friends, genealogy, reading, travel, golf, piano, gardening, nature walks, volunteer involvement within the community. For several years following retirement, I continued to teach one online course per semester.

Do you miss anything about working? Not at this point but during the first couple of years of retirement, I missed the people that I had been used to seeing on a nearly daily basis. Today, I am happy to say that I have frequent contact with several NCCC friends and former colleagues, the vast majority of whom are now retired too.

What is the most fun thing you have done since retiring?

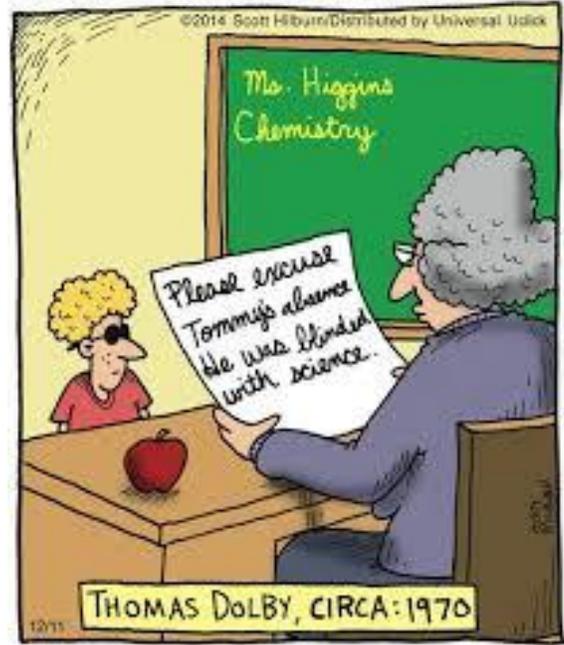
While there are several fun things that I've done during retirement, spending time with grandchildren stands out. Being with our grandchildren (all of whom live out of state) is always enjoyable but the most fun was hosting a week of Camp Nonni and Nonno last summer. Although they had been here numerous times, it had never been sans parents for more than a day or two. The children decided on the

concept of a camp as well as the name. I ordered tee shirts and other items with Camp Nonni and Nonno on them. We had contests, games, swimming, bike rides, Camper of the Day awards, etc. Camp directors (aka grandparents) slept very well each night! We were fortunate with the timing as Covid-19 case numbers were low here and travel between the two states had not yet become an issue. Camp proved to be a hit because recently we received a request from last year's attendees for a return engagement... this time for two weeks! I am, however, uncertain if the increase from one week to two weeks comes from the children or their parents!!

In what ways, if any, has Covid-19 impacted your retirement? This global pandemic has been a challenge for everyone. Fortunately, my husband and I have not been as negatively impacted as have many families. We have friends whose health has been compromised by the virus. Others in our network have had extended family members die from Covid. My support and love has been with them. The changes we've encountered are those which we have been able to meet knowing that they are temporary. Like so many other people, my husband and I have barely seen family and friends over the past year. Holidays, for the most part, have been just the two of us. We, however, have kept in touch via Zoom, texting, Facebook, etc. For example, Christmas day we participated in a three hour Zoom with 18 immediate and extended family members. Technology may have it's limitations but it has made some of the challenges of this global pandemic more bearable. In-person visits, dining out and travel have all been curtailed. The limitations on eating out have resulted in more frequent meal preparation and, at times, more creative cooking on my part. Other times, not so much!

What are your future goals? When I retired, I consciously planned to have continuity and change. For example, I continued teaching online as an adjunct, which served as a bridge to retirement. I also maintained and strengthened existing friendships but forged new relationships too. Similarly, my husband and I revisited places we enjoyed travelling to in the past. At the same time, we explored new places, had new adventures. I maintained an interest in golf but have not met the goal of improvement to the degree set. A little too much continuity there. My future goals are also centered around continuity and change while recognizing that change is often of an unexpected, unplanned for nature. The Covid-19 pandemic has certainly reinforced this. I want to remain relevant as I continue to age. Being meaningfully engaged with family, friends and community is important as are staying abreast of current events, challenging self to new learning and taking care of my health as best I can.

For Fun



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FRCAE Contact

Watch the [NCCC System Messages and NCCC Events Calendar](#) for upcoming workshops



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NIAGARA COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SUMMER GRANT OPPORTUNITIES



2021 IRC GRANTS DUE APRIL 23, 2021

The IRC and FRCAE are sponsoring instructional resource grants. Grants must support research and/or development of instructional resources that impact the NCCC student body in accredited NCCC courses.

The grant is used to cover the cost of implementation of an idea or project that is beyond your current, normal job responsibilities. Generally this project should be completed in the summer.

Maximum grant amount:

\$2,500

To access the application:

1. Go to the FYI page
2. Select Forms
3. Under FRCAE, click on >>
[Instructional Resources](#)
[Grant Criteria and Application](#)

Or check Grants and Awards on the FRCAE web page.

How to submit your grant proposal:

Please submit your proposal electronically, no later than 3:00pm on April 23.

Do you want to work on that idea to improve your class materials this summer?

- Ask an IRC member for help if you have questions about completing the grant application
- Go to FRCAE for examples of successful applications
- Grant winners will be notified in May 2021
- Winners are required to present their resource during PD days

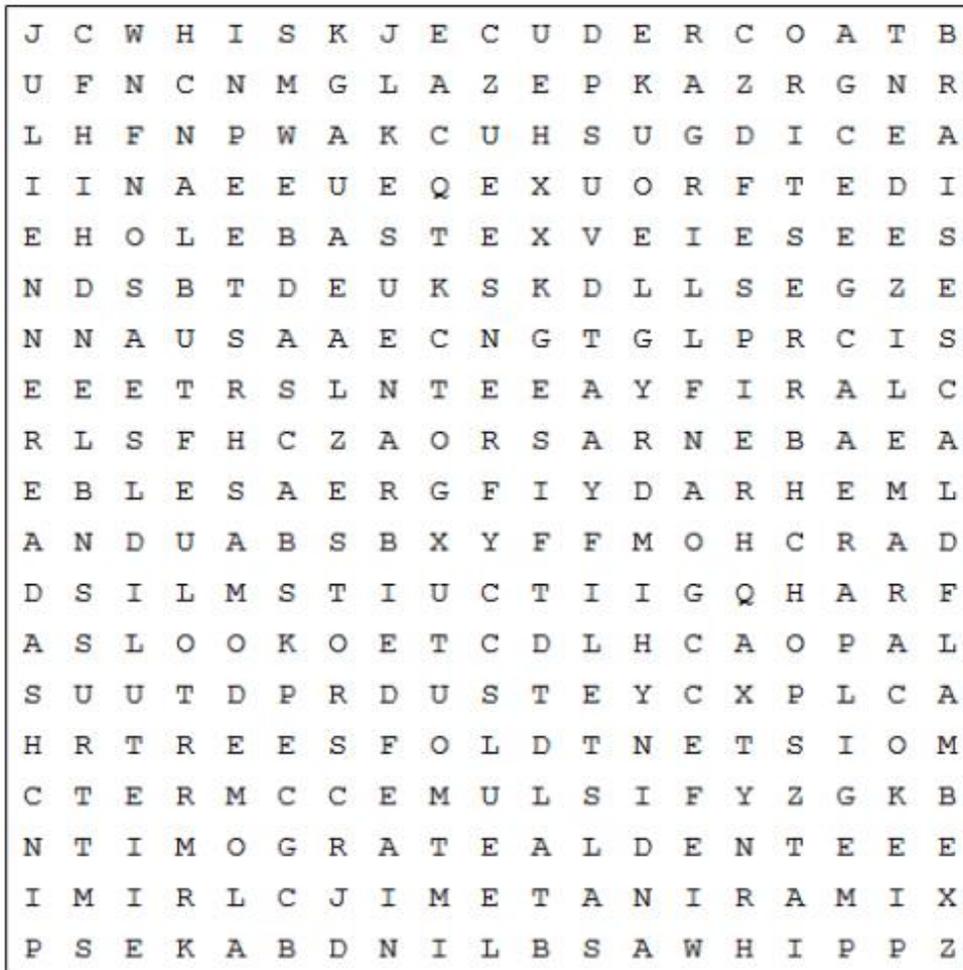
For further information:

Contact James Murphy,
IRC Chairperson at
jmurphy@niagaracc.suny.edu





65 Cooking Terms Word Search



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