



Academic Affairs Newsletter

November, 2015 – No. 5

From the VPAA Office...

Greetings,

“Innovation, Learning, and Success” are the three themes articulated in our current strategic plan. During my past year and a half at Mercer, I have been consciously planning all our Academic Affairs activities based on these three themes. While some of the plans could not be realized as fully as anticipated, many projects were successfully completed or significantly moved forward—with your support. On behalf of the Academic Affairs Council, I want to express my sincere appreciation for all your efforts. We should all be proud of what we have accomplished.

To move on to the next stage, I believe that Academic Affairs faculty and staff should be better informed about the various projects that have been going on as well as future plans. To this end, I have asked Academic Affairs Council members to provide their division/unit update at each biweekly meeting. The information that they have provided has been uploaded to the following MLink webpage: https://mlink.mccc.edu/academic_updates.shtml. I urge you to review this information and let us know if you have any questions.

As we approach the end of fall semester, we are reaching that critical time for us to help our students enroll for the Winter and Spring semesters. Please announce to your classes that Winter and Spring registration begins on November 16. In addition, I would appreciate it if you could actually provide advisement to the students in your classes just as we did in last spring. As always, please encourage your students to come to your office and help them select courses for the Winter and Spring sessions. Again, with all sincerity, I feel that I am lucky to be here at Mercer working with all of you.

From my desk on the last day of October 2015,

Eun-Woo

Eun-Woo Chang, Ph.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Mercer County Community College

Deans Corner

Business & Technology Division **Winston Maddox, Dean**

The Security Industry Association (SIA) and Mercer have entered into a partnership that has resulted in a new academic program – the Associate in Applied Science Degree in Security Systems Technologies – that combines logical security-related courses with newly developed physical security courses.

Developed in cooperation with the Security Industry Association (SIA), this program prepares students for jobs that support the selling, installation, management, and technical support of physical security systems technologies in an IP-based networked environment.

The program requires four semesters of college-level and core courses. While classroom learning is important, this program also provides students with added value through practical, hands-on experiences. SIA is helping build two labs – one focused on access control, the other on video surveillance. The labs are part of the required coursework

Liberal Arts Division **Robin Schore, Dean**

College is revising the student evaluation form.

Please review the categories below and provide your feedback as soon as possible.

Please rate your instructor in the following categories.

I. Knowledge of Discipline

1. Omniscient
2. Spotty
3. Challenged

II. Level of Stimulation

1. Creates a state of constant ecstasy
2. About the same level as daytime television
3. I'd prefer to be in a sensory deprivation chamber

III. Classroom Management

1. Totally out of control
2. Don't mind sitting up straight but why uniforms?
3. Paddling was uncalled for

IV. Tolerance for Diversity

1. Loves everyone—exudes a beatific aura
2. Professes to being a card carrying member of the He-man Woman's Hater Club
3. What's with the white sheets?

Sandra C. Davis
Adjunct, Arts & Communication

2015 is shaping up to be a good year for me as an exhibiting fine art photographer. It started with an invitation to be one of the exhibiting artists in The Natural, the Material, and the Physical: Landscape through the Photographic Eye. The show was curated by J. Susan Isaacs, PhD, of Towson University. It opened in January and runs through the end of March at The Open Lens Gallery in the Gershman Y in Philadelphia, PA. A week after that exhibit opened, I discovered I won a Juror's award in the Photography 34 exhibit at The Perkins Center for the Arts in Moorestown, NJ. The show also runs through the end of March. I had 2 pieces chosen to be included in the Mysterious Photography exhibit at the Markeim Arts Center in Haddonfield, NJ, which ran through the month of February. In April, I will have a solo exhibition: The Goddess Explored opening with an artist reception on Friday, April 3, 4 pm - 7 pm, at The University of the Arts Printmaking Gallery, 333 South Broad Street, Philadelphia PA. the show runs through April 22. A week before this exhibit opens, I will be giving a lecture: My Studio Practice: Handmade Prints, at the Philadelphia Photo Arts Center, Saturday, March 31, 4:30 pm - 6 pm, 1400 N. American Street, Suite 103 in Philadelphia, PA. Also in March, The Book of Alternative Photographic Processes, 3rd Edition, by Christopher James will be released. My work is included in this highly acclaimed book. More info about all of these events is available on my website: www.SandraCDavis.com

MSHP
Linda Scherr, Acting Dean

Laura Blinderman
Professor of Biology

Student Engagement in the Sciences



Laura Blinderman was named a National Academies Education Fellow in the Sciences for 2015-2016 after participating in the **National Academies Summer Institute on Undergraduate Education**, held June 14-19 at Princeton University. The Institute, an intensive five-day program of seminars, discussions, and workshops, brought college and university faculty together to investigate issues in STEM education and to develop teaching units to serve as models for educators nationwide. Co-sponsored by the National Academies and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the Summer Institute had 46 participants who

worked in teams to develop teachable “tidbits” - short, interactive, inclusive, strategies to engage students both intellectually and physically in the learning process. The learning modules employ active learning strategies to elucidate fundamental concepts, to demystify misconceptions, and to help STEM students discover that science is an engaging, rewarding, and creative *process*. The teachable tidbit developed by Blinderman and colleagues in the Evolution and Heredity workgroup employs active learning to underscore the relationship between infant nurturing, epigenetic modification of the glucocorticoid receptor gene in brain, and adult stress in a rodent model. The module is supported by primary literature sources and the HHMI website, Lick Your Rats. Participants also attended seminars on STEM education, engaged in roundtable discussions on teaching philosophy and strategies, and co-led workshop components. All of the Institute work is available to participants to use in their classrooms and to share with colleagues.

Blinderman notes that “Mercer was one of two community colleges represented at the Summer Institute. The opportunity to discuss STEM education with faculty from Princeton, Temple, Harvard, and other 4 year school faculty was important. The presentation by Jay Lebov, Senior Advisor at the National Research Council, confirmed the importance of community colleges in the transformation of and increased emphasis on STEM education. I believe that Mercer’s support of the sciences helps us to be at the forefront of this mission to attract and nurture students in STEM fields and to improve scientific literacy for all students taking science courses. That

Mercer currently has submitted and/or received funding for a number of STEM grant proposals indicates a commitment to being part of the national dialogue”.

Blinderman attended the Summer Institute with colleague Julie Drawbridge, Rider University Professor of Biology. The two will host a meeting this fall for Mercer and Rider science faculty and staff to be held at Rider. Dr. Rebecca Burdine, Professor of Biology, and Princeton University Summer Institute coordinator will present.

The National Academies Summer Institute on Undergraduate Education is organized by the National Research Council's in partnership with the Center for Teaching and Learning at Yale University. Support is provided by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the Presidents' Committee of the National Research Council, and Yale University. Professor Blinderman's participation in the Institute was supported by these entities.



James Kerney Campus
Monica Weaver, Dean and Provost

Darius Dove, Associate Director

New Jersey Youth Corps Is On The Move!



After two years of work, sweat and at times tears, NJ Youth Corps of Mercer County Community is going to move back into the 6 Esther Street address in Ewing, NJ. The newly renovated property was originally home to the program for almost twenty years. With the assistance of the Department of Labor and several other Youth Corps program, Esther St. will officially open in November 2015. The newly renovated home features a classroom, a new computer lab, counseling offices, upgraded staff spaces and a redesigned kitchen/group meeting area.

NJ Youth Corps is a state-wide program designed to assist 16-25 year olds complete their high school education and gain valuable community service experience. Through a combination of classes for the high school equivalency test and community service, Youth Corps members acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to find gainful employment, job training or enroll in post-secondary education. Personal and career counseling guide the students in solving problems and addressing barriers that have hindered success in the past.

Community Service work sites are assigned to develop strong employability skills, team work and commitment. Work sites are project-oriented and include urban renewal, renovation and construction, landscaping, park beautification, child and senior care, hospital service, or clerical and administrative support for project organizations.

**Pamela Price,
Director, Library**



MCCC Library Offers Rosetta Stone

Now available on the library's [webpage](#) is a connection to Rosetta Stone. Our version offers the opportunity to learn over 30 different languages. It is available to all current faculty, staff and students. Please note that a microphone is needed to get the most out of the lessons.

Easy to follow directions are provided on each screen after creating an account by entering your Mercer email address and a password that you create. Once you create your password, you will need to keep a record for your files and future reference since the library will not have access to this information.

For additional questions, contact Dan Calandro, our electronic resources librarian, at: calandrd@mccc.edu or at x 3550.

Academic Program Review Coming Up? Don't Forget the Library!

Olivia Nellums has joined the library staff and will be responsible for maintaining the library's collection and resources. She is the point person for the library's role in assisting with program reviews. Our job is to make sure the collection reflects the faculty voice and current academic perspectives in each program discipline. We need your input to ensure the collection meets your program needs. Additionally, we gather all the information needed for the library's section of the review and seek your assistance in reviewing the collection to determine new resources we should order, or outdated resources that are no longer relevant.

Please contact Olivia at 570-3559, or by email: nellumso@mccc.edu

Just Added to the Library Professional Development Collection

Revolution in Higher Education: How a Small Band of Innovators Will Make College Accessible and Affordable
by Richard A. DeMillo Call number: LA227.4.D47 2015

Colleges and universities have become increasingly costly. Technological innovations have begun to transform higher education by introducing new ways to disseminate knowledge and better ways to learn at a lower cost. DeMillo advocates for the use of technology to overthrow the entrenched hierarchical system of higher education, and chronicles the use of the latest research on learning and the brain to frame a new contract between society and institutions of higher education. According to DeMillo, "The new institutions of a transformed higher education promise to demonstrate not only that education has value but also that it has values – virtues for the common good."

Coming Soon to the Library General Collection

Between the World and Me, by Ta-Nehisi Coates, New York Times bestseller

Prof. Andrea Lynch, Program Director (IST 101)

Proyecta 100K

On July 19, 2015 twenty-six Mexican teachers and students arrived at Newark Airport for a 4-week, full-time, program of study at Mercer County Community College in West Windsor, NJ.

"Proyecta 100,000" is a program established by the Mexican government to increase student and academic mobility from Mexico to the US. The program has as a goal that 100,000 Mexican learners will study in the US as part of a renewed spirit of cooperation between the US and Mexico.

These 26 students who chose Mercer included Mexican teachers, professionals, and students ranging in age from 20 to 64. They came to study English, Communications, Technology, and Health and Fitness. As part of their study, they completed 12 credits of coursework. During their time, they visited 4 major cities, Trenton, NYC, Washington DC, and Philadelphia; and several local attractions, Grounds for Sculpture, a Trenton Thunder game, the Camden Aquarium, and Princeton University.

For many of these learners, it is the first time they have traveled internationally. Mercer has been pleased to be their host.

Following are some reflections by the program's faculty:

My Most Memorable Moment

My most memorable moment during our four weeks journey with a fabulous group of 26 under-graduate (four youngsters), engineers (almost all of them including the ladies!), college professors, and Ph.Ds ranging in age from 20-64 years old, was when Mario, the oldest of the group, came and sat next to me during our Farewell Dinner at "On the Border" in Princeton and politely asked if he could speak to me. Of course, I said. He then proceeded to tell me:

"Miss Julie, when I left Mexico to come to study at Mercer I had no idea what to expect or how the program would be. However, after the first week, I knew I made the right choice! Now as we celebrate the end of our journey, as you call it, I must say that the program exceeded my expectations. I am amazed at how well-coordinated the classes were and how the four professors worked together in unison to give us the best college experience possible. I have learned so much and feel so much more comfortable speaking English in public that I cannot wait to show off to my family! I know I still have to continue practicing my English and focus, as you told us, on my fluency and fluidity. I only wish that I could come back sometime soon and thank you and everyone in the Proyecto 100K team for making this journey a most successful and memorable one for all of us! I am sure my classmates agree with me in saying: WE WILL MISS ALL OF YOU AT MERCER!!!"

This last sentence brought tears to both of us at which point the rest of the group (who have heard it) chimed in and the hugs and more tears continued...

I hope we facilitate this program again and I can't wait to participate in it!

Prof. Maria Julie Lora-Ruiz, M.S. (ESL Instructor)

The anecdote that comes to mind is probably not appropriate for any newsletter! (It has something to do with the translation of the word atrophy.) Nonetheless, I had a wonderful experience with this project! As an adjunct at Mercer, I was equally honored and apprehensive to take part, but once I met the team and realized how wonderfully the selected courses fit together, I couldn't resist. As the days unfolded and the creative juices flowed I firmly agree that we were doing something great here that will change us all forever.

Signed Proud Team Proyecto 100K Team Member,

Prof. Jackie Franz, (HPE 110 Instructor)

One of my most memorable experiences with our visitors from Mexico arose when I asked a question about the class' impression of Americans prior to their visit, and how reading widely distributed magazines such as US, Newsweek and People influenced their perception of the American people. Practically each person's impression of American life was, that generally speaking, Americans are driven by the pursuit of money; and that people in America think it is the greatest country on earth. Our Mexican guests expected to encounter Americans who were brash (like Donald Trump), impolite, lacking empathy and hyper-competitive. However, after meeting a number of people of different ethnicities and nationalities while staying along the NJ Route 1 Corridor, and while touring Princeton, Philadelphia and NYC, they discovered much to their amazement, that their pre-judgments were incorrect and inaccurate. Their encounters with "everyday people " based on their personal experiences were profound and transformative. Many of our Mexican guests felt that their brief four-week stay had been professionally beneficial and invaluable. They expressed their positive impressions about Americans both in speech as well as in writing, although their use of English to express themselves was rather challenging. Their study at Mercer kindled an excitement and they were unanimous in their enthusiasm to share their positive experience with their countrymen. In their observation of Mercer as an educational institution they raved about how open and helpful the members of the College were; and commented about how passionate and committed the teachers were in their classrooms.

At the end of the four weeks, it is my impression that rather than seeing Americans monolithically, our Mexican guests have a more nuanced impression of the American people. The experiences and interactions they had on the East Coast allowed them to view American Culture more like that of a salad bowl and less like a melting pot.

Prof. Alwyn Haywood (CMN 111)

Academic Operations

Susan Zambrio, Assistant Vice President

We have been working on a room inventory at the West Windsor Campus. In addition to making the appropriate corrections to the information we have in our system, with the help of the faculty and adjuncts who participated, we were also able to identify issues that impacted their teaching experiences. We will continue to identify and address any concerns or suggestions we received.

Our Distinguished Lecture series began on September 17 and continues through November 24. The final two lectures are entitled "The American Dream is Alive and Well" presented by Marion Zieger, a holocaust survivor and "Law and Public Safety" presented by John Jay Hoffman, the Acting Attorney General for the state of New Jersey. They are both offered at noon in the CM Building. Shelley Munn is collecting recommendations for our spring lineup. Please contact her if you have someone special with a special story or presentation to share.

The Academic Testing Center will be open during Final Exams week (including Friday) for students with accommodations or taking make-up exams or exams for online courses. They will also be doing batch scoring for any classes who are interested in having your classroom exam graded in the Testing Center.

Mercer Online

Alexandra Salas, Director



MercerOnline Training Update for Fall 2015

As of July 1, 2016 the Blackboard Learning Management System will be available campuswide. To assist you in becoming familiar with Blackboard, MercerOnline has scheduled a variety training opportunities.

Online Training Dates:

MO 101/102 Blackboard Instructor Training (online) (*registration required*)

November 16, 2015

November 30, 2015

December 7, 2015



On-campus Training:

We are also offering several face-to-face sessions.

MO 101/102 Blackboard Instructor Trainings:

- Monday, December 7, 2015 from noon-1:20 p.m. (*registration required*)
- Wednesday, December 9, 2015 from 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m. (*registration required*)

MO103 Blackboard Grade Center Training

- Wednesday, November 18, from noon-1:00 pm in CM126B. (*registration required/seating is limited*)

To assist faculty with Blackboard course set-up, grade center or any other questions they may have about teaching online or using technology in their courses, we are also hosting “Open Sessions” from noon-2:00 p.m.

Open Sessions from noon-2:00 pm in CM126B *(no registration required)*

- Monday, December 14, 2015
- Tuesday, December 15, 2015
- Wednesday, December 16, 2015

Please note that we are now using 123Signup for training registration. To view our training calendar and register click on the following link <http://www.tinyurl.com/nfaygfp> (Training descriptions are available when you click each session title on the calendar.)

American Honors

Gianna Durso-Finley, Assistant Dean

American Honors at Mercer worked closely with the Big Brother and Big Sister organization in Mercer County and co-sponsored their Run for One 5K Saturday 9/26. There were nine AH volunteers and runners (including one mother of a student!). Our students got a chance to talk with other race volunteers and participants from TCNJ and Rider. Many of the people mentioned that they wish they had known about American Honors before starting TCNJ/Rider. An American Honors at Mercer wristband and a brochure were in the "goody bag" and our logo was on the shirt. A great time was had by all.

On Tuesday October 27th, American Honors at Mercer hosted the Dream Big Dinner and induction ceremony. President Wang and Phil Bronner, CEO of American Honors were the guest speakers for the event,



If you would like to have your highlights, stories or concerns published in an upcoming edition, please send them to Susan Zambrio (zambrios@mccc.edu).