

Innovative Pedagogy/Course (Re)Design Proposals

*Submitted for CCC consideration, after review and recommendation by:
the VPAA/DOF Office
and
the former Learning Commons Advisory Group*

November 2013

Proposal #1-- Computational Approaches in Neuroscience
Proposal for a Short Term Curricular Innovation Project
Instructor: Jason Castro

“A programmer is ideally an essayist who works with traditional aesthetic and literary forms as well as mathematical concepts, to communicate the way that an algorithm works and to convince a reader that the results will be correct.”

– Donald E. Knuth, *Selected Papers on Computer Science*

1. Title and Overview.

I propose developing a new course entitled ‘Computational Approaches in Neuroscience.’ I would like to initially develop the course in a small workshop format during short term of 2014, and then offer it as a winter semester course in 2015 (and, hopefully, in subsequent years).

The course will aim to teach fundamental programming concepts by having students perform analyses on real, recent, cutting edge data sets obtained from a variety of labs studying brain function. The major pedagogical innovation is to have programming concepts introduced organically, by making them immediately relatable to real and interesting problems. My hope is that this kind of topical introduction to programming will be more effective (and more fun) than programming courses relying on canned examples to illustrate basic concepts.

2. Statement of interests.

2a. General Motivations. Twenty years ago, young professionals who could program were seen as having an idiosyncratic skill. They were ‘whiz-kids’ -- folks whose rare and quirky ability to commune with machines was often entertaining, and occasionally even useful.

Times have changed. Today, young professionals who *can't* program are at a marked disadvantage. They are yoked to expensive, unintuitive software that can do many things satisfactorily, but rarely the exact thing needed for a particular task. Worse, they are forced to rely on ‘canned’ software packages that discourage them from engaging with the true objects of a problem. Instead of thinking about polling results, reaction times, voltage traces, or word counts in a historical text, they fixate on finding the sequence of button-presses and menu-choices that will give the proverbial ‘right answer.’

Some, like Jaron Lanier, argue provocatively that this problem scales up. Not knowing how to program in a world where the program, broadly considered, is the dominant medium is an implicit capitulation: *I'm fine with **someone else** defining how I interact with my work (Microsoft), my friends (Facebook), and the world (Google).*

In my own field, Neuroscience, it will soon be impossible to be a productive practitioner without also being a competent programmer. A posting for a typical entry level Neuroscience job will either ask for programming expertise directly, or will make it clear that programming experience is highly desired. I saw this firsthand with my own thesis students last year as they applied for jobs. One student was told he was offered a position specifically *because* his thesis involved a good deal of programming. Another student was told that she was a great candidate, *except for* her lack of programming experience. As rewarding as it was to know that I helped open a door in the former case, this was outweighed by my disappointment in the latter case.

I would like to develop a programming intensive neuroscience course for two major reasons. **First**, I am mindful of the hiring, employment, and intellectual trends in my field. In brief, those who can program are recognized as flexible problem solvers with core skills that readily translate to any specific problem. As an educator, I feel compelled to provide my students with an opportunity to learn skills that will make them

competitive. **Second**, and perhaps more importantly, I think programming has an interesting, and possibly essential place in the modern liberal arts education. When stripped of its technical connotations, programming essentially involves framing a concise, elegant, and compelling argument. The beauty of arguments rendered in computer code is that the form is completely uncompromising – it gives no safe harbor for one’s ignorance, and no partial credit for well-intentioned but incomplete ideas. Unlike the essay, which can be judged on soft criteria, and buttressed with tangents, hyperbole, jargon, and baloney, code has ground truth built in. It either runs, or it doesn’t. It demands exactitude in thought.

2b. Potential role of the course in the college curriculum. I believe this course could be useful and interesting at many levels of the college curriculum. It serves my home departments (Psychology and Neuroscience) well, since it will better prepare our students for careers requiring programming competence (which is to say the great and still growing majority of science careers). Also, I am especially interested in developing a programming-focused module that could be incorporated into entry-level courses for the neuro and psych majors, such as Neuro 200. I think it could be extremely useful to show students the draw and appeal of computational approaches at an early point in their specialization.

At a more college-wide level, I believe this course could readily be integrated into several GECs, which I list below (these are all provisional – I have not contacted GEC coordinators):

- Applying Mathematical Methods (C006)
- Color: Sight and Perception (C036)
- The Human Body (C027)
- Physics of the Large and Small (C056)

Finally, at the broadest and most aspirational level, my hope is that this course might serve as a template for other future ‘programming intensive’ offerings in other departments. One possibility is that Bates students may some day be able to specialize in programming through upper-level courses that have a programming designation (roughly analogous to a W designation).

2c. Opportunity for pedagogical innovation. How does one organically and compellingly integrate computer programming into a liberal arts curriculum? This is the larger task I’m setting for myself in developing this course. When a student enrolls at MIT, say, the value of programming is self-evident. It is an essential gateway skill for yet more technical pursuits. At Bates, the proposition that programming is important or essential should mean something different. Surely, one could make a case that knowing how to represent ideas in a machine is critical for developing ‘the whole person’ in the modern world. I think it will be fascinating to develop a new programming course with this in mind.

2d. Pedagogical goals:

Upon completion of this course, students should:

- Have a solid, working intuition for how different types of data (variables, strings, arrays, images, etc) are represented by a machine.
- Be comfortable with the process of thinking algorithmically – that is, breaking a complex problem down into simple, logically organized, and executable steps.
- Be able to write simple functions to solve a variety of data analysis problems.
- Gain familiarity with a diverse range of datasets in neuroscience (including: electrophysiological recordings, fMRI datasets, perceptual data, imaging data, gene-expression data) and feel comfortable performing rudimentary analyses on these data sets.
- Become comfortable with computational ideas, and how they apply to the analysis of neural data (e.g. ideas about information, precision, correlation, clustering, and dimensionality reduction)

3 (Highly) tentative course outline.

The goal for this course during the experimental phase is to develop a well-integrated class that accomplishes three basic aims: **i)** teach rudiments of programming to students, **ii)** teach students about quantitative, computational ideas in neuroscience, **iii)** give students hands-on practice in applying programming concepts to the analysis of real neuroscience data sets. At all points, the emphasis is in thinking about programming as a practical problem-solving mindset, rather than a rarefied technical skill.

Week 1: Best practices/target and 'test-drive' several programming tutorials

- Group discussion on 'programming as a liberal art.'
- Identification of best practices in the teaching of programming. Research: syllabi, institutional approaches/philosophies on programming, programming-intensive MOOCs, books, and pedagogy-focused journals on programming.
- Students broken into groups, and each group works for the remainder of week 1 and week 2 on self-guided programming tutorials that represent a range of instructional strategies. Each student maintains a journal (graded) documenting topics that were explained especially clearly, as well as topics that remain problematic.
- Roundup: What aspects of the programming tutorials are working, which aren't?
- Exercise: Each student teaches a programming concept to the group. What was effective/ineffective in the lesson?

Week 2: Continue programming self-study/Identify interesting neuroscience data sets

- Students continue self-paced programming tutorials and maintain journals of progress.
- Team begins identifying data sets that will make for interesting analyses. In practice, this will involve reaching out to labs and colleagues in other universities, and searching publically curated databases.
- Exercise: Team generates a group 'summary report' on the experience gleaned from the programming tutorials.

Week 3: Guided development of a class module

- Jason gives several short lectures discussing underlying biological ideas and computational concepts.
- Jason goes through each of the steps in analyzing a neuroscience data set. Importing the data, preprocessing, writing functions, etc. Students work in tandem with Jason.
- Exercise: Each student will be asked to present 2 different examples of programming problem sets/labs found from other courses.

Week 4: Data analysis challenge

- Jason issues a 'data analysis challenge'. Students are asked to solve a variety of complex and possibly open-ended questions pertaining to a neuroscience data set. Answering the questions will require students to write short computer programs. Jason will be available for consultation.
- Exercise: Students present the results of their analyses in both written and oral form.

Week 5: Independent development of a class module

- Students work in groups, developing several different lab modules that may be used in future years. The exercise will involve writing out a complete lab (pedagogical aims, questions) and a complete answer set and grading rubric for the lab.

Proposal #2- **Short Term Curricular Innovation Project Proposal**

Proposal to Redesign Psychology 218: Statistics

Amy Douglass, Department of Psychology

Background on the course

Statistics (Psychology 218) is a required course for psychology and neuroscience majors. Two or three sections of the course are offered every year. The enrollment limit is 30 students per section; most students in the course are sophomores or juniors. Although other faculty occasionally teach the course, I have primary responsibility for it, teaching at least two sections every year. The course counts as a [Q] requirement for general education purposes; students can apply it to the Learning and Teaching (084) General Education Concentration.

Current structure of the course

The course meets three times a week for 1 hour and 20 min. There are weekly quizzes every Monday. The Department's Assistant in Instruction, Brian Pfohl, holds optional review sessions for students on Friday afternoons from 2:40-4:00. In addition to the weekly quizzes, students write four APA-style papers in which they present the results from an in-class data collection exercise. In the first paper, students write the Method and Results sections only. In the second paper, they revise the Method and Results and add an Introduction. In the third section, they revise all prior sections and add a Discussion. The final paper is a revision of the third paper. This structure allows students to revise their writing multiple times and add additional information to the Results section as they learn more complex statistical techniques. Each week, the course content is tied to a different current topic in psychological science with in-class demonstrations conducted every Monday that serve as the basis for students' SPSS analysis assignments (due Wednesdays).

My learning goals for the course are multiple. I want students to:

1. Learn basic statistical tests, including when to use each test
2. Increase comfort with analyzing statistical information presented in the media
3. Understand that all statistics represent choices and be able to articulate some of the choices that might lie behind statistical information presented in empirical articles and/or the media
4. See an essential role for statistics in understanding human behavior

Challenges of the course

Throughout the past 12 years, I have struggled with how to make Statistics accessible to our math-phobic psychology majors. To that end, I have added information about current psychological science research, redesigned the APA-style papers, added sections to the student handbook about how to write up results, and included opportunities for in-class application of statistical knowledge to canned data sets. However, in spite of my diligent efforts over the years, many students still struggle with the course. The opportunity to concentrate on redesigning the course is most welcome.

Proposed Guidelines for Short Term Innovation Project

Student recruitment

My goal is to have 3-5 students participate in this course. All of them must have taken Statistics at Bates (ideally with me). My preference is to have students from a wide range of interest in and/or comfort with statistics. In particular, I want at least two students who took the class with me and

struggled with it. This is important to me because if my goal is to find a way to appeal to students who are less comfortable with the topic, I need to understand the perspective of those students who struggled. The students who would be ideal are those who are willing to articulate some of the reasons they struggled. I already have several specific students in mind for this role.

Possible projects and assignments

- Research a form of teaching popular on some campuses (e.g., James Madison University) called “interteaching” whereby instructors set up problems for students and serve as a resource, but do not lecture on techniques before students attempt to solve problems on their own (e.g., Saville, Pope, Lovaas, Williams, 2012).
- Collect data on whether weekly quizzes are the best way to enhance learning. Are there any modifications that can improve the benefits of weekly quizzes?
- Review other statistics courses at comparable institutions to evaluate whether the topics covered here are consistent with best practices. For example, new research presents guidelines for responsible conduct of research, including setting an explicit rule for the to-be-collected number of participants before a study begins (Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn, 2011). This information is clearly important for current researchers. Although it also seems useful for introductory students, I worry that the rationale underlying such recommendations would confuse new learners of statistics rather than enhance their understanding.
- Consider adding readings to the coursework. For example, a possible source of readings is a new book called “Math on Trial: How Numbers Get Used and Abused in the Courtroom” (Schneps & Colmez, 2013). Would students benefit from reading about “statistics in action” while they are learning course material or would they be overwhelmed by the prospect of learning each test *and* reading about practical applications of statistics?
- Examine the possibility of students generating the idea for the data on which the APA-style papers are based. Maybe students would find the APA-style reports easier to write if they are invested in the ideas being tested? This prospect is challenging because students’ ideas might need to be shaped so that they are amenable to the statistical tests I teach. Would students be frustrated if their ideas are not ultimately used? Or if their ideas are changed substantially?
- Investigate the utility of computer-based practice test banks that come with some statistics textbooks. My impression of those tests is that they are too easy, but I have not examined them closely in some years.
- Revisit the wisdom of introducing a new psychological research area every week. Perhaps students would connect better to the statistical tests if we used the same data set all semester?
- Review current literature on stereotype threat. In particular, I would like to evaluate the possibility of implementing empirically-validated interventions to reduce stereotype threat (e.g., Shapiro, Williams, Hambarchyan, 2013).

Class meetings & grading

I will schedule class meetings four mornings a week at 10 AM. During our first few meetings, students will help me brainstorm about their (or peers’) struggles with the class and their own ideas for

improving the content and delivery of the course. Subsequent to these initial meetings, students will be encouraged to choose a project to focus on during the term (e.g., interteaching, weekly quizzes, stereotype threat intervention). Students will also read course-related material so as to evaluate its appropriateness for inclusion in the current semester-long course (e.g., chapters from the “Math on Trial” book described above).

Throughout the rest of the Short Term, we will meet four days a week for an hour or two before students are sent to work on individual projects. Each meeting will begin with a review of what students have accomplished the previous day. Students will provide feedback to one another on the previous day’s research, suggesting directions for future investigation. Students will be required to produce weekly drafts of their final written product. These drafts will not be graded; the final paper will be graded.

Students will be graded on their attendance at class meetings, their contribution to weekly projects, and their final written product outlining recommendations for the Statistics course. In addition, the Departmental Assistant in Instruction, Brian Pfohl, is primarily dedicated to assistance with this course. He will be available during Short Term to meet with us as a class and meet individually with students about their independent projects.

Proposed title

An appropriate title for this course is “Pedagogical Explorations in Statistics.”

Conclusion

The potential for this course to inform significant changes in the current Psychology 218 is high. In addition, this course could serve as a stepping stone for an advanced statistics course that could be taught in future semesters.

In addition, I would be happy to share any conclusions from this Short Term with other faculty who teach statistics across the curriculum. This might include the departments of Economics, Sociology, Biology, Mathematics, and/or Politics. In addition, the information learned through this course might inform discussions of how we teach quantitative reasoning on campus.

In the following pages, I have appended the syllabus and demonstration report guidelines for Fall 2013. Please contact me with any questions about this proposal. Thank you for the opportunity to redesign this important course.

Amy Douglass
adouglas@bates.edu
786-6182

Psychology 218: Statistics (Section A) Fall 2013

Instructor

Professor Amy Bradfield Douglass, Ph.D.
Pettengill 372
x6182
adouglas@bates.edu
Office hours: Monday 9:00-11:00,
Tuesday, 11-12; Wednesday 2:30-4

Assistant in Instruction

Brian Pfohl, B.A.
Pettengill 357
x8314
bpfohl@bates.edu
Office hours: Monday 10-12,
Thursday 1:30-3:30

Course location and time

Pettengill 329, MWF 1:10-2:30; Friday 2:40-4:00 (review session)

How to contact me

Please feel free to email me with questions about course material or assignments. I will respond within 24 hours during the week. In general, I do not respond to emails on the weekends. This policy means you need to think ahead about assignments and quizzes and send me your questions well ahead of when you need an answer.

Required materials

Howell, D. C. (2004). Fundamental Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. [To save you money, I am using an older version of this text. There are a limited number of copies at the Bookstore. You may also order online, where you might find a lower price.]
Handbook for computational procedures. Available in the bookstore.

Purpose of the course

Statistics are an essential tool for answering important questions. As examples, consider these titles from the home page of the Association for Psychological Science (www.psychologicalscience.org, downloaded 8/28/13):

People prefer products that help them save face in embarrassing moments

Practice at "guesstimating" can speed up math ability

Forensic experts may be biased by the side that hires them

Engaging in a brief cultural activity can reduce implicit bias

In this course, you will learn how to analyze various types of data so that you are capable of asking and answering your own research questions in your research methods class and/or your senior thesis. In addition, learning about statistics is a key element in becoming a critical consumer of scientific research presented in the popular media.

There are several ways to be successful in this course.

1. Read the relevant chapter in the text BEFORE coming to class.
2. Practice! Do actual problems rather than just rereading the textbook or your notes.
3. Visit me during office hours or visit Brian Pfohl, our Assistant in Instruction.
4. Do not become overwhelmed before seeking help!

Using these strategies should help you complete this course successfully and develop an understanding and appreciation of statistics as an essential tool in studying psychology.

Week of	Topic	Reading
September 4	Introduction, scales, summation notation	Chapters 1 and 2
September 9	Distributions: Displaying and characterizing	Chapters 3, 4 and 5
September 16	Percentiles and the standard normal distribution	Chapter 6
September 23	Hypothesis tests: sampling distributions and one sample tests (z and t)	Chapter 8 and Chapter 12
September 30	Hypothesis tests: two sample (independent t and correlated t)	Chapters 13 and Chapter 14 (relevant sections)
October 7 & 14 (No class 10/16-10/18 for Fall Recess)	Power, effect size estimates, confidence intervals	Chapter 15
October 21	One-way ANOVA and multiple pairwise comparisons	Chapter 16
October 28	Repeated measures ANOVA	Chapter 18
November 4	Factorial ANOVA (2 x 2 independent groups)	Chapter 17
November 11	Correlation	Chapter 9
November 18 (No class 11/25-11/29 for Thanksgiving)	Regression	Chapter 10
December 2	Non-parametric techniques (chi-square)	Chapter 19
Thursday, December 12 10:30 AM	Cumulative final exam	

Quizzes

Repeated testing can enhance learning (e.g., Roediger, & Karpicke, 2006). Based on these data, this course includes a quiz every week on Mondays. Your first quiz is Monday 9/9. You may miss one quiz or drop your lowest quiz grade. There are no make up quizzes, even if you have a Dean's excuse or are missing class due to a College-sponsored event, including an athletic game or practice. If you must miss more than one quiz due to a College-sanctioned event or family/medical emergency, I am happy to work with you to make up those additional quizzes.

SPSS analyses

Every week, I will present a demonstration of a psychological phenomenon in class on Monday. Once the demonstration is complete, I will have the data posted on the share folder in China in an SPSS file. By class time on Wednesday, you are responsible for analyzing the data produced by the demonstration. **Analyses are due in class on Wednesdays.**

Demonstration reports

You will write several detailed American Psychological Association (APA) style reports containing an analysis of the data obtained in our in-class demonstrations (details provided later). Demonstration reports are due Fridays **in class**. If your demonstration report is late and you have not discussed an alternative due date with me *before* Friday, your grade will be reduced by one letter grade for each day late (including Saturdays and Sundays). In the case of a family/medical emergency or religious holiday, see me about an alternative due date.

Course grade

Your course grade will be based on the average of your statistical output (5%), demonstration reports (20%), quizzes (50%), and cumulative final exam (25%).

Guidelines and due dates for demonstration reports

Over the course of the semester, you will learn how to write a report in American Psychological Association (APA) style. Each APA manuscript has four sections: Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion. You will learn how to produce a complete report by producing increasingly complete versions of an APA-style manuscript as the semester progresses. In addition, you will revise prior reports so that the final product reflects a semester's worth of knowledge and experience in how to communicate statistical information. Each report will be accompanied by two appendices (described below). All demonstration reports are graded on the basis of clarity, succinctness, and technical accuracy. No report will receive a grade of B or higher unless it is written clearly, carefully proofread, statistically accurate, and correctly formatted.

Comment on plagiarism

"Intellectual honesty is fundamental to scholarship. Accordingly, the College views plagiarism or cheating of any kind in academic work as among the most serious offenses a student can commit." (this quotation was taken from the student handbook). Plagiarism in this course will result in an automatic zero for the assignment and the possibility of an F for the course. Knowledge of proper citation conventions is ***your responsibility***. Please see me if you have any questions about appropriate ways to cite reference material. Learning how to manage time will also help prevent plagiarism. If you are having difficulty managing your time, please see me or someone in the Dean of Students office.

Report #1

In this report, you will prepare the two middle sections of an APA-style paper: Method and Results. You will also produce Appendices A and B (see below). This report should be a maximum of one page. Appendices are not included in the page limit. Topic: distributions, **due 9/20**.

Report #2

For this report, you will produce all elements of Report #1 (Method, Results, Appendix A and Appendix B). Plus, you will write an Introduction. We will talk in class about elements of a good Introduction and brainstorm about some possible approaches to this section. This report should be a maximum of two pages. Appendices are not included in the page limit. Topic: one sample t-test, **due 10/4**.

Report #3

For this report, you will produce a complete APA-style paper, including an Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion. You will also write Appendices A and B. A complete sample demonstration report is available in the back of your handbook. Your report should be a maximum of four pages. Appendices are not included in the page limit. Topic: one-way ANOVA, independent groups, **due 11/1**.

Report #4

For this report, you will revise Report #3. Revision is an essential element of successful writing. Therefore, you should make a concerted effort to improve all sections based on the feedback you have received over the course of the semester. You will also write Appendices A and B. Details on the appendices will be provided as the due date nears. Again, your report should be a maximum of four pages. Topic: correlation, **due 11/22**.

Appendices

Two appendices should accompany each demonstration report. In Appendix A you will show your hand calculations for the new statistical tests you reported in the narrative section, using the relevant sections from the Handbook as a guide. In Appendix B, you will explain the statistics. Your goal is to explain the statistical concepts to someone unfamiliar with the subject. Therefore, your explanations must be clear, descriptive, and free of jargon. A sample demonstration report is included in your Handbook. Refer to this frequently when preparing your own report.

Proposal #3- from Mara Tieken for Designing “Community Organizing for Political Change”

Course title and overview: Community organizing for political change

This course will introduce students to the fundamentals of community organizing. Class sessions will focus on the fundamental processes of organizing; students will learn the basic organizing cycle and its underlying principles and practice organizing skills, including relationship building, public narrative, and leadership. Through fieldwork with a local community organization, students will apply this knowledge and these skills and engage in organizing for political action.

Background

I was first introduced to organizing as a graduate student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education: my advisor was beginning a research project documenting the work of education organizing, and I signed on, knowing very little about what organizing was. But as the project evolved and the research began, I first gained a deep appreciation for the sort of change that organizing could effect and then developed an understanding of what organizing actually entails. I worked closely with Southern Echo, a group that organizes black communities throughout the Mississippi Delta. Over the course of two years, through dozens of interviews and hundreds of hours of meetings and actions and events, I watched this organization rewrite Mississippi education policy and change Mississippi school practice. Echo and the other organizations we worked with were building capacity and shifting power in low-income communities of color throughout the country; they weren't advocating and they weren't service—this were organizing, and the effects were real and lasting. And, in the realm of education—an arena particularly resistant to change—this work seemed even more powerful and significant.

This work also seemed to influence our operation as a research team. The project itself operated on principles of organizing: non-hierarchical relationships shared by a team of professors and doctoral students at all stages; shared decision-making; a diversity of ages, racial and ethnic identities, and professional backgrounds; a culture of listening, honesty, and respect; and a willingness to talk about race and power and class. We were practicing what we were preaching, and doing so within the context of one of the most hierarchical institutions in the country.

During my time in graduate school, I continued to explore organizing as a means of effecting political change, particularly in education. I took Marshall Ganz's “Organizing: People, Power, Change” at the Kennedy School and became more involved in organizing efforts in Boston and at HGSE. My dissertation work shifted to focus more squarely on issues of education equity, and I began to pursue questions that coupled my long-standing interest in rural education with this growing interest in organizing.

Now at Bates, I continue to study organizing, but I'd like to bring this interest to the classroom. My current classes focus on the inequalities within our education system, and students, quite reasonably, want to know what they can do about these inequalities, what they can do to further educational justice. My students engage in service, and they learn many things from this service work—but how to effect political change isn't one of them. So I teach *about* organizing—but that's not what they want... they actually want to *organize*. And I want them to organize; I think it is a powerful tool that they could use, not only to address the inequalities of K-12 education, but also to address the injustices and inequalities they see around them at Bates.

This course, then, would allow me to tie my research and personal interests more closely to my pedagogy and to further the potential of community-engagement in my courses. And, importantly, this is a course that students—those in my courses and other students, those wanting to effect change in their own college—have been asking for.

Contribution to the college curriculum

This course is a new course, and if approved, it would be offered during the 2015-16 academic year (due to my pre-tenure leave next year). Given the material, it may be best suited to teach during short term,

but a decision about that timing will be made during the course design process. It would differ from most Bates offerings. A key element of what makes it innovative is that, though it would build off of the college's long-standing tradition of community-engaged learning, this learning would be situated within an organizing paradigm, rather than a service or advocacy model. As such, students would learn how to build community capacity, change power dynamics, and create political change; in short, I hope that our students would begin to understand how to "do with," not just "do for." This course would also be unique in its focus on skills over knowledge. Students would not simply learn *about* community organizing; they would learn how to actually organize, a body of skills and techniques and orientations they will develop through work within actual organizing campaigns. While many college courses are most relevant after graduation once a student enters the working world, this course has immediate relevance: students could apply this learning to push for equity and justice now in their own communities at Bates, in Lewiston, and beyond.

Specifically, contingent upon departmental approval, this course could contribute to both Education minors: Educational Studies and Teacher Education. It could also support several GECs: Children, Adolescents, and School (C030); The City in History: Urbanism and Constructed Spaces (C057); Class, Inequity, Poverty, and Justice (C008); Identity, Race, and Ethnicity (C037); and Racisms (C041). I would also be interested in pursuing possible cross-listing with several departments, including sociology, politics, and environmental studies (and I already know there is potential interest in such cross-listing on the part of the sociology department, with which I already cross-list two courses).

Preliminary course learning goals

Students will:

- Understand what community organizing is and the differences between organizing, advocacy, and service approaches to community change
- Recognize the role of organizing in political change historically, including the Obama presidential campaign, the civil rights movement, and recent education reform movements
- Learn the organizing cycle, from building relationships to taking action
- Gain a basic proficiency in the skills and knowledge necessary for community organizing, including leadership, public narrative, and relationship building
- Participate in an organizing campaign

Potential for broader institutional impact

Bates has a rich history of community-engaged learning. This course would build upon that tradition but shift from the service paradigm; it would acknowledge existing inequalities and address them directly, offering a model for building capacity and power and contributing to the cultivation of informed civic action. By developing new relationships with local organizations, this course could lay the groundwork for further collaboration. I also see this course aligning well with the current focus on "purposeful work," defined in a recent working paper as "any sustained endeavor that organizes and energize behavior, confers a sense of meaning, and has relevance beyond the individual, regardless of the compensatory, professional, or esteem status of that work.... It is real work, and it matters now, to each member of the community." This initiative encourages Bates students to develop and pursue aspirations that are meaningful, both to themselves and to others—the very work that I hope to engage with this course.

Preliminary outline for short term 2014

Week 1:

- Review the basics of organizing: what is community organizing? How is it similar to and different from advocacy and service? What can organizing accomplish?

- Background reading/theory, including Adam Davis’s “What we don’t talk about when we don’t talk about service”, *A match on dry grass* (Warren et al.)

Week 2:

- Study Marshall Ganz’s organizing materials and syllabus (which will likely form the basis for this course)
- Begin to research Maine community organizing efforts (to identify possible fieldwork placements)
- Background reading/theory: Development during college years (William Perry)
- Develop further reading list
- Travel to local organizing action to further develop students’ understanding of organizing?

Week 3:

- Divide up and read further reading list
- Work out how to fit Ganz’s semester-long, graduate-student framework into five weeks or twelve weeks for undergraduates
- Continue to develop list of Maine community organizing groups
- Travel to local organizing action to further develop students’ understanding of organizing?

Week 4:

- Reach out to Maine community organizing groups
- Discuss and—to the extent possible—work out “sticky” questions:
 - How can I assess students’ performance?
 - What ethical issues might arise through the course?
 - How can we help undergraduates enter their fieldwork sites?
 - How will I supervise this work?
 - Should all fieldwork be off campus? Are on campus organizing projects allowed?
 - Could a student’s organizing project create risks for me or them?

Week 5:

- Develop course syllabus
- Solidify list of up to 7 possible sponsors for fieldwork

Proposal #4-

To: Emily Kane

From: Stephanie Kelley-Romano

Re: Short Term Curricular Innovation Project Pedagogical Innovation/Course (Re)Design

Date: October 16, 2013

Title: RHET391B: Presidential Campaign Rhetoric

Brief Overview: Historically, while teaching this course, students participate in a mock campaign – they become candidates; create platforms; hold conventions, debates, and other campaign events; respond to crises or scandals; interact with “voters” (other rhetoric students typically); create campaign materials; and otherwise try to get “elected” President. Simultaneously, we explore the various genres of presidential rhetoric in a way that the academic study and exploration coincides with mock campaign activities. Students are thus exposed to “great speeches” but are forced to recognize the socio-political contingencies of all rhetoric while adapting themes, ideas, and policies to a different audience. Overall, it’s already a pretty great class, but, *it could be even better!*

This *re-design* would seek to make the participatory element of the course (the mock campaign) truly interdisciplinary.

Instructor Interest: Despite the fact this is a rhetoric seminar, and so only available to 15 or so students every-other year, the potential impact of this redesign is significant in several ways:

1. To engage in learning – to participate – is an amazing experience. To inspire creative and critical thinking is the foundation of what I do – this course allows students to look at real world instances, assess them, and then apply those critical insights to their own goal directed objective.
2. To involve other disciplines and programs, to get people who think differently thinking and talking about the same thing, is not only exciting and just fun, it’s also amazingly instructive and important.
3. More selfishly, but equally important, it would help create a network of faculty who engage Presidential Campaigning in their teaching and research who could then collaborate pedagogically and also potentially, in terms of their scholarship. Networking possibilities in terms of sharing potential sites/venues for presentation/publication, teaching strategies, or lines of academic research in alternative traditions would be a boon for the intellectual climate of the college generally. In such a climate – especially in election years – speaker panels, community discussions, film series, and service learning opportunities would organically emerge.
4. It would have the potential to showcase the relevance of a liberal arts education. Frankly, it’s “cool” and “hip” and simultaneously wickedly “smart” – as such, its ability to serve as an example of “Why the liberal arts?” and specifically “Why Bates?” would be beneficial to the image of the college. Especially, if this prompted other classes to promote similar types of engagement, it could help distinguish Bates as a leader in innovative education. Presidential campaign rhetoric serves as a solid gateway since it is grounded enough in traditional public address and theory to appease more traditional advocates of the liberal arts, while simultaneously recognizing the ways a globalized, socially-mediated world changes how and what we know.

Case in point: I often schedule the “nominating conventions” to coincide with parents’ weekend – parents then see campaign events and product (videos, posters), watch their children articulate foreign and domestic policies appropriately for the situation, and sometimes even participate by being “on stage” or introducing their candidate at the convention.

Preliminary Learning Goals

1. To make our work purposeful – I know this is a bit cliché, but really, to take what we know to others, and to listen to what they know and then come to a different place of deeper understanding is a process we can't do too often. The fact that this course could then also have an impact via service learning outlets or community participation is really amazing.
2. To promote interdisciplinary collaborations and discussions within the Bates community.
3. To expand the breadth of student (and faculty) understanding of the many factors that affect the creation and election of a presidential candidate – by simultaneously looking at academic research and “real-world” examples.

Broader Institutional Impact

1. As already intimated above, that this course could serve as a springboard for thinking differently about how and what we learn.
2. In my ideal fantasy world, there could be “clusters” of courses taught at certain times that would create an amazing intellectual community and energy. I see this as having both generative and cohesive propensities – basically, we could promote discussion among GEC faculty to understand (and capitalize on) areas of overlap while also recognizing unique disciplinary/program contributions.

For example, using “addiction” as a potential topic, courses that look at the physiology, neurology, economics, politics, policies, and representations of addiction could all be considered – what it means to be “considered” of course is intentionally ambiguous, but I imagine if several of these faculty members got together and simply talked about their course objectives, areas of overlap would emerge. Then, if we were to have two or three community (brown bag lunch?) panels that combined divisions, it could be really exciting. To have side-by-side discussion of the physical aspects of addiction, narrative of addiction presented in popular culture, and working with addiction in the community would be interesting. Similarly, the class/racial history of addiction, the economics of the pharmaceutical industry, and the philosophy underlying the “war on drugs” would be instructive. Apologies for my rudimentary understanding of the interdisciplinary considerations and implications of those not my own – but, potentially, if I went to these events, I too could learn a lot!

Preliminary Schedule Outline

*I envision having 4 students – one for each of the divisions – I would choose students based on those who major/minor or have significant course work and faculty interaction in those divisions. I would also take suggestions from other faculty as I think using all my own students would be less effective.

1. Week 1

- a. My presentation of the course goals, materials, and assignments to the students. As the course is already divided into two main sections – the mock campaign and the study of public address – I would use a day to go over each (I imagine we would need at least 3 hours to cover the course trajectory appropriately). In addition, I would use two days to have students “do” something from each section. They would have to complete some sort of assignment outside of class and then we would debrief about it in class. I project 2 hours for each of these projects. (total 10 hours)
- b. I would want to conduct informal focus groups of rhetoric students (and others) who have taken the course. Over the years, I've taken suggestions and

incorporated many into the course, but I'd like to see how the last bunch thought about the course, etc. I'd also ask the students who were the "voters" about their experiences – their level of interaction, involvement, interest, etc. (4 hours)

- c. I would want to conduct informal focus groups of other students who are interested in politics and political rhetoric. Ask them broad questions about their current knowledge, what they think is important, etc. (4 hours)
- d. I would want to conduct informal focus groups of students who have NO interest in politics – students who would avoid this class. I want to know why that is the case, and try to strategize ways to involve them, even in ancillary ways. (2 hours)

2. Week 2

- a. Focusing on the mock campaign, I would proceed chronologically and brainstorm with selected students as to how this is relevant/could be included in courses in other departments. Going through the entire campaign will be BIG, but I think it's important to go over the whole thing early and then let it organically grow. (8 hours)
- b. I would meet with relevant and interested faculty – either in small (divisional?) groups or individually. I would assess their level of interest, the degree to which they would like – or could have – their students involved, and brainstorm potential assignments or activities that can contribute to both classes. (a zillion hours? – 10?)

3. Week 3

- a. I think week 2 continues easily through week 3. At this point, hopefully, we are designing assignments with clear goals and clear debriefings.
- b. I would want to have a meeting with as many involved faculty as possible. I would want to present the goals and direction of my course – along with the major topics usually selected as campaign/platform issues. Then, I'd like to have a brainstorming session about potential readings/activities/assignments that they can do in their classes, and ones we could incorporate into the seminar.

4. Week 4

- a. I think this will be the catch up week – I think consulting with and designing co-disciplinary work is going to be very time consuming. If, by fate, we are "caught up" I want to look at the second side of the course – the public address aspects – and think about how we can bring more in from other disciplines – so speeches by scientists about global warming (or whatever). Having all these people who "know" key texts will be instrumental in this.

5. Week 5

- a. Put it all together – I'm an organizational freak, and so at this point, I will want to have everything organized and ready to go. Schedules laid out, original copies of final assignments rechecked, calendar notes as to when to contact other professors regarding reminders of assignments, etc., I would like to have some sort of explanatory/annotated portfolio to give to all participating faculty so they can see what we're doing and where we're going. Finally, I would like to bring everyone back together again to show what we ended up with. I think it's going to be pretty amazing. 😊

NOTES ADDED BY Emily Kane- questions I sent to Stephanie are shown on the next page, with her responses following immediately after:

QUESTIONS FROM EMILY KANE-

1) in the section naming the course to be redesigned, can you specify when you plan to teach it? (I assume Fall 2014?)

2) if it feels appropriate, could you mention that you'll also think about whether/how any of this might also be relevant in your larger "What is Rhetoric" course? (i.e., I am not suggesting you make that a major feature, just that you mention it as part of the broader impact- I'm sure you already use all sorts of interactive approaches there too, and if there's the possibility of working a little of what you learn through the redesign process back into there, even in a very minor way, that could be a cool additional impact to mention as potential- I don't mean this needs to relate to presidential campaigns in particular, but to the rhetorical questions more broadly)

3) could you specify the major, minor and GECs to which the redesigned course contributes?

4) this is mentioned here and there nicely, but could you note even more specifically somewhere that social media is part of what students do in this seminar, and that it's one of the things you'll be continuing to explore in the redesign process? I really hope the "innovation" element in this whole pedagogical innovation impulse won't fetishize tech over other kinds of innovation, but since that happens to be one feature among many in what you'll be working on it can't hurt to highlight it

5) since it's a redesign of an existing course, I should have thought to ask for the syllabus from the last time you taught it- if you have a chance to make the small tweaks above, could you then just tack the last time's syllabus on to the file before you send it again?

STEPHANIE KELLEY-ROMANO'S RESPONSES

October 24, 2013

Re: Short Term Innovative Pedagogy/Course (Re)-Design Follow Up Questions

1. The course would be taught in Fall 2014.

2. You asked how this might be relevant to my What is Rhetoric? class – Basically, when I teach the class currently, the What is Rhetoric? students are the 'voters' – as such they participate in campaign events and are targeted by the campaigns. Typically, their votes count as 2 – other rhetoric students, debaters, and sometimes other classes also participate as voters. With the redesign, I certainly anticipate increased participation by voters. One thing I have been thinking of is having students do an argumentative analysis of one of the ads or speeches put out by the campaign. I'm sure other ways of interaction and engagement will emerge.

3. This course contributes to:

- The Rhetoric Major (both tracks)
- The Rhetoric Minor
- GEC C017: Evidence: Documentation and Reality
- GEC C062: Why Academics Matter
- Interdis: American Cultural Studies

4. Social Media specifically addressed: This course has a large social media component in that within the campaigns students make videos and maintain webpages. They also use social media – twitter, facebook, instagram, etc., for their campaign and also for various activities. So, for example, we have a "crisis" day – on this day campaigns are given a scenario (personal transgression or national disaster) to which they have one hour to respond. Meanwhile, news

(through the students who are the media) is “breaking” – so the campaigns, while preparing their remarks must also be dealing with “leaks” etc.

Simultaneously, in the “public address” trajectory of the course we study the academic literature on the role of social media within campaigns and image construction. Students then (hopefully) use that information to inform their use of social media. We also critique the way “real” campaigns are using social media – so when Hillary Clinton announced her candidacy on YouTube, we looked at the video as well as the mediated reception of that video to various constituencies.

5. Syllabus for previous version of course: see next page

Presidential Campaign Rhetoric

Rhetoric 391B

Professor: Stephanie Kelley-Romano
Office: 308 Pettigrew Hall; Office Phone: 6191
email: skelley@bates.edu

Course Description

In this course, students explore the wide array of discourse surrounding presidential campaigns using various rhetorical methodologies. Texts examined include political speeches, political ads, debates, and news reporting about the campaign. Special attention is paid to newspaper and television coverage of candidates and the development of image through new media/technology.

One of the major goals of this course is for students to understand presidential rhetoric, and understand the process of analysis. By the end of the course, students should recognize the various elements that need to be considered (exigence, audience, constraints, genre, speaker, etc.) to understand texts in context.

A second goal is to recognize and utilize various rhetorical theories and methodologies to best illuminate and understand presidential rhetoric. By the end of the course, students should be able to identify and explain multiple rhetorical approaches and the strengths and weaknesses of each.

Finally, one of the organizational principles of the course revolves around the "Rhetorical Presidency." By the end of the course, students should understand the historical significance of the rhetorical presidency, and how it helps us understand modern presidential rhetoric. Furthermore, students should be able to discuss both the strengths and weaknesses of such an approach as articulated by various proponents/opponents.

Course materials will be available on Lyceum. In an effort to save paper, I will not print most assignments/readings/etc. It is your responsibility to either print them and bring them to class, or bring your computer so you can access them. You should have copies of the texts available during discussion. If you do not, you will receive a zero for participation that day.

Relatedly, much of our communication will take place on Lyceum, Google, or via email. When emailing me, the subject line should contact the course number: RHET391. If not, I may lose it in the black hole that is my in-box.

Required Text

Campbell, Karlyn Kohrs & Jamieson, Kathleen Hall. (2008). Presidents Creating the Presidency: Deeds Done in Words. University of Chicago Press.

Expectations

- Be well informed about the most recent Presidential race (and others)
- Read all assignments thoroughly

- Participate in class discussions in a meaningful way
- Be engaged in the mock campaign
- Be engaged in class and prepared

****Failure to do any of the above things will result in a failing grade****

Course Requirements

Mock Campaign	30%
Class Participation/DQs	20%
Ad Analysis Paper	20%
Public Address Paper	30%

Mock Campaign

One of the most exciting things about this course is the mock campaign. You are expected to participate in some way in this campaign. You may serve as a member of the media, a campaign staffer, or you may run for office.

Each role requires different things. ALL require effort. If you do not participate in a satisfactory way, I will give you one warning and then you will be asked to drop the course. I put a lot of effort into this course, and I expect students to do the same.

Regardless of your specific role in the campaign, your decisions, staff reports, and journal entries should all reflect familiarity with course readings, principles and discussions. The degree to which you are able to do this will greatly affect your mock campaign grade.

For example, you might be a charismatic Vice-Presidential candidate, you might give a pretty good introduction for your running mate at the convention, and you may perform well during your debate. If, in your journal entries you are able to justify your speaking/debating/strategy decisions with course readings/historical precedent, you would earn an “A” in the mock campaign (even if you don’t win). If, on the other hand, your journals do not demonstrate any familiarity with the course readings/lectures or history of Presidential politics, you would earn a “D.”

Class Participation

Louder is not always better – remember this as you participate in class. Class participation grades are based on the degree to which you demonstrate that you have done, and understand, the reading. Additionally, your ability to stay abreast and involved with the current/most recent presidential election and the ways you are able to connect the race to course readings will be considered. Finally, the quality of your discussion questions, and their timeliness, will weigh heavily in your class participation grade.

Discussion Questions

Discussion questions need to be generated for discussion classes. These questions may revolve around the actual campaign or the mock campaign, but should incorporate relevant class

readings. You should TYPE and bring these questions to class – they should be turned in to me at the end of class.

Missing more than 2 sets of questions will result in the lowering of your final grade by one letter grade for each missed set over 2. (Miss 3 down 2, miss 4 down 3, etc.). The quality of question will be evaluated – try to construct questions that synthesize material and require your peers to think critically about campaigns.

In place of discussion questions, you may have to write a specific type of speech. These speeches will be peer-critiqued, and then graded by me.

Ad Analysis Paper

For this paper, you will choose one political ad from the current/most recent Presidential race or from the mock campaign. You will then critique the “informedness” of the ad. More information will be available well before the due date.

Public Address Paper

For this paper, you will choose one campaign speech from the last 4 – 8 years (or from the mock campaign) and conduct a generic analysis of that speech. More information will be available well before the due date.

Proposal #5- from Dennis Browne for multi-level Russian course design/(re)design

(note from Emily Kane: sent from FSA in Russia with additional refinement to be completed later, once he's back on campus)

The goal of this project is to redesign the Russian language curriculum at the various post-elementary levels (any language course beyond Russian 102) by creating a new multi-level Russian language course, which can accommodate students at intermediate and advanced levels (in the current Bates catalog these are Russian 201, 202, 301, 302, and 306).

My reasons for proposing this project are based on a personal desire to explore in more detail some modest attempts I have made the last two years at experimentation in regular semester Russian language courses, and the harsh reality of limited resources and new policies on course enrollments.

I begin with the harsh reality. Russian has gone from 2.0 to 1.4 FTE, or a reduction from potentially 10 to 7 courses per year. The lecturer in German and Russian Studies (GRS) is a 1.6 FTE position, but the position is to be filled in the future by someone who can do both Russian and German: 2 courses in the former, 1 course in the latter. To maintain the Russian minor (7 courses in Russian, 6 of which must be from the language sequence), and to keep Russian as an option for students in the new European Studies Program (EUS), my part-time colleague and I would have to teach 6 of our 7 courses in the basic language sequence, Russian 101 to 302. This would minimize any contribution we could make to European Studies – something I personally would not welcome after the time and energy I committed to help bring European Studies into the Bates curriculum and the EUS-specific courses I have put into the College catalog.

Forgive me for putting this in such a personal light, but I am faced with the following options: a) teach mostly Russian language courses and maybe 1 EUS course per year; b) teach at least 1 EUS course per semester but teach overloads every year in order to do so; or c) find an innovative way to combine intermediate and advanced Russian language students into a single classroom that would keep me at the normal 5 course teaching load, but give Russian language students the credit options they need for a Russian minor or to use Russian as part of their EUS major.

Option 'c' is the most attractive of the three above, and brings me to the second reason, the cheerier one, for submitting this proposal. The last few years I have begun to focus more and more on listening comprehension in the Russian language classes I teach. There is a substantial body of literature on listening comprehension in second language acquisition, but it was my experience on the 2010 FSA to Vienna, Austria, which convinced me that more attention given to listening comprehension exercises and strategies in the classroom is needed and can result in a fuller, more rewarding experience for students when they are abroad.

I have been increasing the amount and variety of such exercises in my Russian classes, but having a full short term to explore more options, experiment with students, and get immediate feedback would greatly benefit my fall and winter semester classes.

The short term would also provide time to test the mixing of language levels in the same group. After the first or second week of a beginning language class, students already start to differ in their development of the various skills (listening, reading, speaking, writing). The longer they

study, the greater are the differences in their relative abilities. Thus, we already deal with “mixed” levels even, for example, in a second year language class. (This is something my colleagues in French and Spanish must deal with on a regular basis, as students come to them with a wide range of abilities from their various pre-college experiences.) A goal of this short term project would be to design exercises using a single listening comprehension assignment which would have meaning and benefit to students at both low intermediate and advanced language levels. (Here, my colleagues in the Classical languages have experience, as they have been combining levels in some of their classes for several years now. Speaking and listening are not the central components of their courses, nevertheless, their experience could prove helpful.)

My goal would be to apply what is learned during this short term experiment to the regular semester classes in Russian (RUS 201-202-301-302), and to redesign the configuration of the post-102 Russian curriculum, so that 201 and 301 could be offered at the same time by the same instructor bringing those students together in one group, but still reserving the sequence of credits they receive.

Aspects of the project will include:

- Interviews with faculty in Greek and Latin (me)
- Interviews with faculty in modern languages who use student mentors in their language classes (me)
- Interviews with students from Greek and Latin (students)
- Looking at pedagogical literature on developing listening skills in a second language (me and students)
- Searching for appropriate materials (me and students)
- Evaluating material for future use (me and students)
- Designing and evaluating the process in which students assist one another in the classroom assignments (me and students)

As I mentioned above, my goal would be to have a Russian language sequence of six courses: 101-102-201-202-301-302 which would result in the commitment of four FTE to staff the six courses. I see 101 and 102 as requiring separate attention, but the goal is to have 201 and 301 as a single unit from the staffing perspective (similarly 202 and 302). If successful, this reformulation of post 102 language courses could have significance in other modern languages, particularly those with similar enrolment patterns to Russian. The harsh reality to which I referred earlier is not one that Russian alone faces.

<http://englishrussia.com/2010/04/17/under-attack-of-ivan-the-terrible/>