

Engage for Change

Capital Region Community Engagement Conference

Siena College ~ Loudonville, New York ~ May 16, 2017



Honored Faculty Speakers

Dr. Kristie A. Ford-Skidmore College



Dr. Kristie A. Ford is an Associate Professor of Sociology and Director of the Intergroup Relations Program (IGR) at Skidmore College. She received her B.A. in

sociology from Amherst College and her M.A. and Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Her research and teaching interests include: race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and social justice education.

Dr. Carol Weisse-Union College



Dr. Carol Weisse is currently the Director of Health Professions at Union College in Schenectady, NY. She received her Ph.D. from Uniformed Services

University of the Health Sciences. As a Professor of Psychology, she teaches interdisciplinary courses in health psychology, death and dying, behavioral neuroscience, and medical humanities. Her research involves topics in medical psychology.

Special thanks to Siena's Council on Teaching and Learning and New York Campus Compact for their support.

Kathleen M. Jimino



Kathleen Jimino graduated from Siena College with a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics. She then went on to SUNY Empire State College where she received a Masters in Social Policy. After graduating from Siena, she started working at Rensselaer County in the information technology department where she was later named commissioner of that department. In 1997 she was appointed to the Rensselaer County Legislature. In 2001 she was appointed Rensselaer County Executive, she was then reelected to her position in 2005, 2009 and 2013. She currently serves as Co-Chair of the Center for Economic Growth's Local Government Council and is on the board of the Commission on Economic Opportunity, as well as serving on the Community Advisory Board of the Sage Colleges Academy for Character Education.

Monica Kurzejeski



Monica Kurzejeski is the current Deputy Mayor of Troy, New York and oversees day-to-day operations, managing all city departments and municipal employees. She became the first female Deputy Mayor in 2016. Monica has worked on development of downtown Troy as well as other areas of the city. Prior to becoming Deputy Mayor, she was the Economic Development Coordinator for Troy as well as the founding Executive Director of the Troy Community Land Bank. She has also worked as the Market Manager for the Troy Waterfront Farmers' Market. Monica received her BA in Communications and Media Studies at Ohio Northern University.

Carolyn McLaughlin



Carolyn McLaughlin was elected in 1997 as Council Member to the Albany Common Council representing the Second Ward in the City of Albany. She currently serves as Common Council President. Ms. McLaughlin's public service career spans 22 years with experience earned in human resources and budgeting. Since 1987 Ms. McLaughlin has worked with various community based organizations including the Urban League, the United Way of Northeastern New York, and the Capital Area Council of Churches. She is President of the Capital Region Chapter of the National Forum of Black Public Administrators. A proud native of Albany, Ms. McLaughlin earned a Bachelor's Degree in Chemistry from Keuka College, Keuka Park, NY. In 1994 she received a National Urban/Rural Fellowship, which led to her receiving a Masters in Public Administration from Baruch College of New York in 1995.

Schedule

- 8:00am-9:00am Honored Faculty Breakfast: Carol Weisse, Union College (*Massry Commons*)
- 9:00am-9:45am Concurrent Session 1
- Literature and Community Engaged Learning: A Faculty-Undergraduate Collaboration (*Snyder Hall 159*)
 - Community Engaged Teaching from a Practitioner's Perspective (*Snyder Hall 161*)
 - Teaching Service-Learning Courses to First-Generation Students (*Snyder Hall 165*)
 - Youth and Restorative Justice Round Table Discussion (*Snyder Hall 168*)
- 10:00am-10:45am Concurrent Session 2
- Attacking the Problem of Homelessness through Data Science (*Snyder Hall 159*)
 - Communicating across Difference: Building an Intergroup Dialogue Program at a STEM Institution (*Snyder Hall 161*)
 - Service learning and Social Justice as Forms of Engagement: The social, emotional and spiritual aspects of change (*Snyder Hall 165*)
 - Working with Refugees Round Table Discussion (*Snyder Hall 168*)
- 11:00am-11:45pm Concurrent Session 3
- Student Journalism and Social Justice in the Neighborhood (*Snyder Hall 159*)
 - Community Connections for the Busy Student (*Snyder Hall 161*)
 - A Vehicle for Promoting Diversity: Connecting Civic Engagement & Service Learning (*Snyder Hall 165*)
 - Art and Community Development Round Table Discussion (*Snyder Hall 168*)
- 11:45pm-1:00pm Honored Faculty Lunch: Kristie Ford, Skidmore College (*Massry Commons*)
- 1:00pm-1:45pm Concurrent Session 4
- What's in a Name? Using Service Learning to Increase the Cultural Competency of Graduate Counseling Students (*Snyder Hall 159*)
 - Diversifying perspectives through a community-based learning healthcare practicum course (*Snyder Hall 161*)
 - Thinking beyond the semester: Faculty Engagement in the Community (*Snyder Hall 165*)
 - Working with Schools Round Table Discussion (*Snyder Hall 168*)
- 2:00pm-3:30pm Closing Panel: Engaging Regional Politicians in Our Work (*Massry Commons*)

Concurrent Session 1

Literature and Community Engaged Learning: A Faculty Undergraduate Collaboration

Keith Wilhite & Jenna Kersten, Siena College

In this presentation, we will discuss the collaboration between a faculty member and an undergraduate research fellow, detailing our efforts to create a community engaged literature course. We will address the research that informed the development of the course, the process of identifying a community partner and designing an appropriate community-engaged project, and we will share information about the class itself. Entitled "Literature and the Refugee Crisis," the course examined themes related to home, identity, exile, and displacement in works of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. For the community engaged component of the class, we partnered with RISSE (Refugee and Immigrant Support Services of Emmaus) and worked with local refugee populations in Albany, NY to explore questions related to personal narratives, perceptions of home, and the power of storytelling. Given the subject matter, the course also placed special emphasis on social justice and our responsibility toward populations in need. As part of this presentation, we will discuss the challenges and opportunities presented in designing a course that would both provide students with a learning experience that moved them beyond the classroom while also fulfilling the goals and objectives of a traditional literary topics course.

Teaching Service- Learning Courses to First- Generation Students

Fred Boehrer, St. Rose

First generation students arrive on-campus with gifts and needs they bring into the classroom. I'll be sharing how I have tweaked a service-learning course over the past three years to better meet the needs of first-generation students, as well as immigrants, low-income students, and students of color. I'll discuss textbook selection, volunteer site choices, as well as how to increase students' sense of ownership of their college campus.

Community Engaged Teaching from a Practitioner's Perspective

Micah Schrom, Siena College

As a Visiting Professor, my experience is primarily as a practitioner of management and leadership rather than as a scholar. Having taught courses across the management spectrum (e.g. principles of management, project management, management consulting, NEXT Consulting Practicum, and organizational strategy), there is real value in community engaged teaching for courses that are teaching students a highly practical discipline. Community engaged teaching provides students with the opportunity to practice what they're learning in the classroom and connect with concepts that are not easily understood from lectures or a textbook thus providing a deeper level of learning. Moreover, students are able to see the outcome of their work and the values they've applied to a real problem facing a community organization. The goal of my session is to provide "cases" of how my community engaged teaching has created a more successful and impactful learning environment for my students.

Youth and Restorative Justice- Round Table Discussion

Erin Dagle, Skidmore College (Moderator); Kashiff Thompson, Mediation Matters; Jamel Muhammad, Youth Life Support Network, Inc.

Concurrent Session 2

Attacking the Problem of Homelessness Through Data Science

Matthew Bellis, Siena College

CARES is an Albany-based organization that “collaborates with and supports our community to create a system of care to prevent and end homelessness.” In collaboration with partners throughout NY state, they have collected a significant amount of data on individuals who move through the homelessness Continuum of Care (CoC). However, the dataset is quite large and complex, and packaged solutions like Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) or Excel are not always flexible enough to answer the questions of support providers. The data is collected according to the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a set of guidelines mandated by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Since the summer of 2016, we have worked with CARES to develop open-source computing tools to interface with these data and create informative visualizations. The ultimate goal is to identify inefficiencies in the support being provided and opportunities for improved outcomes for the homeless. We discuss how this collaboration came to be and additional value added that Siena might provide, both to CARES and perhaps even support providers across the country. The status of the software tools will also be presented.

Communicating Across Difference: Creating an Intergroup Dialogue Program at a STEM Institution

Amy Corroa & Rebecca Rouse, RPI

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Student Life staff and Humanities Arts and Social Sciences (HASS) faculty are jointly developing an intergroup dialogue program for students participating in RPI’s Summer Arch, a transformational learning experience on-campus in the summer term between sophomore and junior year. In this presentation we will share the curricular design for our pilot workshops, as well as our overarching plans for developing this program long-term. The main outcomes from the program are two pronged: develop effective dialogue communication skills for communicating across difference and create a self-awareness of one’s own social identities and how those interact in societal systems of power, privilege, and oppression. All pieces of the program advance students’ multicultural sophistication and global view as they work towards understanding and communicating with diverse others. This adds vital learning to our diverse campus that aims to produce global leaders for a global world. Students will gain necessary skills for working in team-based STEM environments, as well as life skills to be effective advocates and allies in areas of diversity and inclusion. Overall, we hope the program advances our efforts towards social justice on campus.

Service Learning and Social Justice as Forms of Engagement: The Social, Emotional, and Spiritual Aspects of Change

Victoria Battel, Maria College

This session would consider the mission-related aspects of service, engagement, and justice as a spiritual context for change. The session will aim to lead participants in an awareness that the context for service can change hearts and minds and lead to personal and communal transformation. Participants will hopefully appreciate that a spiritual context for mission changes engagement and social change into something deeper and more meaningful.

Working With Refugees- Round Table Discussion

Fred Boehrer, College of St. Rose (Moderator), Rifat Nazir, RISSE, Deborah Richards, RISSE

Concurrent Session 3

Student Journalism and Social Justice in the Neighborhood

Cailin Brown, St. Rose

Journalism students at Saint Rose produce hyper-local stories for two audiences - the neighborhood and the college- in the Spring 2017 in light of the aftermath of the November election. A number of students identified refugee service providers as well as some refugees and immigrants to tell the story of how national policy affects the lives of individuals living in the college neighborhood. The goals of this upper level course were multi-fold. Ultimately, students produced multi-sourced, fact-based news stories which were published in the student newspaper, The Chronicle, or, on The Pine Hills blog at timesunion.com. In tandem, early in the semester, at the invitation of the Pine Hills Neighborhood Association, the class presented an introduction of e purpose of The Pine Hills blog to the association. The course plan was designed to help make students aware of the local implications of federal decisions while simultaneously connecting students and their stories to the neighborhood they serve.

Finding Time: Community Connections for the Busy Student

Renee Adamany, Megan Cassidy, Donna Corbisiero, SCCC

Like many students today, the average college student at Schenectady County Community College has responsibilities outside the classroom. Full-time and part-time jobs and family obligations take up a significant amount of time, and often students have difficulty balancing life and traditional academic activities such as studying and completing assignments. Therefore, when developing service learning projects, instructors can incorporate these projects into curriculum, without requiring a high level of commitment from students outside of the classroom. In this panel, we will focus on practical service learning projects designed for busy students who desire to create community connections and increase civic engagement while maintaining a good school-life balance. We discuss research, advocacy, and direct service projects. Attendees will gain a better understanding of student needs and to develop new ideas for service learning projects. We will be engaging the audience in active facilitation and discussing their ideas and projects.

A Vehicle for Promoting Diversity: Connecting Civic Engagement & Service Learning

Sara Schuman, Russell Sage College

Researchers Edward Zlotkowski and John Saltmarsh (2011) argue that colleges and universities are obligated to promote service learning and civic engagement to prepare students to be good citizens. However, on some evaluations for the Russell Sage service-learning course, "Women Changing the World," students questioned the value of service learning activities, which they perceived as unrelated to their major or intended career. In response, the course was revised to form stronger student understandings and connections with the community partner organization. The proposed workshop will explore efforts to strengthen students' career-motivated mindset to include a more diverse, community-oriented sense of self-accomplishment through civic engagement. This approach also allows students to consider a broader perspective, becoming more civic minded and, in the process, acquiring transferable career skills.

Art and Community Development- Round Table Discussion

Lorraine Cox, Union College (Moderator), Kristen Holler, Albany Barn, Alana Sparrow, The Foundry for Art and Design, Bhawin Suchak, YouthFX

Concurrent Session 4

What's in a Name? Using Service Learning to Increase the Cultural Competency of Graduate Counseling Students

Claudia Lingertat, St. Rose

This interactive roundtable seeks to begin the discussion of how faculty and community partners can prepare students to work with diverse populations. Activities and reflections from graduate students in semester long service learning projects with diverse youth will be shared. This presentation would be helpful for faculty that wish to incorporate a service learning project into their curriculum and for community based partners to learn about the benefits of collaboration with college students.

Diversifying Perspectives through a Community-Based Learning Healthcare Practicum Course

Rhona Beaton, Union College

The session will describe how a community-based learning course that places students with diverse backgrounds and interests at various community sites (i.e. Alliance for Positive Health, Health Education Project, Center for Disability Services, Ellis Medicine, Peaceful Acres etc..) can challenge students to reflect more deeply on issues of access and equity through theme-based group seminars. The session will include examples of focused writing assignments as well as provide an overview of the lessons learned from the students and the community partners. In addition, challenges and strategies for overcoming these will be discussed.

Thinking Beyond the Semester: Faculty Engagement within the Community

Ashley Provencher, Paul Thurston, Siena College

Ashley Provencher's traditional faculty tenure and promotion standards separate teaching and scholarship into distinct categories, suggesting an inevitable trade off between time spent on each of these activities. An integrated approach to course development could more efficiently promote faculty development and support their achievement of content-area expertise. This session will present a case study of how I strategically developed a community-engaged course that closely aligned with my interdisciplinary research agenda in economics and criminal justice. The community-based project at the center of this course has spanned multiple semesters, as is often common for traditional academic research, without diminishing the effectiveness of community-based research for students. Best practices for community-based teaching and learning will be underscored.

Working With Schools- Round Table Discussion

Galen Gomes, Maria College (Moderator); Laurence Spring, Schenectady Schools; Sue Silverstein-Gilligan, Bishop Maginn High School; Christina Roberts, Albany Leadership Academy for Girls High School

Notes: