Bon Voyage to Betsy Barre

We’re starting off this semester’s newsletter on a bittersweet note. Betsy Barre, one of the Associate Directors of the CTE, will be leaving us at the end of April to become Executive Director of the Teaching and Learning Collaborative at Wake Forest University. Betsy has been an integral part of the CTE’s success, and she has been an amazing colleague. We are very happy for her as she begins this new journey, but we will miss her a lot in Herring 129!

Nobel Laureate Visit

Few can claim the honor of being named a U.S. Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Equally few can claim the honor of being named a Nobel Laureate. Yet Carl Wieman, Professor of Physics at Stanford University, is the only teacher-scholar we know who can claim both honors. So we ourselves were honored that he was able to visit our campus to discuss STEM education at the end of March.

After winning the Nobel in 2001, Wieman has devoted his recent career to advocating for reform in STEM education. While on campus, Wieman met with University Administrators, CTE Faculty Fellows, and additional groups working on STEM education across campus. He then ended his visit with a public lecture on “Taking a Scientific Approach to Science and Engineering Education.” For those who would like to learn more, slides from this talk can be found on our website, and a copy of his new book can be checked out of the CTE Library in Herring 129.
Thanks to the generous support of Professor Mikki Hebl and the Robert Foster Cherry Award, the CTE ran its 2nd annual Teaching & Innovation Colloquy in the 2017-2018 academic year. Ten faculty (Daniel Domingues da Silva, HIST; Esther Fernandez, SPPO; Brian Ogren, RELI; Betul Orcan-Ekmekci, MATH; Sandra Parsons, PSYC; Doug Schuler, BUSI; Jane Tao, BIOS; Gary Woods, ELEC; Fay Yarbrough, HIST; Lam Yu, PHYS) were selected through a competitive application process, and each was awarded a stipend to participate in a pedagogy workshop focused on the theme of "Using Discussion for Meaningful Learning." The participants were asked to:

1. Meet 4 times over the course of the academic year.
2. Read selections from two books on discussion-based pedagogies.
3. Share knowledge gained in the colloquy with departmental colleagues by the end of the academic year.
4. Implement a particular pedagogical strategy in a course or courses taught the following academic year and report results to the CTE.

Beth Beason-Abmayr (BIOS), a participant in last year’s iteration of the program, joined Josh as co-facilitator for the Colloquy. Thanks to Beth and to all of the faculty who made this signature program so successful!

Transitions

As John Hutchinson makes the move back to faculty after serving as Dean of Undergraduates, all of us in the CTE want to thank him for his leadership, guidance, and support over the last six years. The CTE only exists at all because John worked hard to make it a reality, and we are very grateful to him. We are also looking forward to working with Bridget Gorman, Rice’s new Dean of Undergraduates, in the coming years.

Spring 2018 Reading Group

This semester the CTE’s perennially popular spring reading group brought together faculty, graduate students, and staff to discuss the book How College Works by Daniel F. Chambliss and Christopher G. Takacs. Utilizing over a decade of extensive qualitative and quantitative research, the book describes the crucial experiences and social relationships that make up a good undergraduate education.