Faculty Development Center Annual Report
AY 2023 – 2024

This year, we continued our work to promote teaching, scholarship, creativity, understanding our students, and fostering faculty work/life balance. We also joined campus partners whenever possible to support learning in all its modalities and to co-facilitate programs and events designed to increase a sense of cohesion and belonging on campus.

Teaching

We held regular high-level discussions on teaching and learning throughout the year. Some focused on books, *The New College Classroom* (Davidson & Katopodis); *What the Best College Teachers Do* (Bain), etc. or themes such as building inclusive classrooms. Kate Misar and Lauren Baldonado presented an excellent workshop on Backwards Course Design and Universal Design for Learning. In connection with the HRDI January training, Andrew Horvitz provided a workshop on grading and assessing student learning. Another highlight was an interactive presentation by expert Dr. Lauren Bryant (U Albany) on “Teaching Large on Classes.” We invited SUNY Plattsburg and SUNY Oswego faculty to join us for that event and shared the recorded webinar with SUNY Central Center for Professional Development.

Rachel Rigolino created the very active A.I. Inquiry Group and developed a highly acclaimed Artificial Intelligence (AI) resource list relevant to teaching and learning. In March, Lizabeth Cain presented a workshop, “Why I am not Afraid of A.I.” Rachel coordinated many additional presentations and workshops throughout the year by faculty including Rich McElrath, Jason Wrench, Joshua Korenblat, Daniel Potocki, student Jackson Rogers, Mary Holland, Nancy Johnson, and others.

Rachel also promoted Hypothesis as an alternative to typical discussion boards with several workshops and watch parties throughout the year.

Mentoring

Ten faculty members participated in our Early Career Faculty Mentoring cohorts. At least two joined the SUNY wide New Faculty Peer Mentoring program. This is an opportunity the FDC could better promote in the future.

We also provided a mentoring venue where we facilitated conversations between new and experienced Department Chairs. We updated our list of recommendations and tips.

Professional development training took many forms, as always. We held workshops on how to complete the Annual Report with Assistant Provost Deb Gould; Research, Tenure and
Promotion with Alexander Bartholomew, and how to apply for a UUP Individual Development Award with Mary Alice Citera.

Per a request from new faculty, we held our first “SEI Reveal Party” in January and looked at our students’ course evaluations together. We processed the information, celebrated our strengths, and shared ideas about ways to improve in areas indicated in the reports.

The Faculty Center continued the honor of advising the Futures Committee of Early Career Faculty and consulted regularly with its leadership.

**Understanding our students**

Dr. Gwen Lloyd provided workshops on *Supporting Distressed Students* in both the fall and the spring. President Wheeler attended the November event.

In the fall, we had a great discussion with Jason Gilliland, Donnie Martin, and students at the Office of Veteran and Military Services. Military-affiliated students provided their candid perspectives on their experience at SUNY New Paltz. This was quite moving.

Emi DiSciullo and Ashley Guerrero of the Disability Resource Center hosted a fall tea at the FDC and then offered an information session for faculty in spring. They arrived with many handouts to explain inclusive design and neurodiversity. We talked about accessibility in our physical environment and proposed a campus walk and role for the future to test ease of access to all areas. Emi and Ashley shared ways faculty can help students navigate the academic environment and learn pre-professional skills.

New Interim Vice President for Student Affairs Kathleen Lieblich and Tatiana Perez hosted a tea and provided their perspectives on ways that faculty can best support students. This also served as an important listening opportunity for them.

**Supporting Research & Creative Activities**

Stephan Macaluso, Moshe Cohen, and Damian Kelty-Stephen stepped up to co-host weekly faculty writing accountability groups in the fall and spring.

Our editing services were extremely popular this year. We had two undergraduate students provide basic proofreading and copy editing of curricular materials and scholarly manuscripts. Graduate students Elias Stuhr and Aylie Rudge did intensive editing of faculty writing. At least eighteen faculty members took advantage of this excellent service.

We continued to promote our institutional membership with the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity with a spring workshop on the “NCFDD Greatest Hits.” Many faculty members participated in the 14 day writing challenges that occurred throughout the year.
A faculty reading group had a lively discussion on Bruno Latour’s recent book, *Down to Earth*.

**Additional Opportunities Provided by the FDC**

We promoted Collaborative Online International Learning by hosting a COIL event with Director Hope Windle. The Provost also attended and heard presentations by Alex Peh and Anthony Dandridge. In the spring, four faculty members participated in the partnering fair.

I held an information session on volunteer teaching at the Shawangunk maximum security prison and four faculty showed up to express interest. This bodes well for the proposed credit bearing program through SUNY New Paltz.

As always, we encouraged use of our grant-finding search engine and the SUNY-sponsored grant writing course which several faculty members are completing this year, at least two with scholarships. Carrie Corti made sure our website Grants & Funding pages were always up to date by sending us the newest announcements.

Our OIT board members Kate Bohan and Rich McElrath were heavily involved in developing micro-credentials and master course shells, respectively, which will have a significant impact on our institution’s outreach, enrollment, and teaching effectiveness.

Various faculty members shared their expertise with the faculty community. For example, Laura Wyeth held a faculty and staff tea and the Greenhouse and Isidoro Janeiro facilitated a workshop on the *Art of Conflict Resolution*.

The Faculty Center collaborated with institutional partners on community events including Sound Your Truth, Circle Back / Give Thanks letter-writing campaign, International Mother Language Day, the student-organized Better Together symposium on restorative climate justice with County Executive Jen Metzger, and Earth Day. We intended to continue our annual support of the Disability Studies Series, created by April Coughlin during our first DEI fellows cohort, but they didn’t need us this year.

We joined the Faculty Adventure Group for a new faculty welcome of 46 participants at Twin Star Orchard / Brooklyn Cider house. There were several wonderful outings throughout the year including Spring Farm in the Mohonk Preserve and Arrowood Farm in the fall, Peterskill State Park when snow was still on the ground, West Trapps, and various happy hours.

**Conclusion**

We continued to provide crucial training, mentorship and support to faculty and by extension, the campus community. Our in-person attendance for workshops, trainings and teas was down for many reasons including understaffing problems that lead to time
scarcity, the move of many meetings online, and general morale. The FDC would benefit from increased Provost endorsement and validation of our programs in his interactions with Deans, and Chairs, and the faculty senate. The new Director, Matthew Newcomb will surely help this happen.

Continued outreach to departments can also help increase our impact. Sarah met with the Division of Engineering Programs for a robust discussion on what faculty want and need from their teaching & learning center. It would be beneficial to continue such listening sessions in all departments. The Office of Communication & Marketing helped draft a new brochure, and that project will be finalized by new FDC leadership.

Sarah Wyman
Director, Faculty Development Center
May, 2024