

AALAC Workshop Proposal
Critical Disability Studies and Universal Design for Learning

RATIONALE FOR WORKSHOP

This workshop fuses critical disability studies (CDST) interventions across multiple disciplines with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) pedagogical and curricular practices. Liberal-arts faculty with varied levels of expertise in CDST and UDL will collaborate to pursue four related goals:

- a. Curricular development
- b. Pedagogical development
- c. Faculty collaboration with disability support services
- d. Inter-institutional development across and between colleges

This project seeks to better educate disabled and nondisabled students by using resources unique to liberal arts colleges: dedicated communities of teacher-scholars; a broad mandate to educate the whole human being; and commitment to affecting our world positively.

A series of virtual, videoconference meetings (provided by Middlebury College), and a further planning meeting for some participants at the Society for Disability Studies, will be followed by a two-day conference to be held in September 2015. We request AALAC support to fund this capstone meeting, to be held at Barnard College.

CDST, an interdisciplinary field that emerged in the 1980s, explores disability experiences, representations, and meanings within social, political, cultural, and historical contexts. Interrogating understandings of normalcy, power, community, technology, and knowledge itself, CDST touches all aspects of liberal-arts learning. Higher education's global proliferation of disability-studies programs reflects disability's and disabled people's increasing presence in our lives, classrooms, and research. Increasingly aware that learners see, hear, move, speak, read, and write in many ways, we still struggle to update pedagogy and curricular design.

UDL, grounded in neuroscience and cognitive psychology, provides a comprehensive approach to learning: educators should provide multiple means of presentation, recall, and evaluation. Rather than designing for an average student and accommodating particular individuals, UDL supports an expansive learner community. By initially removing or bridging barriers, UDL facilitates *all* students' fullest access to the curriculum while maintaining rigorous standards and high expectations.

Our plan spans calendar year 2015. The format combines videoconferencing (hosted by Middlebury via Polycom), in-person meetings, formal presentations, and ongoing working groups. This design intentionally fosters sustainable engagement and UDL principles. During fall 2014, colleagues will propose roundtable and panel presentations for the videoconferences of spring 2015. Monthly videoconferences across Spring 2015 will emphasize curricular and pedagogical development, grounded in CDST and UDL scholarship. Core colleagues will co-facilitate sessions, drawing on their expertise and experiences. Shared scholarly readings will provide a common foundation. These "virtual" meetings also promote strong inter-institutional connections. Faculty will share curricular plans, teaching techniques, and broader institutional approaches to CDST and accessible-learning community plans. This semester will launch longer-term work to transform curricula and engage campuses with critical disability studies and UDL.

Those AALAC core participants who can obtain funding from their home institutions will also meet in targeted sessions of the June 2015 meeting of the Society for Disability Studies (SDS),

the premier organization for CDST and UDL work. SDS' conference models UDL and provides unique opportunities for feedback, networking, professional development, and in-person. We each will attend specific sessions, reporting back to the broader group. Our focused in-person work session during SDS will finalize plans for the fall 2015 Barnard conference and beyond, including initial assessment drafts for work at home institutions, and strategies for increasing CDST and UDL in AY 2015-2016 courses.

THE AALAC-FUNDED BARNARD WORKSHOP

The September 2015 workshop at Barnard College will extend our prior exchanges in three ways. First, we will expand the network from the 12 core members to at least 18 funded participants, inviting additional faculty and disability-services staff from AALAC schools. Second, we intend invite two nationally known CDST scholars and activists (Simi Linton, New York City based, and Sue Kroeger, Director of Disability Resources at the University of Arizona) to join in our discussions and broaden perspectives. Third, drawing insights from this group, we will develop plans to sustain and disseminate our discussions among and beyond cohort institutions. Plans may include presentations at participants' home institutions and a simple online environment for continued communication. We are eager also to present the issues we raise at meetings of professional organizations such as MLA, AHA, APA, and science/STEM groups.

Universal accessibility must be a matter of principle for any public conference in the era of the ADA, and especially for a workshop on this topic. This is one reason that Barnard, an early leader in physical accessibility for disabled people, will be such a welcoming venue for our meeting. We have arranged ASL and CART (Communication Access Real-time Translation, simultaneous captioning) for the entire Barnard workshop; this substantial cost will be funded by Columbia University's Office of Disability Services. In exchange, we will invite interested Columbia faculty and staff to the workshop.

When the fall 2015 in-person meeting at Barnard ends, faculty will assess project outcomes by questionnaire. Faculty will also discuss their experiences in focus groups to assess the project's effectiveness and consider implementation for future campus initiatives. Focus groups will be moderated and recorded so that participants can continue this work effectively. We will ask students and support staff who participate in the project or present with us at SDS to join focus groups or take survey-type assessments incorporated into our self-assessment. Their perspectives will be invaluable as we work to effect change on our campuses around accessibility and social justice.

Co-facilitators of the grant:

Christopher Baswell (English, Barnard College, workshop liaison)
(Barnard will host the two-day in-person meeting)

Susan Burch (American Studies, Middlebury College) (received \$2,500 funding support)

Elizabeth Hamilton (German, Oberlin College) (seeking additional funding support)

Angela Heetderks (English, Oberlin College) (seeking additional funding support)

Other Core Participants

Tara Affolter (Education Studies, Middlebury College) (committed)

Jennifer Armstrong (Biology Department, Scripps College) (committed, received \$1,250 in support)

Kim Drake (Writing Program, Scripps College)(committed, received \$1,250 in support)

Leslie Dunn (English, Vassar College) (committed, seeking funding support for other Vassar colleagues to attend)

Jennie Kassinoff (American Studies, Barnard College) (committed)

Kristen Lindgren (Writing Program, Haverford College) (committed, seeking additional funding support for other Haverford colleagues to attend)

Erin McCloskey (Education, Vassar College) (committed, seeking funding support to attend)

Joan Ostrove (Psychology, Macalester College) (committed, received \$2,500 funding support)

Applicants

Susan Burch (American Studies, Middlebury College, sburch@middlebury.edu).

Christopher Baswell (English and Comparative Literature, Barnard College and Columbia University, cbaswell@barnard.edu)

Barnard College has agreed to administer this grant, which consists primarily of expenses for the fall 2015 workshop at Barnard.

PROPOSED TIMELINE

Fall 2014: Colleagues submit a proposal to the Society for Disability Studies (SDS) for a workshop or roundtable on teaching critical disability studies in liberal arts colleges. Individual members also may propose a workshop to supplement this and/or a student-centered presentation on the same subject.

January-May, 2015: Monthly virtual workshops (2 hours each)
Hosted by Middlebury College

January 2015: Theme: Curricular development (including Universal Design for Learning features) Co-Facilitators: Chris Baswell (Barnard College); Joan Ostrove (Macalester College)

February 2015 Theme: Pedagogical development (including Universal Design for Learning techniques): Co-facilitators: Angela Heetderks (Oberlin College), Jennifer Armstrong (Scripps College)

March 2015 Theme: Accessibility and faculty collaboration with support services Co-facilitators: Susan Burch (Middlebury College), Kim Drake (Scripps College)

April 2015 Theme: Inter-institutional development
Co-Facilitator: Elizabeth Hamilton (Oberlin College), Tara Affolter (Middlebury College)

May 2015 videoconference: collaborative time to work on SDS presentations

June 10-13, 2015: members of the AALAC workshop, **as funded by home institutions**, attend the Society for Disability Studies conference in Atlanta: participate in sessions; group meeting on the morning of Sunday, June 13. Topic: Fall meeting at Barnard, continuing plans for inter-institutional work and collaboration with support services staff at home institutions.

Early Fall 2015: Two-day in-person meeting at Barnard College

Note: Meeting will be either Sept. 13-14 or 20-21 (Barnard has approved both options)

Focal points of workshop: establish plans for continued work through 2016 (additional conference collaboration, course collaborations etc.); draft ideas for access assessments at our home institutions in areas related to our work; longer-term plans for collaboration with support services (to promote accessible and inclusive learning/living/working communities at our home institutions). **Encourage exchange between faculty and Disability Services staff. Contextualizing discussions with Simi Linton and Sue Kroeger.**

AALAC Budget

Note: The budget anticipates the twelve core participants. We will also extend invitations to six or more further AALAC faculty and staff to attend the Barnard workshop. Several schools have committed additional funds to support this core program enabling us to support this ambitious program within the \$18,000 available from AALAC. Supplemental funds will be requested to enable additional colleagues to participate.

Stipends: The co-facilitators have agreed to forgo stipends in order to further support the broader group's in-person workshops.

SPRING 2015

Videoconferencing meetings: Middlebury College will host these meetings using polycom.

Cost = **\$ 0**

EARLY FALL 2015: 2-Day Meeting at Barnard College (estimated costs)

Note: Our 2 Barnard colleagues don't require housing

1. Accommodations: [example: Landmark Guest Rooms at Union Theological Seminary]:

\$200/room x 18 participants x 2 nights

Total= **\$7,200**

2. Transportation:

A. Airfare/trains [estimate is based on estimated travel costs for 16 participants from outside New York City]=**\$6,300**

B. Local transportation: [estimated costs from actual arrival points (JFK, LaGuardia and Penn Station) to/from Barnard] = **\$800**

Total transportation: \$7,100

4. Materials [name tags, flip charts, markers. These visual supplements enable us to model UDL principles of multiple modalities and accessibility]: **\$140**

5. Food [estimating 22 participants: 3 meals x 2 days; beverages and snacks x two days; one reception]: **\$2,860**

6. Space, technical support: **\$2,700**

7. Speakers/focused workshop facilitators:

Simi Linton, PhD (NY-based disability studies scholar and educator, <http://www.similinton.com/about.htm>). Honorarium: \$1,000

Sue Kroeger, Ph.D., Director of Disability Resources at the University of Arizona and lead facilitator of Project ShIFT (Shaping Inclusion through Foundational Transformation), which seeks to reframe approaches to disability and disabled people in higher education insitutions, fostering partnerships between faculty and disability resource staff.

(<http://drc.arizona.edu/veterans-reintegration-education/sue-bio?destination=node/113>)

Honorarium: \$1,000

Transportation (\$550 airfare, \$50 shuttle; housing= \$400): \$1,000

SPEAKERS TOTAL: \$3,000

8) ASL and CART translation services, as needed = \$5,000
(Funded by the Columbia University Office of Disability Services)

Total cost for Barnard College workshop/meeting = \$28,000

Direct and indirect support by Barnard College = \$5,000

ASL and CART support by Columbia University = \$5,000

Total AALAC cost for Barnard College workshop = \$18,000