

## **Activities of the Center for the Liberal Arts: Report to the Faculty of Arts & Sciences**

August 2015

We begin by reminding readers that the idea for the Center for the Liberal Arts (CLA) grew out of faculty discussions held during the curriculum review. The CLA was eventually chartered to “...support a robust liberal arts education through the continual organizing and infusing of content, integration, creativity, and innovation throughout the undergraduate College Curriculum.”

The Fellows are charged to anticipate aspects of COLL implementation before they occur and to bring proposals to the faculty in a timely manner that allows for full discussion so that the new curriculum will remain true to the intent of the faculty. This is our second annual report.

In addition, the Fellows’ Charter requires them to develop at least one COLL course; prepare and review guidelines for the new curriculum in collaboration with the EPC and Dean; assist faculty in designing COLL courses; help faculty incorporate their research into general education courses; develop technological and pedagogical means to advance general education; survey course offerings in general education; and work with student resource centers to facilitate student success in the COLL Curriculum. It is important to stress that the CLA is an advisory rather than executive body; its role is to provide counsel, advice, and encouragement to the faculty, to EPC, and to the Deans.

Our report for AY 2013-14 and more information about the Center can be found at the [CLA website](#). We also refer you to the [COLL Resources for Faculty](#) website. (This latter website is password-protected, and requires you to have a WordPress account. If you don’t already have one, it only takes a minute to create an account.)

While the new COLL curriculum is a collective effort involving many of our faculty, the CLA Fellows are on point and we feel honored, humbled, and a little overwhelmed at times, by the role. We are grateful to those colleagues who welcomed us to departmental conversations, attended brown bags, and brainstormed with us. This has been an exciting year, and the new curriculum is only just beginning. There is a lot of work ahead of the faculty as we bring the new curriculum online over the next four years, and the Fellows hope to make it as fun and intellectually rewarding as possible.

### **Creation and Growth of the Center: A Short History**

The decision to move forward with the CLA was made in fall 2013 by the Dean’s Office, which also identified funding for the first cohort of four CLA Faculty Fellows. The [CLA charter](#) was developed by the Dean’s Office, in consultation with the Faculty Affairs Committee. The new curriculum was approved by the FAS in December 2013. The call for nominations for the first cohort of CLA Fellows went out in December 2013, and the first Fellows were appointed in January 2014.

Given the ambitions we have for the new curriculum, and the success in identifying further funding, in Fall 2014 four more Fellows were added, along with a very able part-time administrative assistant (Sharon Morris). Steve Otto, Communications Director for A&S, has provided critical staff support each step of the way, and we have had a very collaborative working relationship with the Dean’s Office, where Dean Homza acts as liaison. She has been, in essence, an additional Fellow and a valued colleague every step of the way. In addition, we have worked closely with the EPC, Swem Library, and a variety of

other campus offices. These collaborative relationships across campus have allowed us to develop and deliver a rich variety of offerings to the faculty, ultimately for the benefit of all our students.

In May 2015, another four fellows were appointed, bringing us to twelve in all. Each Fellow serves for two years. We anticipate that twelve will be the steady-state number of Fellows for the foreseeable future, and that our current Fellows' appointments will resolve into two overlapping cohorts of six Fellows each.

First cohort (Jan. 2014):

- Deborah Denenholz Morse, English
- Nicholas Popper, History
- John Riofrio, Modern Languages and Literatures
- Gene Tracy, Physics

Second cohort (Sept. 2014):

- Carey Bagdassarian, Chemistry
- Bruce Campbell, Modern Languages and Literatures
- Georgia Irby, Classical Studies
- Paul Mapp, History

Third cohort: (May 2014):

- Matt Allar, Theatre, Speech and Dance
- Paula Bank, English
- Catherine Forestell, Psychology
- Christine Nemacheck, Government

We anticipate that from now on the two-year appointments of new Fellows will be announced each May, with the call for nominations going out sometime around Spring Break.

In Summer 2015 we launched the search for a full-time Associate Director, which we hope to complete early in the fall. This will be followed by a search for a full-time Administrative Assistant. These two positions will provide the necessary administrative support for our planned program (more below). This staff support will be especially critical to the success of COLL 300, because the on-campus program will require a steady flow of visitors and related events. While the COLL 300 program will be inclusive, and involve all those faculty who wish to take part, the CLA is charged with providing coordination and administrative support of this aspect of the new curriculum. This will ensure that these visits do not add to the workload of the staff in departments and programs, or the Dean's Office.

### **Breaking new ground, setting precedents, making it real**

The CLA is still new, and therefore most things we do as CLA Fellows are done for the first time. We have been very conscious of the fact that we were setting precedents and laying the foundation for what – must be an important locus of faculty creativity in the years ahead. The goal is to promote a collaborative culture where faculty share ideas and learn from one another as we create the new curriculum.

In addition to the stipends for the Fellows, we worked from a program budget of roughly \$70K this past year. Funding was provided by the Dean's Office, the Charles Center, private gifts and the income yields on several W&M endowments, and the Mellon Foundation's grant to implement the COLL Curriculum.

### **CLA Activities and Accomplishments for 2014-2015**

- **Brownbag Lunch Seminars.** Nineteen of these events were organized. A complete list is appended below.
- **May/January Seminars.** Five January Seminars, and eleven May seminars were supported. A complete summary is appended below.
- **Department/Program Retreats and Meetings.** The CLA provided support for departments or programs that wished to spend focused time discussing how they will transition to the new curriculum. These were: Art and Art History, Chemistry, Economics, Environmental Science and Policy, European Studies, French, Philosophy, and Physics.
- **COLL Coffee with a Fellow.** This proved a popular way for faculty to engage in one-on-one in conversation about new course ideas and to ask questions about the new curriculum. It also provided the Fellows with a chance to hear feedback from colleagues, and led to several ideas for seminars, or brown bags.
- **Faculty Innovation Grants.** These supported "outside of the box" ideas for faculty who want to bring new ideas to COLL course creation. Our inaugural awardees were: 1) Barbette Spaeth (Classical Studies) to attend the Barnard Workshop on "Reacting to the Past", 2) Matt Allar (Theatre, Speech, Dance) to attend the Prague Quadrennial festival which will support his development of THEA 100\_03 (The Storyteller's Journey), and 3) Marc Sher (Physics) to support a student assistant to facilitate conversion of PHYS 201 (Modern Physics) into a COLL 200 course.
- **Visitors:**
  - In support of faculty working on the communication skills piece of COLL 100, we invited Jean-luc Doumont, an internationally recognized expert on scientific communication, to present the faculty workshop "Effective Communication for Rational Minds," on Feb. 18 (the scheduled Feb. 17 lecture was cancelled due to snow). He will be returning in September 2015.
  - As part of exploring and modeling the on-campus COLL 300 experience, we invited Professor Arlene Davila from New York University to present an April 9 lecture, "El Mall: The Spatial and Class Politics of Shopping Malls in Latin America." This event doubled as the Department of Anthropology's Inaugural Lecture to honor Vinson Sutlive. CLA Fellow John "Rio" Riofrio organized other professors to incorporate the lecture and background materials provided into their syllabi. The lecture was held in Washington 201 (capacity = 170) with standing room only.
- **Representing W&M in National Venues.** CLA Fellows Georgia Irby and Chris Nemacheck are serving with Deans John Griffin and Lu Ann Homza on an initiative convened by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), "Institute on Integrative Learning and the Departments." Their goal is to strategize priorities and elements of the coming COLL 400 experience.
- **Strategic Planning.** The Fellows engaged in a yearlong conversation about our programming priorities (faculty development, course development, student resources), and the implications for the CLA's internal administration/structure and budgeting. Having clarified the programming and related budget needs, and necessary staff support to carry it out, this planning led to a

proposed administrative structure that will allow the CLA to grow while remaining innovative, with institutional memory developed in tandem with a steady influx of new Fellows. This plan won approval from the Dean's Office to search for a full-time Associate Director. The Associate Director should join us in early Fall. Submission of a Priority Budget Request (PBR) is planned with the Dean's Office for Fall 2015. The goal is to institutionalize CLA funding currently provided by the Mellon Foundation curriculum implementation grant.

- **Work with Swem Library.** The strategic planning discussions also led to an articulation of space needs for the CLA. The Fellows met with the Dean of Libraries, Carrie Cooper, and other members of the Swem staff multiple times to discuss the CLA, Swem's plans to develop a collaborative space, and the role of the Library in the new curriculum. CLA Fellow Gene Tracy will join Dean Homza on a Swem Library committee planning possible renovations, and he joined the Swem staff on a trip to the Hunt Library at NC State in June.
- **Online "College Studies" Course: Student Gateway to the COLL Curriculum.** CLA Fellows provided content oversight and guidance for the Academic Advising portion (Part 1) of this summer course for incoming first-year students. The Fellows also collaborated with the Dean's Office and Swem Library to produce a new suite of online resources teaching students to become "information literate" (Part 2), with its design integrated into the intentions of COLL 100 and COLL 150 courses.
- **Proactive planning for COLL 100 and COLL 300.** The Fellows held conversations with the co-chairs of EPC, and attended the COLL 100 and COLL 300 open fora hosted by Dean Homza, as part of last year's faculty conversation about these parts of the new curriculum. They also held a series of internal discussions focusing primarily on the on-campus piece of COLL 300, specifically how that very innovative aspect of the new curriculum can be brought online and coordinated in a manner consistent with faculty intentions. The Fellows distributed a white paper discussing the on-campus COLL 300 experience in April and possible frameworks, strategic approaches, and implementation timeframes. We look forward to extended conversations with the faculty in the coming year.
- **Work with the Board of Visitors.** The Fellows met with Rector Todd Stottlemeyer in November 2014 to discuss the new curriculum and the CLA. This led to an invitation to address the full Board of Visitors at their April 23, 2015 meeting. At that meeting, Dean Conley spoke about the new curriculum in general, while two of the Fellows (Paul Mapp and Gene Tracy) gave a presentation about the CLA, and the opportunity the new curriculum provides for energizing faculty creativity. The talk was very well received.
- **Work with Advancement on Fundraising to Support the New Curriculum.** Four of the Fellows worked with Advancement to create short films describing their courses.<sup>1</sup> Five of the Fellows took part in the annual Dean's Charter Day Dinner, an important venue for connecting with significant donors to A&S. In July 2015, CLA Fellow Nick Popper gave a presentation about the CLA at the University Advancement retreat. We will continue to work in collaboration with Ginny Elwell, Director of A&S Development, and colleagues in Advancement, to help raise funds in support of the new curriculum.

Going forward, the CLA will continue to offer support for department or program retreats that are aimed at COLL course development. If funds can be identified, we eventually hope to encourage more ambitious and wide-ranging efforts by faculty that might include, for example, funding visitors, books or other media, or trips to national workshops or conferences.

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<sup>1</sup> Here are the links: <http://www.wm.edu/as/undergraduate/curriculum/coll/100>, and <http://www.wm.edu/as/undergraduate/curriculum/coll/200/>.

**Closing remarks**

We want to thank our colleagues in the Dean's Office and the Faculty at large for the opportunity to work together with you as we create the new curriculum. Our job as CLA Fellows is to feed that excitement and to embrace that positive energy as the new curriculum becomes a reality.

The coming year will be an exciting one. The new curriculum is about to begin. Colleagues: Start your engines!

Respectfully submitted by the Faculty Fellows,

Matt Allar  
Carey Bagdassarian  
Paula Bank  
Bruce Campbell  
Catherine Forestell  
Georgia Irby  
Paul Mapp  
Deborah Denenholz Morse  
Christine Nemacheck  
Nicolas Popper  
John Riofrio  
Gene Tracy

## Funded January Seminars, Spring 2015

Proposer	Topic	# participants
Hui	Chinese and Japanese Sections	5
Lunden	Study of Language	5
Runfola	Data Science	9
Tracy, Longo	The Idea of the University	5
Zuber	Writing Committee	5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>29*</b>

\* There is some double counting in this raw total, because some faculty took part in more than one seminar. The number of individual faculty who took part in CLA January Seminars was 27.

## Funded May Seminars, Spring 2015

Proposer	Topic	# participants
Campbell	European Studies Program	7
Deconinck	Makerspace Technologies	9
Iyanaga	Mapping Soundscapes	5
Irby	History of Science	7
Macdonald	Geology and COLL Courses	8
McGovern	American Studies	9
Pacini	Environmental Humanities	8
Riofrio, Blum, Yanez	Non-Traditional Written Communications	8
Tracy, Longo	COLL 300: The University as Idea and Ideal	7
Vose**	Religious Studies	7
Zuber	Writing in the First-Year Experience	8
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>82*</b>

\*There is some double counting in this raw total because some faculty took part in more than one seminar. The number of individual faculty who took part in CLA May Seminars was 72.

\*\*This seminar is/was scheduled for August 24, 2015.

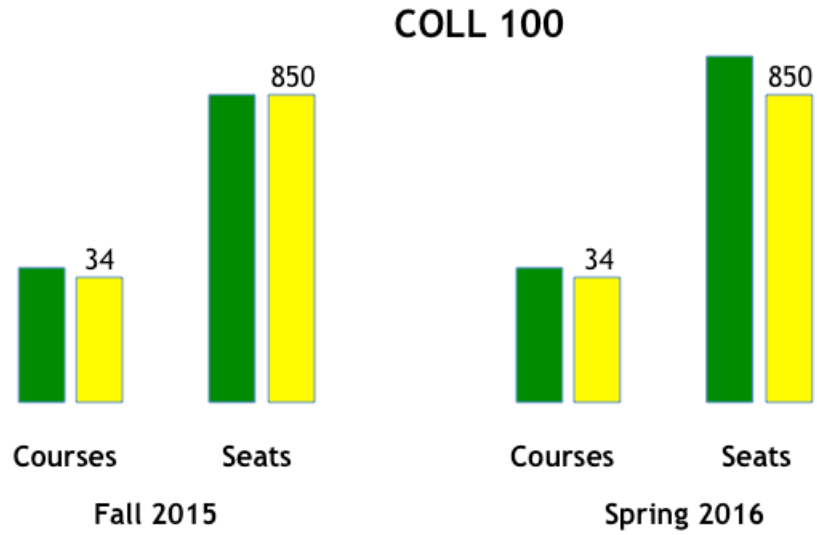
## Brownbags Lunch Seminars 2014-15

<u>Presenter</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Title/Description</u>
CLA	Sept 18 & 19, 2014	<p><b>College Curriculum: Info Session for Faculty</b></p> <p>Do you still have questions about COLL 100? Do you need a refresher on the three knowledge domains and the ambition of COLL 200 to inspire faculty and students to reach across those knowledge domains? Do you have questions about the criteria for crafting new COLL 100 courses?</p>
CLA	Sept 25 & 26, 2014	<p><b>COLL 100: Intellectual Goals and Strategies</b></p> <p>COLL 100 courses investigate "big ideas" with the specific goal of instilling in students a sense of involvement and investment in scholarly inquiry.</p>
CLA	October 1, 2014	<p><b>COLL 200 Courses in Development</b></p> <p>English Department faculty who cross-list regularly or teach in Film Studies, WSGS, Africana Studies, Environmental Studies, and American Studies present the COLL 200 courses they are developing.</p>
Mike Blum Pablo Yanez	Oct 22 & 23, 2014	<p><b>COLL Online Resources for Faculty</b></p> <p>Academic Technologists Mike Blum and Pablo Yanez introduce the Center for the Liberal Arts' website hosting COLL resources for faculty. The website is intended to provide faculty with a central location for COLL resources. The goal is to present practical ideas, considerations, examples, sample assignments and grading schemes, tutorials, and pointers to further resources.</p>
Mike Blum Pablo Yanez	Oct 29 & 30, 2014	<p><b>Mapping for COLL 100 and Beyond</b></p> <p>Get ideas for assignments creating and sharing maps with embedded images, videos, data, and more. Mapping assignments can run the gamut from very easy to very complex, and the strategies and examples discussed fit almost every level.</p>
Chuck Bailey Francis Tanglo-Aguas Gene Tracy	Dec 11 & 12, 2014	<p><b>Lessons from the Fall Pilot Courses</b></p> <p>Chuck Bailey, Francis Tanglo-Aguas, and Gene Tracy each taught a pilot COLL 100 this fall. In this brown bag session they discuss the communication skills piece and guide a conversation with participants: their experiences, what they learned, and resources that are available to support COLL 100 course development.</p>

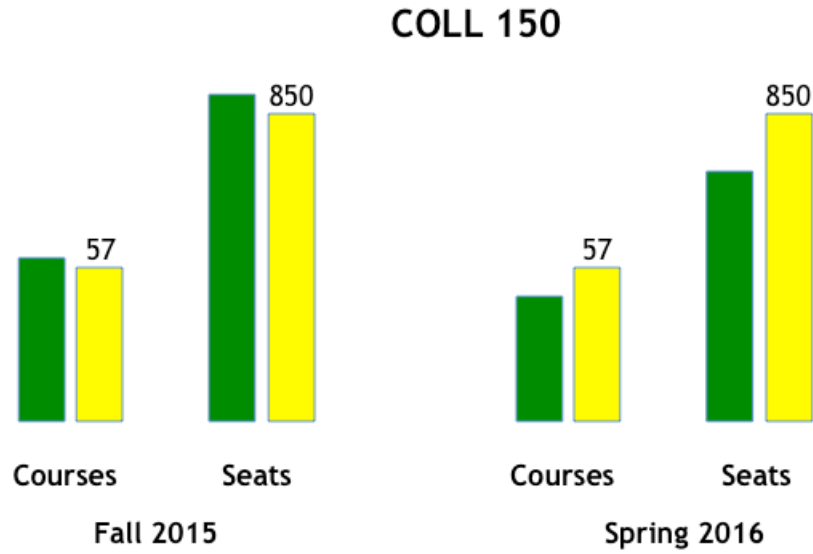
## Brownbag Lunch Seminars, 2014-15 *continued*

<u>Presenter</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Title/Description</u>
Gene Tracy Nick Popper	Feb 11 & 12, 2015	<b>COLL 100: You're in the Schedule Next Year...Now What?</b> This brown bag is intended primarily for faculty who have decided to take the plunge, or been pushed off the gang plank, to create a new COLL 100 course and who are now faced with planning and preparation for next year. Gene Tracy and Nick Popper share their experiences working on COLL 100 course development, encourage other faculty who are putting together courses to share their thoughts, and find out how the CLA can best support faculty over the coming months as we bring this part of the new curriculum online.
John "Rio" Riofrio Cary Bagdassarian Paul Mapp	March 5 & 6, 2015	<b>Eureka! Transforming Current Courses into COLL 100</b> "Rio" Riofrio, Carey Bagdassarian and Paul Mapp talk about how to convert your old William & Mary course into a shiny new COLL 100.
Bruce Campbell Deborah Morse	April 1 & 2, 2015	<b>COLL 200: Reaching Out to a Domain</b> Hear from those who have been teaching COLL 200 pilot courses. CLA Fellows Deborah Morse and Bruce Campbell with other COLL 200 teaching pilot veterans lead a session to answer any questions for those teaching COLL 200 in academic year 2015-16.
Gene Tracy Teresa Longo	April 21 & 22, 2015	<b>COLL 300 Colloquium: The University as Idea and Ideal</b> Some of the latest ideas from the CLA Fellows on how to implement the on-campus piece of COLL 300, and a proposed COLL 300 colloquium idea that a group of faculty have been working on: "The University as Idea and Ideal." The goal is to show how the highly interdisciplinary "University as Idea" COLL 300 model might work, by showing how it can adapt to changing COLL 300 themes and a steady stream of visitors from all over the world. We hope to encourage more faculty to think about other possible COLL 300 colloquia, and to share those ideas sooner rather than later so we can learn from one another during this critical course design phase.

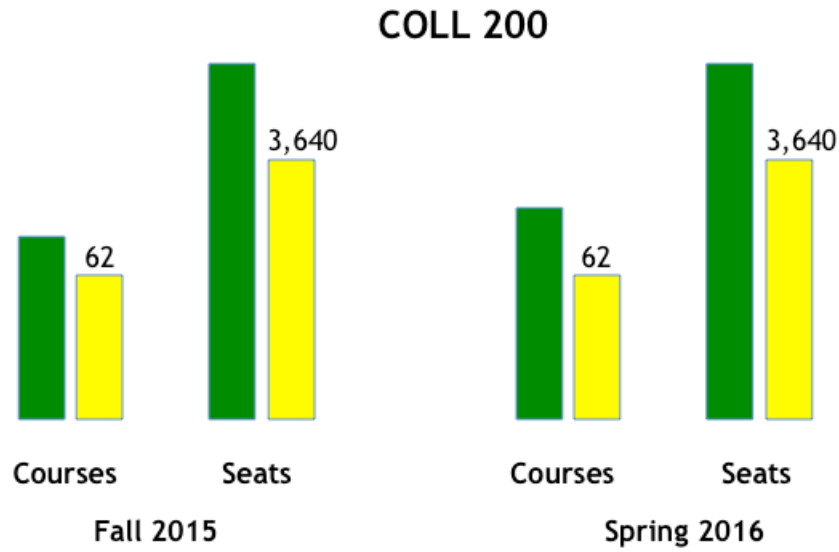




This summarizes the number of courses and seats available for COLL 100. Note that we require 1600+ total seats to accommodate the first-year class. The yellow bars and related numbers show the targets, while the green bars show the courses and seats available as of May 2015.



This summarizes the number of courses and seats available for COLL 150. Note that we require 1600+ total seats to accommodate the first-year class. The yellow bars and related numbers show the targets, while the green bars show the courses and seats available as of May 2015.



This summarizes the number of courses and seats available for COLL 200. The yellow bars and related numbers show the targets, while the green bars show the courses and seats available as of May 2015.