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CAE Newsletter

In this issue of the Center for Academic Excellence's Newsletter, you will find news, information on CAE offerings and other campus resources, as well as opportunities to engage in various activities. We look forward to working with you this semester!

Since 2003, the CAE has supported innovation and scholarship in teaching and learning across Fairfield University. We eagerly support individual, department, program, or unit work on the University's strategic goals: Core Integration, Living & Learning, the integration of the Jesuit mission in graduate and professional education, and diversity. This newsletter highlights ongoing work with collaborators across campus on these efforts.

"What's happening?"

CAE Directorship



Dr. Larry Miners, Professor of Economics, has returned to the Center for Academic Excellence as director for the 2011 – 2012 academic year. He resumes his directorship after a year-long sabbatical during which interim CAE director Dr. Kathy Nantz, Director of Core Integration and Associate Professor of Economics carried on the CAE's mission. Thank you Kathy for your fabulous work!

Progress on the Core Pathways Project



Significant progress on the Core Pathways Project was made during AY 2010 – 2011. Under the leadership of Dr. Kathy Nantz, Director of the Core Integration Initiative (2005 – 2011), and the Faculty Directors of the six Pathways to Integration (*Engaging Traditions, Creative and Aesthetic Engagement, Global Citizenship, Quantitative Reasoning, Rhetoric & Reflection, Scientific Reasoning*). On May 3, 2011, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee approved a motion in support of the Core Pathways. ♦ Learn more about the [Core Integration Initiative \(CII\)](#). ♦ View the [Pathways brochure](#) to learn about Pathways formulation and their associated learning objectives, and the [Pathways summary](#) for student learning outcomes. ♦ Contribute to the ongoing Core Pathways curriculum map by completing an inventory of your courses as they align with particular Pathways. Worksheets available through the CAE, [email us](#) ✉. ♦ For 2011 – 2012, the CAE looks forward to collaborations with **Dr. Manyul Im**, Associate Professor of Philosophy, and new Associate Dean in the College of Arts & Sciences, who will work on continuing the institutionalization of core integration and assessment of student learning.

5th Year of Fairfield FPLCs Ready to Takeoff



In 2011 – 2012, the CAE will facilitate three Faculty and Professional Learning Communities (FPLCs)*: (1) JUHAN – Jesuit Universities Humanitarian Action Network; (2) Cities; and (3) Mindfulness in Teaching. ♦ Learn more about the FPLC program, check our [website](#). ♦ Watch for the Call for Participation in Spring 2012.

*A Faculty & Professional Learning Community (FPLC) is a cross-disciplinary group of 5-8 members, committed to a year-long teaching and learning program, with seminars and activities for learning, development, and community building. FPLCs address Strategic Goal I, on integrating undergraduate core courses with one another, with themajor, and with the mission.

Summer Institute 2012:
May 2012

**Next Summer Teaching
Conference:**
June 2013

To learn more about the
Conference visit the CAE's
website ►►

CAE online:

To browse the most updated
list of workshops & events ►►

Register for CAE workshops
& events ►►

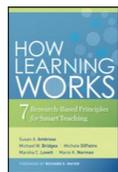
Summer Institute on Integrative Teaching & Learning 2011

The 2nd Annual Summer Institute "Cultivating Integrative Teaching and Learning" (May 18 –May 20) brought together 60 participants from different colleges and departments working on team projects, and numerous campus experts who presented and consulted with participating teams on a range of topics including: the Core Pathways, course design, course management systems (Blackboard and Mentor), e-Portfolios (Digication). During the 3-day Institute, teams worked intensely on their projects to vertically and/or horizontally integrate the Core. ♦ This Institute is made possible through funding from the [Davis Educational Foundation](#). ♦ Coming in early spring the Summer Institute 2012 call for participation!



Fairfield Learns in Action

The CAE hosted its 11th Annual Summer Teaching Conference "Learning in Action: Innovative Pedagogy, Technology & Course Redesign" with over 100 national participants. Keynote speaker [Michele DiPietro](#), executive director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Kennesaw State University, Associate Professor of Statistics, and co-author of *How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching* (2010) gave the keynote address. An additional plenary "ePortfolios in Action: 4Parts" presented by J. Elizabeth Clark, Professor of English and ePortfolio professional development leader and Marisa Klages, Director of Outcomes Assessment and Associate Professor of English from LaGuardia Community College/CUNY, highlighted national ePortfolio trends and [ePortfolio @ LaGuardia](#).



CAE hosts Back-to-School Week



To kick off the new academic year, the CAE collaborated with campus partners on a week chock-full of workshops to help faculty get their Fall courses ready. Topics included course design, the graphic syllabus, engaging millennials with creative research assignments and Films on Demand, and instructional technologies (Blackboard, Mentor, and Digication). ♦ *Look for a similar opportunity before the start of the Spring semester. Have ideas for possible sessions? [email us](#) ✉.*

Peer Review of Teaching (PRoT) Project



In collaboration with the Faculty Development and Evaluation Committee (FDEC), the CAE began work with teams of faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences (Visual & Performing Arts, History, and Religious Studies), the School of Nursing, and the Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions, on the development and piloting of peer review of teaching plans. Participating teams came together for three days this summer to work on their own PRoT initiatives. Look for the reports by these groups at FDEC's Faculty Development Day this December.

Scheduled Offerings

Among the services and resources we offer faculty (full-time and part-time) and professional staff: workshops, individual consultations on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), consultations to departments and programs on peer review of teaching and curriculum, a mentoring program for new faculty, Faculty & Professional Learning Communities (FPLCs), a summer teaching conference, funding to participate in (or present at) teaching & learning conferences, and a [Lending Collection](#). Check our [website](#).

This Fall we offer workshops on topics including *Nuts & Bolts of Clickers*, *Mentoring Fulbright Scholarship Applicants*, *Nine Ways to Use Class Discussion to Promote Learning*, among others to be announced. See emails or CAE's [Schedule of Events](#) page.

Interpreting IDEA?

IDEA Student Rating System
Learn more about the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction system.

Core Pathways Unmasked

Save-the-date:
October 21, 2011
11:30am – 3:00pm
Oak Room, BCC

Fall MAT Season

Mark your calendar:
October 11 - 24

IDEA Student Ratings Workshops

Introduction to IDEA, integrating IDEA into your course, and interpreting your IDEA Diagnostic Form Report(s), now what? The CAE and FDEC (Faculty Development & Evaluation Committee) will continue to collaborate on multiple workshops that focus on integrating IDEA into courses, increasing response rate, helping students grasp our goals, “unpacking” and interpreting IDEA reports and improving our teaching. ♦ *Dates to be announced.* ♦ *Individual consults available upon request.* ♦ Consult IDEA’s [Interpretative Guide of the IDEA Diagnostic Form Report](#), among other [IDEA resources](#) that provide guidance for interpreting individual faculty reports.



Core Pathways Unmasked

Building on the annual Core Unmasked event for students, at this year’s event the CAE and the Core Integration Initiative will highlight the Core Pathways. As Undergraduate advising and registration for Spring 2012 runs Monday, October 31 through November 18, encourage your students and advisees to attend this interactive pre-registration event to learn more about the Core Pathways and the many Core offerings across the College of Arts & Sciences. ♦ **Save-the-date: the Core Pathways Unmasked** will be held on **October 21, 11:30am – 3:00pm, Oak Room, Barone Campus Center**. To reserve your department’s table, please [email us](#).



Mid-semester Assessment of Teaching (MAT)

Mark your calendars! **October 11- 24, 2011** is MAT season. MATs are confidential, informal, off-the-record, formative feedback from your students about which activities in your classroom are helping them learn and which would help them more. ♦ To learn more about our MAT procedures, check out our summary [PDF](#). ♦ *Watch for the call from the CAE. To schedule a MAT for your course, email us*.

Tech Bytes Brown-Bag Series

Bring your lunch and join the CAE and Computing & Network Services for a series on instructional technologies. **‘Why Blackboard?’** (September 14) facilitated by Mary Kleps, this session will provide an overview of how you can enhance your face-to-face or online courses with Blackboard Learn; and **Using Digication e-Portfolio** (October 4) facilitated by Lisa Nagy, both sessions noon – 1pm, Library 107c. ♦ Stay tuned for more instructional technology brown-bags to come.



Learning Environment Projects (LEPs)

Three technology projects continue to be deployed this fall: Course Management Systems (Blackboard and Axiom Mentor), Electronic Portfolio (Digication), and Portal. ♦ To learn more about Blackboard and how to get started, visit Computing & Network Services’ [Blackboard resources page](#). Questions? Contact [Mary Kleps](#), Instructional Support Specialist. Blackboard training sessions include: Getting Started with Blackboard (September 20 and October 19) and Exploring Assessment Tools in Blackboard Learn (October 27) – to register visit the [C&NS site](#). ♦ To get started with Mentor, visit the [Mentor home page](#). Questions? Contact [Curt Naser](#), creator and administrator of Mentor. ♦ Learn more about Digication, visit Fairfield’s [Digication resources](#) page. Need a Digication account or have questions? Contact Lisa Nagy, Software Support Specialist, or Aaron Perkus at eportfolio@fairfield.edu. ♦ Expect events and training on LEPs technologies throughout the academic year. ♦ *Interested in sharing your use of Course Management Systems or e-Portfolio with colleagues?* [email us](#) to be part of a showcase event later in the Fall semester.



Have a suggestion for a teaching and learning workshop?

[Email us](#)!

Opportunities for Faculty

Fall Convocation

Save-the-date:
September 13, 2011
4:30pm
Bellarmine Lawn

Worlds Imagined Blog

[Teaching Resources](#) ▶

Faculty Development Day

Save-the-date:
December 13, 2011
Noon – 2:00pm
Library Multimedia Room
Lunch provided.

Faculty Resource Network

Learn more about the [FRN](#) and professional opportunities.

Funding Application:

CAE's Travel Grant
Apply and submit to the CAE.

Fall Convocation

Join your campus colleagues and students on the Bellarmine Lawn for Fairfield's annual Fall Convocation event: **Tuesday, September 13** at 4:30pm. This is an opportunity for the Fairfield University community to gather together to celebrate the start of the academic year and welcome newest members of our community. Featured speaker: Dr. Danke Li, Professor of History, 2011 MLK Vision Award Recipient, and new co-chair of the President's Institutional Diversity Council. Convocation to be followed by a community cookout (open to all) on the Oak Room Patio. In keeping with the Class of 2015 theme, *Worlds Imagined*, the Convocation Committee has selected a number of materials for faculty and staff to consider for use in curricular and co-curricular programming throughout the year. Materials include streaming videos, articles, books, documentaries, websites centered around the global citizenship theme. Visit the [Worlds Imagined blog](#) to learn more and inspire students to imagine, create, and be actors in our world.



Faculty Development Day – Peer Review

Save-the-date! **December 13, 2011**. FDEC's Faculty Development Day will feature your colleagues who have been working on developing peer review of teaching and curriculum systems. Their work has been funded by the [Davis Educational Foundation](#). Work ranges from sharing syllabi, assignments & activities, developing teaching circles, to tailoring processes and forms for observation of classroom, laboratory, clinical or studio, to curriculum mapping and aligning IDEA rating goals with departmental learning goals. ♦ *To discuss a possible department or program consultation on the peer review of teaching and curriculum, just [email us](#).*

Faculty Resource Network

Going on sabbatical? Could use NYU resources in your teaching and research? Interested in connecting with colleagues across disciplines? Participate in Faculty Resource Network offerings! The [Network Winter 2012](#) (January 9 – 13) features **seminars** on literatures, climate, and women of the Atlantic. No fee for participation, but you request travel funding from your program. Application deadline: October 7, 2011. ♦ Other opportunities include: in Spring 2012 the **Semester Scholar-in-Residence** program, application deadline: September 9, 2011; and **University Associate**, application deadline: October 7, 2011. ♦ To apply for these opportunities, contact [Larry Miners](#), *Fairfield FRN liaison*.



Writing Circles or Pairings

Increasingly, groups of 3-5 faculty meet every 2 weeks, for 1 hour, no homework assigned. Some check in the first 10-15 minutes on how writing went. The person "up" then gets the remaining time, whether to put an idea into words, vent about obstacles or break up a draft conference proposal or article among participants for feedback or proofing. Resources on **getting writing done** and journal outlets are available on the [CAE site](#). To find others interested, just [email the CAE](#).



CAE's Grant for Teaching & Learning Conference Participation

With support from the Davis Educational Foundation, the CAE is pleased to offer faculty travel grants to participate in teaching & learning conferences. Please contact us prior to registering. ♦ *For an application, [email the CAE](#).*

Have questions about these opportunities?

[Email us](#) ✉!

CAE Lending Collection

Come to the library lower level and browse our lending collection.

Workshop:

Nine Ways to Use Class Discussion to Promote Transformation

Monday, September 19
11:30 am – 1:00pm
Library 107c
Lunch provided.

CAE Resources

Teaching Handouts

Browse the CAE's Articles

Media Resources

Video and film streaming available:

- Films on Demand ▶▶
- Online Streaming ▶▶
- NBC Learn in Blackboard ▶▶

Teaching Resources & Tips

Check Out the CAE's Lending Library!

We lend over 600 books and resources, on grading, discussion, teaching in specific disciplines, etc. [Search online](#) (location: CAE-Lower Level) or browse our shelves (by Library 107A&B), and check materials out at circulation.



📖 **Book Highlight:** Donald Finkel's *Teaching with Your Mouth Shut* (2000)

Finkel short book aims to get students to keep “continuing their conversation in places where they naturally get together... throughout unschooled parts of students’ lives” (p. 50). But letting inquiry guide classroom activity, refusing to lecture, and entertaining the unpredictability of spontaneous discussion are not easy and thus create anxiety. The result, as Finkel describes, is that “If you have been subjected to Telling most of your life as a student, you will probably end up teaching through Telling—even if what you have been told is that Telling is ineffective. The medium is a stronger message than the message itself” (p. 160). Yet “thinking on your feet” can be so demanding. “The most difficult challenge for the teacher in the open-ended seminar derives from the unpredictability of spontaneous human conversation” (p. 41). In answer, the author recommends that professors tolerate unpredictability, use open-ended, probing questions, and all the while stay with their own sense of surprise and learning anew.

CAE shelves: ACTL 0025.

Tipsheets, Articles, and Handouts on Teaching & Learning

Browse [online](#). Categories include: active learning tips, collaborative learning (in 60 seconds or less), critical thinking, diversity & service learning, and integrative learning techniques.

📖 **Chapter Highlight:** Robert Boice's *Advice for New Faculty Members* (2000)

From Bob Boice's classic manual, as useful to new faculty as to veterans seeking renewal—according to our colleagues. This [chapter](#) includes 8 rules proven effective steps, supported by research, on the balance of teaching, research and service. Among the most powerful tips: Prepare in brief, regular sessions (rather than wait for big, often hard-to-find, chunks of time). Used by some writing circle faculty ([email](#) us to join one).

Streaming Videos & Films for the Classroom – 3 resources available



The DiMenna-Nyselius Library recently added 5,500 new streaming videos to its collection with the purchase of **Films on Demand** (a.k.a. Films for the Humanities and Sciences). Videos from various disciplines are available from any internet connection, can be shared, linked to, or embedded in a web page, and are available in a variety of formats. Access Films on Demand from the Library's [database page](#). Learn more about Films on Demand by visiting the Library's [Films on Demand Best Bets page](#). Questions? Contact [Philip Bahr](#), Reference & Media Librarian. ♦ Additionally, Fairfield University offers **online streaming** so faculty and students can have 24/7 access to digital academic content through QuickTime Streaming service. Computing & Network Services, DiMenna-Nyselius Library, and the Media Center partner up to help faculty put their digital content onto the streaming server. Learn more about how to get movies digitized, request a movie for a class, and how students gain access to movies by visiting the [Online Streaming Movie Resource Page](#). For questions about the digitization process, e-mail [Jean-Henry Mathurin](#) at the Media Center. For questions about the online movie database, contact the C&NS helpdesk at cns@fairfield.edu or ext. 4069. ♦ Blackboard Users, this Fall the University is piloting the [NBC Learn](#) extension for Blackboard Learn. **NBC Learn Higher Ed** is a collection of primary source videos, newsreels, documents, and images that can be used for research, projects, and in classroom and online teaching. Media can be downloaded and embedded directly in the Blackboard course environment. Questions? Or think this extension should be purchased, please contact [Mary Kleps](#), Instructional Support Specialist, C&NS.

Did You Know?

Efforts to demystify the A-word (Assessment) are underway at Fairfield! Campus resources are available to assist faculty and programs in understanding what and how students are learning. [Dr. Christine Siegel](#), Associate Dean for the Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions, Associate Professor of School Psychology and the new **Faculty Consultant for Assessment of Learning** is available to consult with departments and interdisciplinary programs to help with the development or redevelopment of assessment plans. Christine will assist the University design a plan to assess the effectiveness of the Core curriculum. ♦ Additionally, [Dr. Curt Naser](#), Associate Professor of Philosophy, creator of Mentor, and **Facilitator for Academic Assessment** is available work with units across campus that use Axiom Mentor as a tool to gather and sort evidence of student learning. ♦ Visit the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) [assessment resources page](#) to learn about national best practices; and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Commission on Institutions of Higher Education [assessment resources page](#).

Fairfield's Vision for Teaching and Learning

Teaching at Fairfield is gradually undergoing a culture change in at least four main ways:

- (a) Better clarifying the goals of a Fairfield education (hence the six Pathways to Integration; see the [page of learning outcomes](#)), so students get the point of it all;
- (b) Checking better how well our students achieve those goals: what our students 1) know, 2) can do and 3) care about (hence the renewed work on “assessment of student learning”), so we find out whether they’re getting it;
- (c) Reflecting better on our own teaching practice (hence “[peer review of teaching](#)” pilots in numerous departments, to include not only classroom observation and [IDEA student ratings](#) but materials and teaching philosophy, both for purely improvement purposes and for decisions like annual reviews and rank & tenure), so we keep learning ourselves;
- (d) Better using technologies for all the above, especially through learning management systems like [Blackboard](#) and [Mentor](#), and [Digication](#) ePortfolio, a tool that lets students and faculty alike store work, reflect on it, and share it with others – all in one place.

Your Feedback

We welcome comments on our newsletter, suggestions for workshops, teaching tips. [Email us](#) !

The CAE Team is here to help!



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Email, call, or visit us in the DiMenna-Nyselius Library lower level.

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