As a highlight of this month’s newsletter, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) would like to share an interview with Mr. Matthew Forrest, Associate Professor of Art and Printmaking. Mr. Forrest taught the Art Capstone course during the Fall semester and will be sharing his experiences while teaching the course as well as the teaching and learning techniques used.

Tell us more about the Art Capstone course. What did you and your students accomplish?

The Art Capstone course is divided into two separate parts: the senior thesis project and senior thesis exhibition. The classes run simultaneously within a student’s senior year. Help is provided to facilitate focused research as well as production time for students within the BA concentrations. For example, students within the capstone exhibit track accomplish their thesis research during their capstone exhibit development. For visual artists and graphic designers, this work can lead to an exhibit. For art history majors, it can lead to a formal presentation. It just depends on the degree concentration the student is pursuing.

Was the Art Capstone course delivered face-to-face or online?

We had a hybrid course this Fall. We provided online open critiques to allow students to talk and share ideas. The online open critiques also allowed for providing fluid feedback from faculty, peers, and visiting artists.

How does the mode of delivery affect your choice of teaching and learning techniques?

As the instructor, I felt it was imperative to provide additional support and to reassure my students that they had the full support of Georgia College, making sure that students felt connected during these unprecedented times. I did this by using every resource available, such as audio and video feedback, open online office hours, and digital learning resources. The Writing Center and Career Center also provided support to our graduating seniors.

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How do you assess your students? Are portfolio assessments helpful?

Students are assessed in a number of ways within the class, ranging from group projects and reviews, writing assignments, and of course, their thesis work. They also have three full department reviews during the semester. A digital portfolio in the form of three online presentations must be completed. Student assessments are a pivotal part of the capstone process.

What challenges do you face during the Art Capstone course? What teaching and learning techniques do you use to overcome these challenges?

This is a great question. I am sure all the GC instructors had some of the same challenges. For this class, I learned a great deal on using WebEx, Zoom, and other online software to stay connected to students while providing learning resources that could be utilized at a distance. I found that some students created GroupMe chats to form a community on their phones for asking course-related questions.

I used the Serve Help Desk for a number of technology support needs, including meeting student software needs and trouble-shooting OneDrive folders. I can’t give them enough credit for their help and support on so many fronts. I leaned on my colleagues within and outside my department for support for learning resources such as online galleries, free software, and much more. The Center for Teaching and Learning also provided demonstrations and resource links to give additional support to my students.

What are the highlights of the Art Capstone course for you?

Helping students develop and display their research to the public, highlighting four years of dedication to their chosen focus, was especially meaningful for me. During the Fall semester this year, students produced work for their online capstone exhibit. I would like to acknowledge and thank Professor Abraham Abebe for giving his time to support our capstone students within the website.

How do you showcase your students’ artwork? How was this showcase different from courses in previous years?

In the past, we would display student works within the Leland Gallery. Due to the pandemic, the format was changed to an online exhibit so everyone could view our students’ works remotely. However, we still relied on our faculty, like Ernesto Gomez, to provide gallery support on public relations for the show cards, the banner, as well as best practices for documenting work published online. While the presentation format had changed, the support our students received and the incredible work they produced was exceptional.

News from the CTL

Center for Teaching and Learning Collection

The CTL has partnered with the Ina Dillard Russell Library to provide Georgia College with access to books on teaching, learning, the scholarship of teaching and learning, research, and more. To locate more of these books, follow the instructions below:

1. Go to gil.gcsu.edu.

2. Search for “center for teaching and learning collection”.

3. When the results are retrieved, scroll down until you see “Location” listed on the lefthand menu. Below “Location” will be the link with the text “Center for Teaching & Learning” with a number beside it. Click that link.

4. When you find a book that you would like to check out, take it to the Circulation Desk to borrow as you would any other library book.

We are ordering additional books almost every week. Come and browse our collection! Many thanks to the Library for helping us catalog and share our resources.
CTL Teaching Tips

Start of Semester Course Checklist

The Fall semester has ended and the start of the Spring semester is just around the corner. Now is the time to gather or create the content for that new course you will be teaching for the first time, or it’s time to freshen the course you teach every year. Whether the course is new or old, there is always information to gather, update, compose, or research. Sometimes the task of preparing multiple courses for the upcoming semester can be a bit overwhelming or at least a bit hectic. Even the format of face-to-face, hybrid, or fully online present unique preparation challenges.

A Start of Semester Checklist is just the thing to help bring a bit of structure to your semester preparations. The checklist is nothing more than a to-do list that will help you remember all of the tasks to complete before the semester begins.

The following will help you work through the checklist:

- Not every item on the checklist will apply to your course. Complete the task(s) that apply and disregard those that don’t.
- Use the space provided to customize the checklist for special tasks and break larger tasks into smaller components.
- Retain a digital copy of your checklist with your electronic content for the course. If building content in GeorgiaVIEW, create a hidden folder in the Content area and save a copy of the checklist there. This can be a checklist document or a checklist created in the GeorgiaVIEW checklist tool.

The Beginning of Semester Checklist can be found in the Center for Teaching and Learning Faculty Resource Course within GeorgiaVIEW, under the Helpful Tools module. If you need assistance or have any questions about the checklist, please contact the Center for Teaching and Learning at ctl@gcsu.edu.

Memes and GIFs as Powerful Classroom Tools

Have you ever thought of incorporating visual media into your courses to engage your students? One way to successfully engage your students is to incorporate memes and GIFs into your courses. Students can use visual media, such as GIFs, to demonstrate how they are feeling about a new course concept or show their understanding of a course concept or topic.

- Memes and GIFs can be used as icebreakers and check-ins.
- Memes and GIFs can be ways to explore society and culture
- Memes and GIFs can demonstrate course concepts

News from IT

The IT Team thanks you all for your support and contributions to our success in 2020. Even though it has been a tough year in many ways, there are always positive aspects to be found if we take the time to look for them. Have a safe and joyous holiday season, and we look forward to working with you in 2021!
News from the Library

Dr. Walker Named Director of Russell Library

Effective January 1, 2021, Dr. Shaundra Walker will be serving as the Director of the Russell Library. Congratulations from the CTL, Dr. Walker! We look forward to continuing to work with Dr. Walker and with the Russell Library.

Library Hours for Winter Break

Library hours during the break, which runs from November 30 through January 18, are as follows:

Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday: Closed

The Library will be closed from December 24 to January 3, in observance of Christmas and the New Year. The Library will also be closed from January 16 to January 18, in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Affordable Learning Georgia - Affordable Materials Grants

Affordable Learning Georgia’s Affordable Materials Grants are intended to:

- Explore and expand course materials transformation to include the adoption, adaptation, and creation of Open Education Resources (OER); the adoption of materials available through GALILEO and USG libraries; and the use of other no-cost and low-cost materials.

- Provide support and time to faculty instructors, librarians, instructional designers, and professional staff to meet, plan, review, and implement these approaches.

- Work toward equitable access to materials and lower materials costs for students and contribute to student retention, progression, and graduation.

Affordable Learning Georgia Grant Information Session

Affordable Learning Georgia is issuing a Request for Proposals for Affordable Materials Grants with applications due by March 1, 2021. Note: all grant applications must be coordinated with the Office of Grants and Sponsored Projects. There is also an online information session scheduled for anyone interested in applying for this grant on January 11, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. via MS Teams. Please see the meeting information below to join the meeting (no registration required).

Meeting Link
Dial-In: +1 478-219-4222, 575386211#
Phone Conference ID: 575 386 211#

Please contact Dr. Shaundra Walker, Library Director, at shaundra.walker@gcsu.edu, if you have any questions or need more information about Affordable Learning Georgia and the benefits of open education resources.