



# Excellence in Teaching Matters

Volume 4, Issue 2

Spring 2013

## Message from the Director

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back for another semester of innovative teaching and student learning! In this issue of our newsletter, we hope that you'll enjoy reading MJ Potvin's tips on flipping the classroom (pgs. 1 & 9) and Laurie Levesque's book review (pg. 5). Also, don't miss reading about our fall speaking event where we hosted Dr. Mathew Ouellet (pg. 6).

During the fall semester, the CTE staff have been busy preparing two new programs for the Suffolk community. Check out more information on the Hybrid Course Design Institute (pgs. 2 & 3) and Faculty and Professional Learning Communities (pg. 2). As the semester progresses, we'll be offering more information about how to join us in these new opportunities to learn more about the latest schol-

arship on teaching and classroom innovations.

We also hope that you'll consider applying for one of our Teaching Innovation Grants (pg. 4) or join our Spring "Pass-the-Book" Group (pg. 8), where we'll be reading Claude Steele's *Whistling Vivaldi*. As always, we hope that you'll bookmark our spring events calendar and join us for a faculty luncheon or workshop.

This semester, we'll continue to host our writing groups and we'll also host a second round of "Grading Daze," a week where the CTE space is open to you (with snacks) to help you get your grading done. We wish you the best during a busy spring semester. Summer will be here before you know it!

## Flipping Out in my Classroom by MJ (Pelletier) Potvin

Educators at all levels of the teaching spectrum are abuzz these days with talk of hybrid learning. Websites like sophia.org house libraries of videos posted by elementary and high school teachers and offer certification in "flipping the classroom". Khan Academy offers thousands of free videos on topics ranging from arithmetic to art history, modules for students to practice their skills and applications for teachers to track student progress and focus their efforts on the individuals who most need their attention. John Green (author and one of the "vlogbrothers") produces fast-paced, humorous and informative YouTube

"crash courses" in world history. The Harvard-MIT initiative called edX has made world-class university education available free to everyone. When I was an undergraduate in 1986, we had textbooks and maybe some overhead slides. Personal computers were non-existent. How far we've come.

In October 2012, more than a dozen faculty members joined me for a lively, interactive presentation on my "Adventures in the Flipped Classroom". A bit of background: I began teaching online versions of my graduate intermediate accounting courses in Spring 2011. (continued on page 9)

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### CTE by the Numbers

#### Fall 2012

- **79** instructors received thanks through the CTE "thank-a-prof" program
- The second round of TEALIGs funded **4** faculty working on research projects (more info. pg. 4)
- **24** faculty attended our inaugural Grading Daze hosted during finals week (more info. pg. 2)

The CTE has received a generous grant from the Davis Educational Foundation to develop and implement a Faculty and Professional Learning Community (FPLC) program over the next three years. FPLCs are structured communities that will offer the space for 8-10 cross-disciplinary faculty members, staff and/or administrators to engage in active and collaborative conversations every three weeks about teaching and learning. This program has been designed to support the curricular objectives in the Strategic Plan for undergraduate education such as implementing hybrid teaching and learning models, increasing students' multi-cultural competencies, and encouraging our students as entrepreneurs and innovative thinkers. About 85% of this grant will go directly to as many as 40 faculty—divided among four FPLCs—per year to spend on teaching innovations. This program will be launched this semester...so watch out for more information about how to apply over the course of Spring 2013!

## Hybrid Course Design Institute (HCDI)

Another new program piloting during Spring 2013 is the Hybrid Course Design Institute. This is a six-week program that includes face-to-face and online activities that simulate the experience of taking a hybrid course. Completion of the Course Design Institute (CDI) is highly recommended prior to signing up for the HCDI. If you are interested in taking the HCDI you must be able to commit to attending all six face-to-face sessions.

Watch your email for more information on this exciting new initiative. If you have any questions about the HCDI do not hesitate to get in touch with the CTE!

(for more information see the flyer on the following page)

## Grading Daze

At the end of the fall semester, the CTE piloted a new programming event: Grading Daze. During this week-long event, the CTE provides the space, snacks, and support for you to drop-in and get some of your grading done. Okay, so while we do provide the space and snacks, it is the folks who stop by to grade that will provide you with your cheering (lets-get-this-grading-done) committee! Keep a look out for further details about the Grading Daze event at the end of spring semester; it runs Monday-Friday of finals week from 9am to 4pm in the CTE space on the 12th floor of 73 Tremont Street. No need to RSVP—just stop by if you can. We hope to see you there!

### Upcoming Events:

**(All events held at CTE on the 12th floor of 73 Tremont unless otherwise noted)**

#### January

**1/18— Pass-the-Book Launch**

**1/23— Writing Group Kick-Off Event**  
noon-1pm

**1/24—TEALIGs Information Session**  
10-11am

**1/29—Faculty Lunch Series**  
noon-2pm

**1/31—Faculty Workshop**  
Responding to Student Writing  
1-2:30pm

#### February

**2/4—3/25—Hybrid Course Design Institute**  
10am-noon & 1-4pm each Monday of the week (NOT on 2/18 & 3/11)

**2/8—Writing Lockdown**  
9am-4pm  
Location: TBD

**2/20—Faculty Workshop**  
Hybrid Course Resources  
1-2:30pm

**2/27—Faculty Lunch Series**  
noon-2pm

**2/28—Faculty Workshop**  
iPads and Accessibility Apps  
1-2:30pm

# Center for Teaching Excellence Hybrid Course Design Institutes



The **Hybrid Course Design Institute** is a six-week program that includes face-to-face and online activities that simulate the experience of taking a hybrid course. Participants must commit to attending all six sessions. Completion of the CTE Course Design Institute is highly recommended prior to signing up. HCDI sessions are capped at 15 participants so sign up now!

**As we prepare to launch the HCDI in summer 2013, please check-in with the CTE website regularly for the most up-to-date information about this exciting new initiative!**

**For more information on upcoming Hybrid Course Design Institutes or to register, call CTE at 617-573-8222 or email Christina DiRico ([cdirico@suffolk.edu](mailto:cdirico@suffolk.edu)).**

Upon completion of the HCDI, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate competency with hybrid course design principles and a range of hybrid teaching methods through the creation of a course structure that emphasizes active learning and student engagement.
- Adapt F2F activities for online learning.
- Assess student learning in a hybrid course environment and evaluate which assessment methods are best for F2F versus hybrid employment in a particular discipline.
- Support students in hybrid learning environments.
- Identify where to find help at Suffolk to troubleshoot technology concerns and issues.



The CTE Teaching and Learning Innovation Grants (TEALIGs) provide seed funding of up to \$2000 to encourage new and innovative ideas designed to continue to improve and sustain the quality of education at Suffolk University. Awards support projects that directly enhance the learning experience of Suffolk students. TEALIGs have two funding cycles:

	<b>Fall Funding Cycle</b> (for funds to be used January 1-June 30)	<b>Spring Funding Cycle</b> (for funds to be used July 1-December 31)
<b>Application Due</b>	October 15th	February 15th
<b>Decision Received</b>	November 15th	March 15th

It is expected that awardees will participate in a showcase to highlight their accomplishments and/or learning, depending on the award, and disseminate their work to the Suffolk Community through, at minimum, a presentation at the Center for Teaching Excellence or the annual CTE Technology Symposium.

Please submit all applications to Katie Linder (klinder@suffolk.edu) by the deadlines listed above.

For more information about these grants (including FAQs and Application Form), please see: <http://www.suffolk.edu/research/50721.html>

### **Congratulations to our Fall 2012 TEALIG awardees:**

Micky Lee (CAS): Teaching Media Theory Through Praxis

Susan Orsillo (CAS): Open Educational Resources for the online course "Abnormal Psychology"

David Schumaker (CAS): Clinical Interviewing Strategies for Assessing Suicide Risk

Monika Raesch (CAS): Engaging Students via Educational Interactive Games

## TEALIG INFORMATION SESSION

The CTE is hosting an information session about TEALIGs on **Thursday the 24th of January from 10-10:45am** in the CTE space on the 12th Floor of 73 Tremont Street. Stop by to learn more about the funding the CTE provides for Open Educational Resource (OER) Development, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), and Travel Funds (for faculty who want to present at educational conferences).

Refreshments will be provided. We hope to see you there!

### **Upcoming Events:**

**(All events held at CTE on the 12th floor of 73 Tremont unless otherwise noted)**

#### **March**

**3/7— Faculty Workshop**  
Curriculum Design  
1-2:30pm

**3/8— Writing Lockdown**  
9am-4pm  
Location: TBD

**3/11—3/14—Course Design Institute**  
10am-3pm each day

**3/25—Thank-a-Prof Launch**

#### **April**

**4/3— Faculty Workshop**  
Tips & Strategies for Effective Grading  
1-2:30pm

**4/11—Faculty Lunch Series**  
noon-2pm

**4/23—Pass-the-Book Discussion**  
1-2:30pm

**4/26— Writing Lockdown**  
9am-4pm  
Location: TBD

**4/29—5/3—Grading Daze**  
9am-4pm each day



The CTE has many books that focus on active learning including what it is and how to promote it in your teaching. Some of these titles are:

### **Promoting Active Learning**

Chet Meyers & Thomas B. Jones

### **Student Engagement Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty**

Elizabeth F. Barkley

### **Collaborative Learning Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty**

Elizabeth F. Barkley, K. Patricia Cross & Claire Howell Major

### **Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom**

(see review below)

Charles C. Bonwell & James A. Eison

### **Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers**

Thomas A. Angelo & K. Patricia Cross

### **Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom**

John C. Bean

(more information about the Lending Library on page 6)

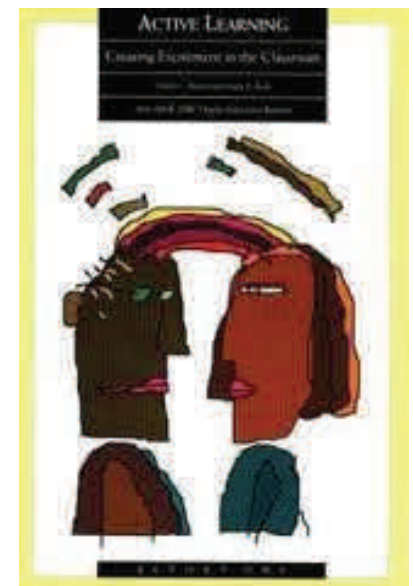
## Book Review: Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom

This small paperback is just right for a short targeted read focusing on two key areas: a better understanding of active learning and concrete suggestions on how to make that happen. Though published 20 years ago, the authors present clearly and succinctly many techniques that are useful in today's classroom. Examples are given of how to embed various types of brief interactions into lectures so as to maintain student interest as well as increase retention and processing of concepts. The suggestions are backed by research on the learning impact of these activities.

A very useful section of the book focuses on carefully chosen discussion questions. The first stage builds a supportive classroom environment, and the second structures an effective class discussion by using certain types of questions to lead students to deeper and more engaged thinking about a subject. The authors' suggestions around active learning in large classes can be skimmed or skipped. These are only minimally useful as they predate the ability to show video clips in

class, or the use of clickers, iPads or computers in the classroom. Newer publications likely provide better overviews of best practices for active learning in large courses using technologies, simulations, and the like.

The other useful sections in this book are its discussion of barriers to change and a comparison of strategies vs. risk. They articulate how faculty are less likely to design engaged courses built around active learning due to constraints imposed by professional identity as well as the pressure to 'get through the material'. An insightful discussion is presented on the perceived risk of trying new classroom techniques or approaches. The authors offer a comparison of active learning strategies based on two dimensions: level of engagement and perceived risk. This guidance will be helpful to faculty considering how they might experiment with pedagogical changes to increase student engagement.



Review written by  
Laurie L. Levesque

Starting on the 1st of December, 2012, we instituted a new lending policy in conjunction with completing the steps necessary to automate checking out books from our Lending Library. All of our titles are now catalogued using My Library—an app for the iPad.

### Checking books out:

You may check books out for an initial period of **3 weeks**. We will contact you near the end of this initial 3 week period about returning the book; if you still require the book, you may renew it twice thereafter (2 weeks per renewal).

Please be sure to check out any books you want with a CTE staff member. Before leaving the library, please bring the book to either Christina DiRico (office #1285), Katie Linder (office #1294C), or Danny Fontaine (office #1283) as we need to check out the book(s) using our automated issuing system.

If no-one is around to check-out a book for you, please fill in one of the purple laminated cards located at the library so that one of us can issue your book(s) electronically.

You are responsible for each book that you check out. Should you misplace a book you will be responsible for covering the costs of a replacement copy.

### Returning books:

Please be sure to return any books to a CTE staff member. Please bring the book to either Christina DiRico (office #1285), Katie Linder (office #1294C), or Danny Fontaine (office #1283) as we need to return the book using our automated issuing system.

If no one is around to collect your books, please leave them on Christina's desk (office #1285) with your name.

## Fall Teaching Luncheon: An Intersectional Model for 21st Century Excellence in Multicultural Teaching and Learning

On Monday the 1st of October 2012 the CTE welcomed Dr. Mathew Ouellett to campus for our annual Fall Teaching Luncheon. This year's topic—Multicultural Teaching and Learning—drew an audience of faculty and staff from across campus to hear Dr. Ouellett's presentation. Both deeply personal and humorous and lighthearted, Dr. Ouellett shared many insightful experiences and suggestions for why it is so important to embrace the diversity of our students, to engage students in rich discussions about their educational experiences including what they bring as unique—but diverse—individuals to the learning experience, and why it is important and necessary for faculty to begin and sustain dialogues on “hot topics” with their students.

Some of the many important lessons and useful suggestions that Dr. Ouellett shared with the audience include:

- clearly state course goals and learning objectives and link hot topic conversations to objectives for the course

- embed multicultural competencies as a course goal
- hot topics involve a lot of emotion; it is important to acknowledge this
- intentionally choose the hot topics to include in your course to better manage the learning experience
- model ignorance and thereby encourage your students to ask questions

- bring the affective out in the open: after a difficult discussion, ask students to anonymously write down an emotion they are feeling and read this emotion to the class

- create a climate where students can “take it back” or admit they have changed their thinking

- let students interact with hot topics through individual assignments



Many of Dr. Ouellett's talking points and suggestions informed our decision for *Whistling Vivaldi: how stereotypes affect us and what we can do*—as this semester's Pass-The-Book choice (more information on page 8)

## Work with a CTE Staff Consultant

### Upcoming Events:

(All events held at CTE on the 12th floor of 73 Tremont unless otherwise noted)

#### May

#### 5/20— Sensory Disabilities Institute

10am-2pm

#### 5/22—5/23—Technology Symposium

Suffolk University Law School  
8am-4pm each day

#### 5/28—5/31—Course Design Institute

10am-3pm each day

#### June-July

#### 6/4—7/2 & 7/16—Hybrid Course Design Institute

10am-noon & 1-4pm each Tuesday of the week

#### 7/17—8/21— Hybrid Course Design Institute

10am-noon & 1-4pm each Wednesday of the week

#### 7/8—7/11—Course Design Institute

10am-3pm each day

Individual faculty consultations are designed to provide support for faculty and lecturers who would like to improve their teaching or learn more about teaching strategies and learning theory. Instructors work one-on-one with a CTE staff member based on their own goals and needs.

During an initial meeting, the instructor will outline the issues that they want to explore and the CTE staff member consultant will provide resources, support, and a plan for action that may include a classroom observation, gathering additional feedback from students, reviewing previous evaluations, or meeting regularly for conversations about teaching.

Individual consultations can address a number of teaching issues and concerns including, but not limited to, assessment, active learning, the course design process, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. *To set up an individual consultation, email [cdirico@suffolk.edu](mailto:cdirico@suffolk.edu).*

## Improve Your Courses with Student Feedback

A Midterm Feedback Session is a confidential method that uses small group discussion among students to provide feedback to the instructor. The process takes about 20-30 minutes with the faculty member out of the classroom on a scheduled day.

Once a Midterm Feedback Session is requested, you will receive a form that allows you to provide us with additional details about your class. A CTE colleague will then visit your class and ask your students to respond to three questions:

1. What aspects of this course ENHANCE your learning?
2. What aspects of this course HINDER your learning?
3. What could YOU (as a student) do to make the course better for your classmates and the teacher?

The information gathered will then be correlated into a confidential report for the instructor. Once the report is ready, a debriefing session is scheduled with a CTE staff member to discuss the results and brainstorm ideas for the class.

Research has shown that faculty who conduct mid-course feedback and have a consultation raise their teaching evaluations and improve learning. To sign up for a mid-term feedback session for this semester, call the CTE office at 617-573-8222 or email Christina DiRico at [cdirico@suffolk.edu](mailto:cdirico@suffolk.edu) by **Friday the 1st of February**.

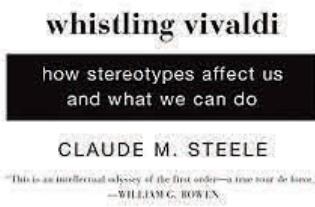
## Join the CTE Writing Group

### Do you want to write more but struggle with time management, motivation, or accountability?

During the academic year the CTE offers a writing group for faculty and staff who are interested in goal-setting and accountability. Participants meet weekly to discuss their projects, troubleshoot obstacles, share and discuss tips and strategies, celebrate successes, and set weekly goals for writing or tasks that will help writing productivity! The Spring 2013 group kick-off meeting will be held on **Wednesday the 23rd of January at noon** in the CTE space on the 12th Floor of 73 Tremont Street. In addition to discussing your research and writing interests, a weekly meeting time will also be determined. We hope to see you there!

## Spring Semester: Pass-the-Book Group

Each spring semester, the CTE facilitates a campus-wide Pass-the-Book program for faculty and staff. This semester we have selected *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do* by Claude M. Steele (2011).



Keep an eye out this spring for Claude M. Steele's book *Whistling Vivaldi: how stereotypes affect us and what we can do* which might just show up in your campus mailbox!

(from the back cover of the book):

Claude M. Steele, who has been called “one of the few great social psychologists,” offers a vivid first-person account of the research that supports his groundbreaking conclusions on stereotypes and identity. He sheds new light on American social phenomena from racial and gender gaps in test scores to the belief in the superior athletic prowess of black men, and lays out a plan for mitigating these “stereotype threats” and reshaping American identities.

**What others are saying about this book:**

“Conveys an understanding of why race remains such a powerful factor even in a society where racial discrimination is seen as abhorrent.”

(Adam Serwer - *American Prospect* )

“Startles, beguiles, and challenges as it exposes the myriad ways that threats to our identities exert a powerful stranglehold on our individual and collective psyche.” (Lani Guinier, *Harvard University* )

“An intellectual odyssey of the first order—a true tour de force.”

(William G. Bowen, former president of Princeton University and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation )

Pass-the-Book Group will be launched on **Friday the 18th of January 2013**. At this time ten faculty will be mailed a copy of *Whistling Vivaldi*. After two weeks, those ten faculty will pass on the book to a colleague of their choice. The cycle will continue throughout the spring, until over 60 faculty have had a chance to read all (or parts) of Dr. Steele's work.

If you don't happen to receive the book from a colleague, but still want to check it out, the CTE will have extra copies on hand for faculty to borrow through the CTE lending library on the 12th floor of 73 Tremont.

All participating faculty and staff are invited to a round table discussion of the book the afternoon of **Tuesday the 23rd of April 2013** where they will have the opportunity

to talk about the ideas that Dr. Steele puts forth regarding stereotypes and what they mean for ourselves and others. In addition to discussing the book's arguments, participants will have the opportunity to explore how to apply Dr. Steele's suggestions in their own classrooms

## Fall Semester: Book Group

Do you have an idea of a book to suggest for our fall book group? If so, please get in touch with Christina DiRico (cdirico@suffolk.edu) with your suggestions. If you are willing to lead a book group, please let Christina know that, too.



## Adventures in Flipping the Classroom (continued from page 1)

The prospect of condensing a 2.5 hour live class (already bursting at the seams with too much subject matter) into a 1.5 hour online “chat” was daunting: how could I possibly do justice to the material and ensure a high level of student learning in such a short amount of time? My solution was to create my own video lectures complete with slide presentations, sample word problems worked on a virtual white board, and occasional video clips of me (to remind folks that there’s a human being behind the voice). Students are expected to manage their time and progress independently throughout the week, reading the chapter, working exercises and problems, and watching video lectures before our weekly online chat. Their mission: to come to the chat session armed with questions. I listen to their feedback and run an interactive ad hoc lecture addressing the concepts they flag for further clarification. Formal evaluations and informal email anecdotes from my students indicate that this technique has worked well.

In the last few semesters, I have worked to incorporate increasing amounts of online course materials into my live classes; in effect, “flipping” my lecture out of the classroom and into the students’ homes, commutes, smartphones, and iPads. By leveraging the videos I post online, I have been able to free up important in-class time to cover the subject matter in greater depth and devote more attention to the areas students struggle with. Feedback from my on-campus students indicates that the opportunity to watch and re-watch video lectures as part of their homework and independent study has really helped reinforce their knowledge of and confidence with the material. Many students have indicated a willingness to spend more time on their

own with the videos in exchange for the chance to devote more time in class to problem-solving techniques – key skills to be honed by those individuals who plan to sit for the CPA examination.

Charming and witty though I may be, my “flipping” experiments have taught me the valuable lesson that no one wants to listen to my voice for a full two-hour video lecture. My self-imposed personal assignment for the next two semesters is to rework all my videos into shorter chunks of 10-12 minutes each – the time frame Khan Academy and other experts suggest is the upper limit for holding viewers’ attention. I grapple with the prospect that students in my live class may opt to not watch the videos – as adults, I can’t force them to do so. The reality is that this lack of preparation on participants’ part could hold an entire class back in such a fast-paced course. Additional challenges I’m working to address: Does watching my lectures on video work for non-native English speakers? (So far, yes.) How do I ensure that my class keeps pace with that of my peers teaching the same subject matter? (This has been a struggle, given that we can cover more material and in more depth.) And perhaps most importantly, how can I ensure students adhere to Suffolk’s academic honesty policy when they are taking their exams online? (My solution to-date: give timed exams and watch closely for aberrations and inconsistencies in individual performance within the exam). I sometimes feel like I’ve barely dipped my toe into the ocean of online learning. At other times, I feel like a seasoned professional who has spent two valuable years searching for more creative and effective ways to deliver course material. Either way, I know that each successive future semester will see me incorporating more technology into



*MJ (Pelletier) Potvin, Instructor  
in Accounting*

my classes and leveraging important face-to-face time via online assignments. So far, it seems to be working.

To quote Captain Jack Harkness of Torchwood (fellow sci-fi geeks, unite!), “The 21<sup>st</sup> century is when everything changes. And you’ve gotta be ready.”

***By leveraging the videos I post online, I have been able to free up important in-class time to cover the subject matter in greater depth and devote more attention to the areas students struggle with.***

The “Adventures in Flipping the Classroom” workshop drew over 15 faculty and staff.

If you have an idea for a faculty workshop email [klinder@suffolk.edu](mailto:klinder@suffolk.edu).



# Technology Symposium

## May 22nd & 23rd, 2013

### Collaborative Conversations: Teaching and Learning, Technology and Leadership

Hosted by The Office of the Provost, Information Technology Services, and The Center for Teaching Excellence at Suffolk University in Boston, MA



This symposium will focus on the collaborative efforts needed to intentionally and effectively teach with technology including such topics as:

- Collaborative approaches to teaching with technology that enhance student learning;
- Collaborative demonstrations of technology tools that foster excellence in teaching;
- Collaborative relationships that support teaching with technology;
- Collaborative innovations between teachers and students for the improvement of teaching and learning;
- Collaborative relationships among faculty, academic technologists, administrators, and/or faculty developers to support excellence in teaching with technology

We welcome all proposals. Priority for acceptance to this symposium will, however, be given to collaborative presentations that outline *why* a particular technology was incorporated into teaching, *how* this technology was incorporated, and that provides *take-away materials* (e.g., How to Incorporate Twitter into Your Teaching; The 5-Step Guide to Working with Prezi; 5 Questions to Consider for Working with SmartBoards) for session participations. Collaborative presentations that can present data about student learning are particularly encouraged.

The full Call for Proposals: <http://www.suffolk.edu/research/54436.html>  
Online submission form for Proposals: <http://www.law.suffolk.edu/symposium/>

The deadline for Proposal submissions is the **15<sup>th</sup> of January, 2013.**

If you have any questions, please contact Katie Linder, Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, at: [klinder@suffolk.edu](mailto:klinder@suffolk.edu)



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Please let us know if you would like to write an article, book review, or be featured in our "Professor Profile" for *Excellence in Teaching Matters*. We also welcome any suggestions that you may have to make this newsletter more valuable to your teaching.

## Professor Profile: Celeste Peterson

### Tell us a little about the courses you currently teach.

I teach Genetics and a more advanced course on Molecular Genetics. For me, nothing could be more exciting. In Genetics we learn how a mutation in your DNA influences appearance, behavior or susceptibility to disease. What are the chances that you will inherit a mutation from your parents? How common are these mutations in our population? We also discuss how inexpensive DNA sequencing has created large data sets that can identify genes influencing just about any characteristic. It is a real possibility that in a few years, students will be able to sequence their own genomes. In the Molecular Genetics course, we delve into the structure and function of the essential molecules of life and ask how they control cellular dynamics. Throughout the courses, I connect abstract learning with personal stories about genetics and some aspect of original genetics research. The students at Suffolk are terrific and I really like interacting with them.

### What are your favorite courses to teach and why?

Being new to Suffolk I've only taught these two courses but I enjoy them both. It's a remarkable time to be teaching genetics. Biology is a complex process where so much is still unknown, but now we have sophisticated tools to answer our questions. In my Molecular Genetics course and lab, students learn modern techniques and then set out to discover novel genes involved in protecting cells against environmental damages. We have an alumnus of our department who had a television show called "the Beast Hunter" where he goes out to search for new animal species. Expanding on the theme, I call my students in my class "the Gene Hunters".

### Where do you find new ideas for teaching?

At Suffolk, we have joined a research consortium with several other universities that is sponsored by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. It is a large-scale genomics research project on gene silencing, and the students at each school analyze a segment of DNA. Together, at the end, we expect to have publishable scientific and pedagogical results. In addition I do my own scientific research here with students, publishing and going to conferences. My students keep a blog where they send me articles and commentary – so I'm learning a lot from them as well.



*Celeste Peterson is an assistant professor of Biology in the College of Arts and Sciences. She received her B.S. in Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry from Yale University and her Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from Princeton University. Before her graduate work, she was a Fulbright Scholar at Uppsala University. After her dissertation, she completed fellowship*

*training at Harvard and M.I.T. in microbiology and biology. She has taught courses at the Harvard Extension School, Princeton and M.I.T. She is a member of the American Society for Microbiology and the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.*

### What is one of your favorite teaching moments?

I love it when my students realize that they can make an original contribution. My job is to convince them that the textbook is only the beginning and science is filled with unanswered questions. When students take ownership of their own work, and make connections with the primary literature, they start to ask their own questions. Hopefully, they will get to experience the thrill of discovering something that nobody else knows.

### Thinking about students who are 5 years or more out of your courses, what is something you hope they would say about what they learned from you?

First, I believe that many of my students will have careers in the life sciences. Two seniors who took Molecular Genetics this spring with me went on to top research institutions for molecular genetics. This is really an age of opportunity for genetics, particularly in Boston where biotech and health care are becoming the largest employers in the area. Second, I hope that everybody in the class will have a deeper insight into their own biology, from better understanding where they come from to utilizing clinical approaches such as personalized medicine. Finally, I hope that my students will learn something about the power and joys of the scientific method. I want them to take home the idea that science is not only hard work but is also a lot of fun.