Faculty Senate:
Students and Developmental Math

By Alan Kaufman, Ph.D.

When a student enters Bergen with a placement in English Basic Skills, he or she must begin taking the required EBS class immediately. Such, unfortunately, has not been the case with students who have a Developmental Math (DM) requirement.

On April 20, 2004, the Faculty Senate adopted a resolution that called for students to begin “their developmental math requirements by the fifteenth college credit.” Then-President Judith Winn favored this policy in principle but had questions about implementation. These questions led her to establish a committee to study the relevant issues and to offer recommendations. The committee ratified the resolution adopted by the Faculty Senate calling for students to begin their DM coursework by the fifteenth credit.

When Jerry Ryan assumed the BCC Presidency, he asked to delay implementation of the DM fifteen-credit requirement while the Development Math department considered some curriculum modifications. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee agreed to his request. It was not until its May 17, 2011 meeting that the Senate again turned to this issue—which had not been acted upon for four years. At that point, after President Ryan had said that he did not want to sign a resolution that was seven years old but would sign an updated one, the Senate chose to form a committee, in Fall 2011, to make any appropriate changes to the April 20, 2004 resolution.

Early in this Fall 2011 semester, Interim President Jose Adames actually approved the DM proposal. This means that for students beginning their studies at Bergen during the Fall 2011 semester, and for all students henceforward, DM requirements must begin to be met by the fifteenth credit. The Senate sub-committee will still be charged to study whether or not any changes need to be made to the resolution. If changes are made, then the policy will be refined.

This is a significant step in the right direction for our students. In recent years there have been students who have delayed meeting their DM requirements. This has caused educational as well as graduation problems. Our responsibility as a faculty is to provide our students with the best possible education; enactment and enforcement of this policy will help us to advance this mission. Students are best served by meeting their remedial requirements, whether in English or in Math, as soon in their educational careers as is feasible. Now they will be able to do so; indeed, now they must do so.

What is Asia? Classical Chinese Philosophy: A Historian’s Perspective

By Rachel Wieland

BCC students Diego Montablo and Ali Emadi have something to say about composting and they are saying it with art. In the cafeteria you can see the two diligently working on painting the columns with pictures of floating refuse and mosaics of gardens. They both speak passionately about how they are giving a message to the BCC community about why to show compassion and care for the college, community and planet.
Spotlight on Bergenstages

By Jim Bumgardner

Hearts were pounding in Ender Hall Lab Theatre as audience members sat on the edge of their seats watching the murder mystery thriller “The Mousetrap” unfold. It is the ‘who-done-it’ of all ‘who-done-its!’ Agatha Christie’s “The Mousetrap” is the longest continuously running play in theatre history and is finally being performed here at BCC.

There are four more opportunities to catch the show but get your tickets now because it is sure to be a sell-out. Remaining performances are Thursday, Friday & Saturday, November 3 - 5 at 7:30 p.m., and a matinee on Saturday, Nov. 5 at 2:00 p.m.

On the other side of campus, in the Anna Maria Ciccone Theatre, the tension was mounting around the court of King Henry VIII as rehearsals continued for the December 2 opening of Bergenstages production of “A Man for All Seasons.” Sir Thomas More will not go against his strong Catholic convictions and support the Church of England’s request to separate from Rome and affirm King Henry’s divorce of Catherine of Aragon in order to marry Anne Boleyn.

Can someone be so convicted in their beliefs to oppose a monarchy? More’s silence on the issue resonates loudly in the hallways throughout England and Europe, and those who want More removed are conspiring in the shadows. But should he conform to the wishes of the king and denounce his beliefs? If not, then, he is in fact a traitor to the king he so loves?

Get your tickets now to see this amazing, thought-provoking experience in the theatre. The show will perform December 2, 3, 8, 9 and 10 at 7:30 p.m. with matinee performances on December 3 and 10 at 2:00 p.m. There will be a special panel discussion with audience talkback immediately following the Thursday, December 8 performance. The panel will feature distinguished BCC faculty members Theo Solomon and Cat Graney as well as the cast and production team of “A Man for All Seasons.”

The author is the director of Bergenstages, and a director and assistant professor of performing arts in the School of Arts, Humanities and Wellness. He can be reached at jbumgardner@bergen.edu or 201-493-3615.

The Chronicle of Higher Education Online

By Kate McGivern

You asked for it, and we got it for you! The Sidney Silverman Library now has full text electronic access to The Chronicle of Higher Education. The online version includes enhanced features: online only articles, daily news, advice columns, job listing, discussion forums, and statistics.

While some parts of The Chronicle are available on the free web, items marked with a gold key are considered premium content and are only available through this special Library subscription. Access to The Almanac of Higher Education annual which includes data, analysis and state by state profiles is also available.

How to find it:

On campus: Begin at the library homepage (www.bergen.edu/library). Enter the title in the search box. In the results list, click on the electronic version and then click “connect to database” to be taken to the most recent edition of The Chronicle.

Off campus: Follow the same steps. After you click “connect to database” you will be asked for your last name and your BCC ID number, then you will gain access to The Chronicle.

As always, if you have any trouble, either give the library a call or stop in to see us. The Sidney Silverman Library is open 7 days a week and offers limited reference service at the Lyndhurst campus two days a week.

The author is an assistant professor in the Sidney Silverman Library. She can be reached at kmcgivern@bergen.edu or 201-447-7980.

Meadowlands Campus Hosts Tri-State Best Practices

By Sarah Shurts, Ph.D.

On February 18, 2012, the Meadowlands campus of Bergen Community College will be host to a Tri-State Best Practices Conference dedicated to innovation and creativity in the community college classroom. The conference program will include over 60 presenters from community colleges throughout New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

This conference is intended to provide a forum for community college professors throughout the region to share successful strategies for assessment, classroom management, writing across the curriculum, infusing technology into the classroom, and engaging students. While some panels will be devoted to topics from a single field, others will be interdisciplinary with the hope that exposure to practices from a variety of disciplines will inspire new approaches to old material.

All Bergen faculty are welcome to attend the event, and those who preregister can enjoy the luncheon and keynote speaker at the midday session break. The conference committee of Maureen Ellis-Davis, Alex Perry, Anthony Yankowski, Mecheline Farhat and myself would also like to take this opportunity to ask volunteers from BCC to serve as moderators for one or more panels during the conference.

All conference information will be provided on the website http://www.bergen.edu/pages1/pages/Best-Practices-Conference.aspx which will be updated over the coming months with the registration form, conference program, information on the keynote speaker, and directions to the campus. We look forward to seeing all of you on February 18.

The author is an assistant professor in the Department of History and coordinator of the Tri-State Best Practices Conference. She can be reached at sshurts@bergen.edu or (201) 301-1261.

The new Student Center is opened.

October 18, 2011
CITL Presents The Web Enhanced Program

By Amarjit Kaur, Ed.D.

The Web Enhanced Program (TWEP) is an ongoing project supported by the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning, designed to help faculty share information with their students. There are more than 700 Web-enhanced course sections being offered during this fall 2011 semester. A Web-enhanced course is a traditionally taught course that has an online course component to supplement the class. It provides a place for faculty to provide a copies of syllabi and class handouts to students 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

This way, students do not have a reason to say, “I do not have the handout from the last class.” It can help to cut down carrying piles of class handouts from one class to another. A Web-enhanced course helps to extend classroom time by providing a place for reflective journals and blogs. Students can practice course exercises and complete and submit assignments. Professors can communicate individual grades and feedback on class assignments.

The online course materials and activities developed in a Web-enhanced course can be copied to the shell created for the next semester. Course materials can be accessed from anywhere for quick updating of documents, pulling up presentations on the projection screen or referring to files during office hours. Exemplary student work from one semester can be saved for setting expectations for the next semester.

If you would like to Web-enhance your course, sign up for a workshop at http://www.bergen.edu/citlworkshops. You can also enroll in the self-paced TWEP when you request a course shell at http://www.bergen.edu/coursecourse. Let us know if you have any questions.

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The Art of Composting continued from page 1

Ali says, “Art is my third language. For the ‘Art for Composting Project’, we hope to give a visual message to grab people’s attention and have them think about composting. But in the end, people have to think for themselves.” Diego says, “I feel inspired daily by seeing all the bad things we usually do to live.”

Their art messages are asking us to consider what kind of world we want to create and live in. Some of the messages in the paintings are deliberate and straight forward; other times I find myself staring in a trance at food suspended between fire and water, something so elemental, I feel it more than I understand it.


The author is an assistant professor of developmental math in the School of Science and Mathematics and advisor to the Environmental Club. She can be reached at ravieland@bergen.edu or 201-412-5340.

Diego Montalvo and Ali Amadi

The Center for Peace, Justice and Reconciliation: From Conflict to Creativity

By Thomas La Pointe

This academic year the Center for Peace, Justice and Reconciliation (CPJR) is sponsoring a number of innovative initiatives for faculty, students and community members.

Launched two years ago, CPJR fosters awareness of the mechanisms of social conflict, political and ethnic violence and genocide through educational initiatives, exhibitions, dialogues and forums. Working with local and global communities, the center helps students develop skills in conflict resolution and ethical decision making to promote social justice and global citizenship.

Among the initiatives underway for this semester is a project, directed by Dr. Jon Yasin and supported by CSUH, that brings together Hip Hop pioneers and law enforcement representatives in a dialogue about gang violence. Building on our conference last semester devoted to Forgotten Genocides, CPJR will also launch its Armenian Genocide Education Initiative. Directed by Dr. David Eisenholz, the project will host the first in a series of professional development workshops for county high school teachers.

In the spring, CPJR will sponsor an exhibition at Gallery Bergen devoted to the work of Bou Meng, one of only a handful of artists to survive the notorious Cambodian Killing Fields, host a full program of events for Genocide Awareness Week and sponsor our second annual Scholarship Challenge.

Faculty who are interested in learning more about the center, or who would like to participate in our programs, should feel free to contact me.

The author is the director of the Center for Peace, Justice and Reconciliation and an Assistant Professor of Literature and Composition in School of English. He can be reached at tlapointe@bergen.edu or 201-459-9006.

Best Practices in Assessment

By Joann Marzocco, Ed.D. and Gail Fernandez

A number of changes have recently taken place within the Center for Institutional Effectiveness (CIE). Joann Marzocco is serving as the Interim Coordinator of Assessment and Strategic Planning, Gail Fernandez is the CIE Academic Fellow, Jill Rivera is the CIE Administrative and Educational Support Fellow and Tonia Mckoy serves as the Associate Director of Institutional Research. One of the Center’s objectives is to facilitate and support the assessment of student learning at Bergen. The emphasis is now on a faculty-driven assessment process.

Assessment of student learning and of our institution is something we do informally on a daily basis. The formal assessment that CIE facilitates involves the systematic collection of assessment information. It is faculty members who determine their program goals, student learning outcomes, and means of assessment. It is faculty who decide how they want to use the assessment results to improve student learning.

As we enter a new assessment cycle, our assessment process continues to be refined. In September, faculty representatives were elected by their departments to serve on the Learning Assessment Committee (LAC) of the Faculty Senate. The committee is discussing a variety of issues including the length of the assessment cycle, the method of reporting, and ways of communicating assessment successes to the college community.

A Best Practices in Assessment series began in October with a workshop on writing student learning outcomes. The second workshop in the series, “Means of Assessment”, will take place Thursday, December 1, from 12:30 – 1:30 and will be co-sponsored by Faculty Development and CIE (Bring your own lunch and CIE will provide dessert).

Assessment provides an opportunity for all of us to pursue innovative and positive changes to our programs. The staff of CIE is here to assist you in your assessment initiatives.

The authors: Joann Marzocco is a professor in the School of Mathematics, Science and Technology, who can be reached at jmarzocco@bergen.edu or 201-447-7902. Gail Fernandez is an associate professor in the School of English, who can be reached at gfernandez@bergen.edu or 201-493-7525.
College Wide Promotion and Sabbatical Committee Meeting Schedule

Sabbatical Meeting Dates:
- Thursday, October 27: 12:30 – 1:30
- Thursday, November 3: 12:30 – 1:30
- Thursday, November 10: 12:30 – 1:30 [if needed]

Promotion Meeting Dates:
- Thursday, December 1: 12:30 – 1:30
- Thursday, December 8: 12:30 – 1:30
- Thursday, December 15: 12:30 – 1:30 [if needed]
- Tuesday, January 11: 10:00 – 5:00
- Wednesday, January 18: 10:00 – 5:00

Organizational Meeting:
- Thursday, February 23: 12:30 – 1:30

Try a Mid-Career Fellowship Program at Princeton

By Jared Saltzman

At the start of the spring 2010 semester, I received an email from Dean Amparo Codding suggesting that I might be interested in applying for the Mid-Career Fellowship Program at Princeton University. I had heard about this program before, but I must admit, at first I was skeptical. I discovered that if I was accepted I would be able to take classes at Princeton and use any resources available at the university to write a thesis. This, combined with the opportunity to work with other community college faculty, led me to apply.

Although I have spent almost two thirds of my life in the world of academia, when the day came for my first trip to Princeton I was nervous. I have not had this kind of feeling since I finished my graduate work over 30 years ago at NYU. I could not believe that I was actually attending classes at Princeton University, putting myself once again in the shoes of a student rather than those of a professor. I soon found myself energized; the history surrounding the institution and the strong bond within this program with so many community colleges were enough to allow me to take in this invaluable experience and bring it back to my own classroom.

After finishing my classes at BCC, I would head straight to Princeton. At 10:30 at night, when I was driving back home, I could not believe how awake and mentally alive I was. The classwork might have been overwhelming, but as I got back into the rhythm of being a student, I was reminded of why I chose my profession.

Attending classes was only the first part of my experience. I soon had to select a topic for my thesis, a task that was a bit more challenging than I initially anticipated. Nevertheless, I knew I wanted to write about the field of distance learning. It took me three months of reading to finally narrow the scope of my research and another two months to complete the thesis. In the process I learned a great deal. I have already incorporated many ideas in my classes here at BCC and intend to add even more as I plan for the coming semesters.

I would not have thought that at this point in my career I could have been so motivated and revitalized. Working with my colleagues from community colleges from all over the state has been a wonderful affirmation. It is good to know that you are not alone. If you find yourself, like I did, feeling a little tired and jaded this might be just what you need. It was for me.

The author is an associate professor in the School of Arts, Humanities and Wellness. He can be reached at jsaltzman@bergen.edu or 201-447-7197

Model Program: Teaching-of-Writing Circle

By Leigh Jonaitis, Ed.D.

A national journal, Teaching English in the Two Year College, has recognized in its September 2011 issue The Teaching-of-Writing Circle at Bergen Community College as a model of running a creative professional development program on a dime.

Professor Kelly Keane and I created The Teaching-of-Writing Circle four years ago to provide a space for full- and part-time faculty in the School of English to meet and discuss issues in our writing classes. We focus our meetings in one of two ways: on the discussion of a recent article or theory and ways we might apply it locally, or on an issue that we see in our classes and how we might connect it to literature in the field.

While our main goal is to create opportunities to increase communication and share ideas among professors, our secondary goal is to align more closely theory and practice. Some of our topics have included Plagiarism in the Classroom, Us-ing Literature in the Writing Classroom, Understanding Assessment in the Writing Classroom, Student Learning Objectives in Our Departments: Continuity or Gaps? Teaching Writing in the College Classroom: Departing From the Traditional vs. Playing it Safe, Ethnography in the Writing Classroom: Constructing Meaning through Writing, and Working With At-Risk Students: Enabling or Supporting?

The Teaching-of-Writing Circle is not funded. We buy water bottles, bring baked goods, and come ready to roll up our sleeves and engage. Participation has been quite high. In our last session of the spring 2011 semester, over 30 people were in attendance.

The author is an associate professor in the School of English and coordinator of The Teaching-of-Writing Circle. She can be reached at ljonaizis@bergen.edu or 201-493-3509.