As a highlight of this month’s newsletter, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) would like to share an interview with Dr. Paulette Cross about her course, Writing Life Stories: Discovering Cultural Heritage. Dr. Cross is a Foundations of Education faculty member here at Georgia College in the Department of Professional Learning and Innovation.

**Tell us about your Writing Life Stories: Discovering Cultural Heritage Course.**

The stories that come out of this class are about ordinary, everyday people. Their memories are a gift to ourselves and others. This venture is satisfying and rewarding for students because it makes them think about their journey, the journey of their family, and the obstacles that have been faced now and in the past. Being able to share this story with others and get feedback from peers is a special experience.

**How did you come up with the Writing Life Stories course?**

My class, while multicultural, is based on my experience taking a class on Asian-Americans Writing Life Stories in the fall of 1997. I discovered this class while perusing the University of California- Irvine (UCI) catalog during a study abroad program in Mexico. Although the Asian-American Life Stories class was not focused on my heritage and culture, the professor welcomed me to attend the class and learn how to write my own life story centered on African-American history as related to my family. I took Cynthia Alby’s Design for Transformative Learning classes to organize my resulting ideas from taking this course and designed a class on Writing Life Stories. As a result, I was allowed to conduct a pilot course in the fall which was ultimately approved by the University Curriculum and Instruction Committee. I will teach the Writing Life Stories course in fall of 2021.

**What did you hope to accomplish?**

My teaching style is student-centered, so I want my students to facilitate their work and take ownership of their projects to build engagement. Currently, in my EDUC 2120-05 course, my students are preparing to present at the Women’s and Gender Studies (WGS) Symposium at Georgia College in April. Like my students in the Writing Life Stories course, they were nervous, but as I demonstrated how to achieve the goals of the project, they got excited about how their projects would look, once finished. I use learning centers to offer my students a variety of prompts, such as free-writing, memoir, interviews, national identity, the concept of home, bibliography, and more to work on so they can find something they’re comfortable working on to maximize their engagement. In the learning centers, a group of students may be conducting their genealogical research, while another group of students are creating their family photo collection, and yet another group of students are writing their abstracts, formulating concepts about their families or...
utilizing theories that fit all at the same time.

**Tell us about how this class affects your involvement on campus.**

The campus is a microcosm of the larger community and creating strong community bonds here is important to me. This course not only develops community among the students but among faculty members, too. I have partners from other departments who come in to assist students with creating their family history books. For example, Cynthia Alby from the College of Education worked with students to develop their understanding of and ability to distinguish between the genres of memoir, narrative, biography, and autobiography. Kerry Neville from the College of Arts and Sciences, who also conducts a study abroad program in Ireland, worked with the students to develop their memoir-writing skills, specifically. Evan Leavitt from the Ina Dillard Russell Library worked with students to design the front and back of their family history books using Canva. Library personnel assisted the students in their family genealogical research. The Writing Center also collaborated with students in the course.

**Tell us about how this class affects your involvement in the community.**

I was awarded the Inclusive Excellence Grant to accommodate the residents of Baldwin County and Milledgeville. I have loved teaching this class on campus and am excited to bring these concepts to the community. Community dynamics will bring a whole new dimension to this project. The participants will meet for four Saturday afternoons in May to learn about their national identity and origin, gender identity, how U.S. history and their family history interact, and more. There are already several people inspired to take the course. Community participants will have the same resources as students but will use an adjusted format to suit participants’ needs. I will adjust the requirements to meet the needs of participants as well as bring in a transcriptionist to assist participants in their family interviews. We have partners in the Department of English, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and the Library who will be joining us to bring their insights and expertises. The Library has graciously provided an Active Learning classroom to host the class. After the completion of the class, I would love to have a showcase of the completed family histories for the community to share and enjoy. If you would like to learn more about this project, please contact Dr. Cross at paulette.cross@gcsu.edu.

**CTL Updates**

- **One-on-One Consultations for Faculty Reproducing Face-to-Face Courses Online** Dr. Cynthia Alby is available to consult with faculty members as they think through how to reproduce their face-to-face courses in an online environment. She will also be available to help with creating a vision for an online semester. Any interested faculty should email Dr. Alby at cynthia.alby@gcsu.edu to set up a time to meet via WebEx.
• **Department Partnership with Office of Sustainability Announcement** The Center for Teaching and Learning is now the newest participating department in Georgia College’s Bobcats Work Green program. Bobcats Work Green is a partnership program created and administered by the Office of Sustainability that aims to foster a culture of sustainability and create pathways for collaboration. It is open to all offices and departments who have an interest in learning more about how to live and work more sustainably and assist with campus initiatives. The Center for Teaching and Learning and the Office of Sustainability look forward to the new partnership and are excited about what’s to come.

**CTL Teaching Tips**

• **Communicating with Students in Times of Remote Teaching** When it becomes necessary to shift instructional methods due to an event, disaster, or emergency, it is helpful to provide our students with guidance on the new expectations. Here are some tips to alleviate the stress of new expectations for your students.

1. Update your syllabus with new expectations. Upload the modified syllabus to GeorgiaVIEW and communicate with your students to let them know it is there.

2. Let your students know how you will communicate with them and how they can communicate with you. Avoid using the e-mail function in GeorgiaVIEW: it only sends emails to the inbox within GeorgiaVIEW. Have students send you their phone number rather than sharing your own phone number.

3. If you will be holding office hours, let your students know how to reach you. If you will be using online conferencing software, like WebEx, be sure to test it out before you begin. It will be helpful to provide tutorials for your students when using unfamiliar software.

4. If you will be conducting class from within GeorgiaVIEW, be sure to upload any assignments or resources to a module within GeorgiaVIEW. When uploading materials to the website, be sure to consider the needs of your students. Help improve access to your materials by ensuring that you meet the minimum requirements of digital accessibility. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) has placed several Quick Guides in the CTL Faculty Resources course on GeorgiaVIEW to help with this process.

5. When considering streaming resources (video, podcasts, audio, etc.), be aware of the bandwidth available to your students. Many may not have ready access to high-speed internet, especially in rural areas. Try to avoid uploading large files that will require large bandwidth to view or download.

**Rubrics**

The publishing workflow in the new Rubrics Grading Experience now includes a confirmation message that warns users when the rubric is not fully evaluated. When evaluating against a rubric, the overall score is now calculated after all the criteria in the rubric have a score selected.

**Announcement - GC Journeys Info Sessions and Workshops**

GC Journeys info sessions and workshops are canceled for the month of March. To register for sessions after March, please see below.

**Register for a GC Journeys Info Session**

**Register for a GC Journeys Workshop**

Questions? Email journeys@gcsu.edu
6. Finally, for students who are not familiar with GeorgiaVIEW, the CTL has placed links on the GeorgiaVIEW home page containing videos and supportive guides. These can be found on the right-hand side of GeorgiaVIEW in the blue boxes. Included in these resources are tutorials and videos on how to use several of the functions of GeorgiaVIEW.

- **2020 EDUCAUSE Horizon Report** We encourage you to review the [2020 EDUCAUSE Horizon Report](#). This report profiles key trends and emerging technologies and practices shaping the future of teaching and learning and envisions a number of scenarios and implications for that future. It is based on the perspectives and expertise of a global panel of leaders from across the higher education landscape.

**CTL Tech Tip**

**Students’ Readiness to Adopt Fully Remote Learning** The COVID-19 pandemic is prompting many colleges and universities to abruptly and comprehensively adopt online learning in place of face-to-face classes, in an effort to limit transmission of the virus. Faculty, students, and support staff are all working to accommodate this massive change. EDUCAUSE research on student, faculty, and institutional readiness for online learning can help institutions better understand the pre-COVID-19 perspectives and status of their faculty, students, and organizations. This research summary is one of a series of reports outlining higher education’s readiness to move teaching and learning online to preserve and continue its institutional mission during the current pandemic. [Read the research summary on Student’s Readiness to Adopt Fully Remote Learning](#)!

**GeorgiaVIEW Webinars**

- Online Group Work: Strategies for Success, March 24, 3:00 p.m. ET. [Register for the Online Group Work: Strategies for Success Webinar](#)!

- Exploring Student Agency in Online Courses, April 14, 3 p.m. ET. [Register for the Exploring Student Agency in Online Courses Webinar](#)!

- Product Tour: How to Master Student Assessment with Brightspace, April 16, 2 p.m. ET. [Register for the Product Tour: How to Master Student Assessment with](#)

**News from the Library**

The Library is announcing a new Library database, [America’s News - Historical and Current](#). America’s News provides a comprehensive collection of reliable news sources covering a wide array of topics and issues. Find information on topics related to business, criminal justice, education, environmental studies, health, international studies, performing and fine arts, political science, social issues and more from a variety of news media featuring newspapers, videos, images and web-only content including the Macon Telegraph and other Georgia newspapers, as well as USA Today and more. We suggest bookmarking the link for convenience!