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Volume 21, Number 1, March, 1999

Implementing an Interdisciplinary Core Curriculum: The Experience of a Small Public Liberal Arts University in Georgia, by Dr. Deborah Vess, Director of Interdisciplinary Studies, Georgia College and State University. Proponents of interdisciplinary studies have long argued that interdisciplinary work fosters the growth of critical thought, greater empathy for problems addressed, and the ability to apply knowledge to many different contexts. Consequently, interdisciplinary courses should play a strong role in a liberal arts curriculum. At Georgia College & State University, the Public Liberal Arts University of the University System of Georgia, we have designed a new core curriculum which features nine new interdisciplinary core courses. ... Our new core features interdisciplinary courses in all areas of the core except for mathematics.

Remembering Ernest Lynton, a memorial tribute to Ernest A. Lynton, Commonwealth Professor Emeritus at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, by Beth Casey and Julie Thompson Klein.

The AIS Website is Operational! Visit the AIS website to learn about your Association.

Faculty Positions.

Volume 21, Number 2, May, 1999

American Academic Culture in Transformation: Fifty Years, Four Disciplines, edited by Thomas Bender and Carl E. Schorske, with introduction by Stephen R. Graubard. Review by Sylvia Gamboa, College of Charleston. The humanities and social sciences in the United States have lately been shaken by debates about both method and mission. Questions have been raised about the nature and definition of American academic disciplines, the role of ideology and political commitment in scholarship, the possibility of objectivity, the status of theory, and the place of knowledge in the larger culture and polity (4). Thus begin historians Thomas Bender and Carl Schorske in their introduction to *American Academic Culture in Transformation: Fifty Years, Four Disciplines*. ... Bender and Schorske, editors and contributors to this ambitious work, set out to chart and make sense of how in the 20th century, American higher education in the United States has profoundly changed.

Report on the AIS Membership Survey, by Shelagh Squire, AIS Vice President, Relations. A survey was sent out with the dues notice in December 1997, and 23 percent of active AIS members responded. ... Survey results indicate a high level of satisfaction with services that the AIS currently offers. It was described as a "great organization" offering "real intellectual stimulation."

Conference Announcements

- "Medicine - Magic - Religion," SSHM Annual Conference, University of Southampton, Southampton, England, 17-18, July 2000.

Hosting AIS Conferences. Special session scheduled for the 1999 meeting at North Central College, Naperville, Illinois.

Volume 21 Number 3, September, 1999

Into the Light of Things: The Art of the Commonplace from Wordsworth to John Cage, by George J. Leonard, University of Chicago Press, 1995. Reviewed by Mark Looker, Concordia College, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Interdisciplinary studies can be like shifting between discrete lenses: the goal is to see the world more clearly without getting dizzy from the rapid changes in viewpoint. ... George Leonard's fascinating and frustrating study of the "end of art," announced by philosopher Arthur Danto and exemplified particularly by the work of avant-garde composer John Cage, is in many ways more like the tri-focal, where we view the same object from sharply delineated points of view than it is like the "elastic adjustments of the eye" to which full interdisciplinarity aspires. Notwithstanding, this book should be of interest to anyone teaching interdisciplinary courses, in the humanities in particular, because of questions it implicitly raises about the nature and method of interdisciplinarity.

The Innovative Campus: Nurturing the Distinctive Learning Environment, by Joy Rosenzweig Kliever, The Oryx Press, Phoenix, Arizona, 1999. Review by Robert Benedetti, Dean of the College, University of the Pacific. This book is based on extensive interviews conducted at six experimental colleges that were founded in the 1960s and that survive today. Included in the survey are Pitzer College, New College of the University of South Florida, Hampshire College, the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, University of California-Santa Cruz, and the Evergreen State College. ... Joy Kliever is on the right track. All of us have something to learn from experiments. ... By focusing on those places where conditions conspired to create a unified curriculum, we have an opportunity to evaluate the way that different educational philosophies, carried out systematically, end up.

Conference Announcements

- Third Annual Conference of the Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Intter-Langues, Universite du Havre, France, 23rd and 2rth March 2000.
- Swiss Transdisciplinary Conference: Joint Problem Solving between Science and Society, February 27, 28,29 and March 1, 2000.

Volume 21, Number 4, December, 1999

The Academy in Transition: An Exercise in Positive Thinking. Three pamphlets in The Academy in Transition Discussion Series, Association of American Colleges and Universities, Washington, D.C. 1999. *Contemporary Understanding of Liberal Education*, by Carol Geary Schneider and Robert Shoenberg; *Mapping Interdisciplinary Studies*, by Julie Thompson Klein, and *General Education: The Changing Agenda*, by Jerry Gaff. Review by Raymond C. Miller, Professor of International Relations and Social Science, San Francisco State University. The Association of American Colleges and Universities informs the readers of these three pamphlets that American higher education is in a "period of transformative change." These discussion papers, and the three to follow - *Diversity and Learning*, *Education for Global Understanding*, and *Intersections of Educational Quality and Cost* - are intended to "provide road maps about the directions and destinations of the changing academy." ... If the authors of the three already published papers are right, we interdisciplinarians should be reassured. The direction appears to be toward more interdisciplinarity, more connections, more relationalism, and more integration in the college curriculum. A careful reading of the papers, however, lowers one's confidence in the inevitability of this

direction.

"To Read Between the Lines." *Simone Weil: On Politics, Religion and Society*, by Christopher Frost and Rebecca Bell-Metereau, Women of Ideas Series, London: SAGE Publications, 1998. Review by Francine G. Navakas, North Central College. In the last two decades scholars from across the disciplines have intensified their conversation about the life and thought of French philosopher and social theorist Simone Weil (1909-1943), with claims and counter-claims about her intellectual and spiritual legacy and the assumptions behind her words and deeds. ... Christopher Frost, Associate Professor of Psychology, and Rebecca Bell-Metereau, Professor of English, in their 1998 contribution to the Sage Women of Ideas Series, add a fresh, forthright, and focused voice to this conversation about Weil. By placing their commentary within the framework of the Women of Ideas sequence, they have cleared a path to examine the origins, structure, and power of Weil's "intellectual work" and thus to explore what Joan Dargan has called the "habitable space" within which Weil chose to conduct her private and public battles.

How can your interdisciplinary program market itself to prospective students? To find out, AIS formed a marketing committee of Scott Abbott, Elaine Englehardt (chair) and David Keller, all from Utah Valley State College. In response to a survey sent out last April, they received brochures, fliers, handbooks, posters, catalog copy, application packets, viewbooks, newsletters, and website addresses from 60 interdisciplinary programs in the United States, Canada, and New Zealand. ... The better brochures, in the judgment of the committee, included photos, profiles of current students and prominent alumni, a list of recent graduates and their current job or graduate program, and a list of stellar faculty. One listed titles of senior projects, and the marketable skills developed through interdisciplinary education. Another quoted employers on the skills they most value in program graduates they hire. ... The best brochures were designed with parents as well as students in mind.

Conference Announcements

- Association for Integrative Studies, 22nd Annual Conference, "Interdisciplinarity: Values in Conflict," October 5-9, 2000, Portland State University, Portland, Oregon. Proposal Submission Form.
- "Cultivating Humanity: Knowledge a Transformative," February 24-26, 2000, Georgia College & State University, Milledgeville, Georgia.

For questions and comments, contact us at aisorg@muohio.edu