



Talking Teaching

Fall 2016

PLEASE SAVE THE DATES & JOIN US FOR GREAT CONVERSATIONS . . .

Talking Teaching is a series of informal discussions of teaching-related topics—suggested by faculty members—over breakfast or lunch (or, new this semester, afternoon “tea”). Talking Teaching provides an opportunity to build community and to pause & reflect on our teaching, on the design of our curriculum, and on our students’ learning experiences.

This semester’s Talking Teaching series again focuses on “Making Connections”—creating & refining the components of our new Connections curriculum, as well as implementing & integrating its various aspects.

Topics are listed below, with times and preliminary descriptions. *We are looking for discussants for these events.* For each conversation, eight to ten discussants will bring a question or an idea to spark the collective exchange of ideas. Imagination, not extended preparation, is the only requirement to be a discussant.

Please contact Dave Chavanne (dchavann@conncoll.edu) or Tanya Schneider (tschneid@conncoll.edu) if you are interested in attending or serving as a discussant.

We hope to see you at these events!

Strategies for Talking with Students about Our New Connections Curriculum

TUESDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER, 8:30 AM to 10:30 AM

ERNST in BLAUSTEIN

What makes Connections so distinctive? Have you found it difficult to talk about the Connections curriculum with incoming students? Do you have questions about the specific requirements? Are you uncertain about the broader objectives of the program? In this session, we will discuss the substance of Connections—both the “big picture” and the smaller details—and how best to communicate essential information about it to current & prospective students, parents, and colleagues at other institutions.

Discussants include Anne Bernhard, Amy Dooling, Candace Howes, Suzuko Knott, Emily Morash, Joe Schroeder, Jefferson Singer, and Abby Van Slyck.

Designing Assignments for Full Participation

PART OF THE PILOT “TALKING TEACHING TEA” AFTERNOON DISCUSSION SERIES

MONDAY, 10 OCTOBER, 3 PM to 5 PM

HOOD in BLAUSTEIN

Achieving full participation requires campus-wide dialogues and sharing effective practices. In this workshop, members of the community will come together to discuss principles and strategies for designing assignments that allow all students to fully participate. Which aspects of our assignments encourage students to reach their potential, and which put up barriers? Participants are encouraged to BYOA (bring your own assignment) for revision during the workshop.

Teaching & Advising Our New FYs: Updates & Current Experiences

OFFERED TWO DIFFERENT TIMES:

MONDAY, 17 OCTOBER, 3 PM to 5 PM (“Talking Teaching Tea”) in HOOD

THURSDAY, 20 OCTOBER, 8:30 AM to 10:30 AM in HOOD

Our new First-Year Seminars (FYs) continue to be a key component in our Connections curriculum. As we continue to improve and refine the teaching and advising of FYs, what are the successes and challenges? How can we continue to improve the teaching, team advising, and student learning in these important courses? These two sessions will be a chance for those teaching and advising an FY to share their experiences with each other and other interested faculty & staff members.

Senior Integrative Projects & Our Pathways

TUESDAY, 25 OCTOBER, 8:30 AM TO 10:30 AM

HOOD in BLAUSTEIN

Senior integrative projects are a critical component of Connections and, specifically, our new Pathways. In this session, we will explore what individuals and departments at the college are already doing when it comes to senior integrative projects. How are the new Pathways (both created and in-process) adapting and scaling up existing practices? What are the key characteristics of integrative capstone work? Do we need to think differently if we are to successfully expand existing approaches across the entire campus? Come hear from and share your ideas with our colleagues leading and developing our Pathways.

Fostering Student Well-Being, Promoting Full Participation

FRIDAY, 28 OCTOBER, 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM

HOOD in BLAUSTEIN

How can we put full participation into practice by responding effectively to the many challenges to well-being our students face? Adjustment to an unfamiliar environment may be complicated by mental health, medical, and learning-related concerns (both diagnosed and undiagnosed). Historically underserved and underrepresented students—such as first generation college students, LGBTQIA-identified students, students for whom access to resources has been/continues to be limited—may encounter additional transition-related challenges at our predominately white, private, liberal arts institution. These concerns may include: financial difficulties, lack of adequate social support, homesickness, and a limited sense of belonging. The cumulative effects of microaggressions and underrepresentation may impact students’ emotional well-being, learning, as well as their academic and social functioning. As faculty members and advisors, we may feel unprepared or unsure how best to offer support. What are the relevant campus resources that we can help our students connect to? In this session we will share questions, experiences, difficulties, and successes, and hear from colleagues from across campus that specialize in supporting student well-being.

Integrating Scholarship & Teaching

THURSDAY, 3 NOVEMBER, 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM FACULTY LOUNGE in BLAUSTEIN

Can the classroom actually be used to enhance our research and creative productivity? Faculty members at Connecticut College are expected to engage significantly in both teaching and scholarship/creative work. Do these activities need to be dichotomous? In this session, we will explore how some of our colleagues have integrated their scholarship and creative work with their teaching. How can we use our personal-professional work to enhance the effectiveness of our teaching? What types of projects best allow for student involvement? What new opportunities for integrating scholarship & teaching might our Connections curriculum provide?