

THE LOG

Divine Word College

November 29
2022

A Bulletin for the Divine Word College Community

Vol. 42 No. 15

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Birthday Corner

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THE PRESIDENT *Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD*

Advent Colors

The shopping malls are decked out in red and green – but the Church is dressed in Advent colors. The purple, blue and bit of pink of these four weeks remind us to “Prepare the way of the Lord!” John the Baptist joyfully shouted out his message. His joyful challenge still echoes today.

Advent may be a really good time reread Pope Francis’ joyful apostolic exhortation on evangelization, *Evangelii Gaudium*. The Holy Father highlights the joy of John the Baptist – noting that John leaped for joy in his mother’s womb when Mary, pregnant with the Eternal Word, came visiting. Years later, as Jesus began his public ministry, John told his own disciples that he felt like a “best man” at a wedding. He rejoiced to hear the bridegroom’s voice! (Jn 3:29).

Missionaries commit their lives to evangelization, especially to faithseekers. Pope Francis observed that “There are Christians whose lives seem like Lent without Easter.” Missionaries might add that there are plenty of faithseekers whose lives seem like a continual Advent without Christmas. They yearn and hope, but the gloom is never dispelled by the bright light of the Word.

So, we reach out to them in a dialogue rooted in friendship. We hope that the Spirit can use us to awaken in them a bright and lively faith. That can only happen if our lives are also painted with joy.

In the Catholic Churches of North America, and in many other churches as well, we have the custom of preparing an Advent Wreath. In Spanish it is known as a corona, an Advent Crown. By both names it is meant as a sign of a King. In ancient Rome, a wreath was a headdress made of leaves to mark the victories of an emperor. Victory wreaths were often interspersed with flowers and



continued next page

silver, gold and other precious metals. With the lighting of the Advent Wreath we count the Sundays between the Solemnity of Christ the King and the birthday of the Christ – Jesus, the anointed Prince of Peace. We prepare the crown, the wreath, for his second coming.

As we light the candles of the wreath, let us pray for faith-seeking friends everywhere. St. Arnold Janssen has given us a good advent prayer, **May the darkness of sin and the night of unbelief vanish before the light of the Word and the Spirit of Grace.** Advent is also a great time to be like John the Baptist, sharing a joyful witness to the dawning light of the Divine Word. Whatever you do, be sure to wear your Advent colors with joy.



VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Fr. John Szukalski, SVD

Modified Class Schedule

Advent Luncheon – 11:50 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 30, 2022

The annual DWC Advent Luncheon will take place from 11:50 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. on **Wednesday, November 30, 2022.** In order to accommodate this college-wide event, classes will be held according to a modified schedule. Please carefully note the starting and ending times for each class period as listed below.

Wednesday, November 30, 2022 – Modified Class Schedule

Undergraduate Classes

9:00 a.m. class	9:00 – 9:50 a.m.	No change
10:00 a.m. class	10:00 – 10:50 a.m.	No change
11:00 a.m. class	11:00 – 11:45 a.m.	Ends 5 minutes early
1:00 p.m. class	1:15 – 2:05 p.m.	Start delayed 15 minutes
2:00 p.m. class	2:15 – 3:05 p.m.	Start delayed 15 minutes
3:00 p.m. class	3:15 – 4:05 p.m.	Start delayed 15 minutes
4:00 p.m. class	4:15 – 5:05 p.m.	Start delayed 15 minutes

ESL Classes

9:00 a.m. class	9:00 – 10:50 a.m.	No change
11:00 a.m. class	11:00 – 11:45 a.m.	Ends 5 minutes early
1:00 p.m. class	1:15 – 2:05 p.m.	Start delayed 15 minutes
2:00 p.m. class	2:15 – 4:05 p.m.	Start delayed 15 minutes



DIALOGOS Academic Newsletter

The November 2022 issue of the Academic Newsletter for Divine Word College—DIALOGOS—is appended to this edition of the LOG. Read about professional development activities and conference attendance from several faculty members.

Congratulations, December 2022 Graduates!

Listed below are the eight expected graduating students for the Fall 2022 Semester, with corresponding degree major and minor, pending successful completion of any remaining coursework and the attainment of cumulative grade point average (C-GPA) requirements. These students, along with the other expected graduates for the Spring 2023 Semester, will be officially approved for graduation by the Board of Trustees at its May 2023 meeting.

Congratulations on your hard work, perseverance, and academic success!

Name	Degree/Major	Minor
Sr. Ndigue Formilack Magdalene, SST	BA/Philosophy	Intercultural Studies
Mr. Franciste Jean Mervil	BA/Philosophy	Intercultural Studies
Sr. An Thuy Thi Ngo, LHC-QN	BA/Theology & Mission	Intercultural Studies
Sr. Liem Hong Thi Nguyen, IHM	BA/Theology & Mission	Philosophy
Sr. Nhiem Thi Nguyen, LHC-V	BA/Theology & Mission	Intercultural Studies
Sr. Thuong Hoai Thi Phan, FMV	BA/Theology & Mission	Philosophy
Sr. Phuong Thu Thi Tran, LHC-HH	BA/Theology & Mission	Intercultural Studies
Sr. Duong Y, IMM	BA/Theology & Mission	Philosophy

Senior Synthesis Capstone Presentations – Fall 2022 Semester

Tuesday, December 6, 2022

1:00 p.m.

Classroom 101

Sr. Thuong Hoai Thi Phan, FMV – “Justice for Migrant Workers: Scripture, Church Teaching, and Culture in Saigon.”

A Theology & Mission Capstone Presentation

THM Capstone Instructor: Dr. Benjamin Winter – Assistant Professor of Theology

Sr. Duong Y, IMM – “Mission to the Youth: Educating Young People of Ethnic Minorities in the Kontum Diocese.”

A Theology & Mission Capstone Presentation

THM Capstone Instructor: Dr. Benjamin Winter – Assistant Professor of Theology

Wednesday, December 7, 2022

10:00 a.m.

Classroom 101

Sr. Phuong Thu Thi Tran, LHC-HH – “Inter-Religious Dialogue and Community Building: Developing a Summer Education Program for High School Students in Hien Quan Village.”

A Theology & Mission Capstone Presentation

THM Capstone Instructor: Dr. Benjamin Winter – Assistant Professor of Theology

Sr. Nhiem Thi Nguyen, LHC-V – “Empowering Vietnamese Women’s Dignity through Mission Work in the Vinh Diocese.”

A Theology & Mission Capstone Presentation

THM Capstone Instructor: Dr. Benjamin Winter – Assistant Professor of Theology

Wednesday, December 7, 2022

11:30 a.m.

Classroom 101

Mr. Franciste Jean Mervil – “Can Faith Be Scientific? From Thomas Aquinas and Emmanuel Kant View.”

A Philosophy Capstone Presentation

PHI Capstone Instructor: Dr. Jason Reed – Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Thursday, December 8, 2022

10:00 a.m.

Classroom 101

Sr. Liem Hong Thi Nguyen, IHM – “Active Participation: Ministry for the Disabled in the Family of God.”

A Theology & Mission Capstone Presentation

THM Capstone Instructor: Dr. Benjamin Winter – Assistant Professor of Theology

Sr. An Thuy Thi Ngo, LHC-QN – “Caring for the Vulnerable in Vietnam: Abortion, Ministry, and Human Dignity.”

A Theology & Mission Capstone Presentation

THM Capstone Instructor: Dr. Benjamin Winter – Assistant Professor of Theology



Signature Assignments for Fall 2022 Project

As the semester comes to an end, the Fall 2022 Project is heading into its next phase: collection of signature assignments, which will then be “anonymized”, uploaded to OAP, and prepared for the upcoming Faculty Evaluation rounds in January.

So, if you are one of the instructors whose fall signature assignment is part of the College’s overall Assessment Plan, please submit these assignments as Word documents before December 9! Why Word Documents? Because I need to eliminate names; doing so in Word is a lot easier than working with Adobe!

Thank you! I greatly appreciate everyone’s collaboration!



Greetings to one and all!

It is with no small reluctance that I am announcing my departure from Divine Word College. For a number of reasons, I believe the time has come for my retirement. My last six years at Divine Word College have been wonderful and rewarding. My last day here will be January 6, 2023.

Wherever I may go, I shall always pray for the continued success of Divine Word College in the coming years. As I have told more than one person, we may choose to leave the College and the Society but, in truth, they shall always remain a part of us.

Thank you all for your many kindnesses during my latest tenure here at Divine Word College!

Daniel C. Williams, ML
Library Director



VICE PRESIDENT FOR FORMATION DEAN OF STUDENTS

Fr. Long Phi Nguyen, SVD

Vocation Mass

The Romans Formation group will animate the last vocation mass for this semester on Wednesday, November 30th, at 8:00 AM in the main chapel. Long Ngoc Hai Nguyen will share his vocation journey. Please come to pray for an increase of vocation in religious life, particularly for Fr. Long Phi Nguyen, SVD, and his formation group members.

Advent Luncheon

DWC community will kick off our annual Advent Season with a luncheon on Wednesday, November 30th, from 11.50 AM to 1:00 PM in the dining room. It is a time for reflection and fellowship. All students are required to attend. For further information, check the student board.

SVD and SSpS Advent Recollection

On Saturday, December 3rd, all SVD members and SSpS sisters will begin their annual Advent Recollection day in the chapel of Mother of Asia, beginning at 9:15 AM until noon. Please keep all SVD and SSpS members in your prayer.

Final Exam Week

Final exam week will begin Monday, December 5th until Friday, December 9th. During this week, there will be two Masses (8:00 am and 8:00 pm) in the main chapel. Good luck on your final exams.

Christmas Break

All students going away during Christmas break, please send the Dean your contact information by noon on **Friday, December 9th**. Permission for traveling before Saturday, December 10th, must be approved by the Dean of students.

- Helpful information for those traveling during COVID-19, make sure to plan ahead:
- Check the current COVID-19 situation at your destination
- Make sure you understand and follow all the state, local, and territorial travel restrictions, including mask wearing, proof of vaccination, testing, or quarantine requirements.
- If traveling by air, check if your airline requires any testing, vaccination, or other documents.
- Prepare to be flexible during your trip as restrictions and policies may change during your travel.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>

On behalf of the Formation and Student Life Committee, I wish you and your family a wonderful Christmas season, and may the birthday of Christ warm your heart and home with love, joy, and peace. Safe travels and merry Christmas!

Reducing Stress before the Final Exam Week

Time flies and we are at the end of our Fall semester. This means final papers have to be submitted, final presentations are due and final exams are around the corner. This causes stress for all of us, especially for all students. Am I OK with my grades? Will I pass this class? Am I ready for the final exams?

Too much stress and pressure can cause your ability to study for your final exams or when writing your final papers. These can give you a negative effect, both physically and psychologically. Anxiety, depression, insomnia, panic attacks, irritability and loss of appetite are some of the symptoms of high levels of stress. So I would like to share some tips on how you can reduce your stress level before your final exams.

1. **Take A Break** – you cannot force yourself to study nonstop. There is a limit in our brain to absorb the information. Taking a break is important, even for as little as ten or twenty minutes. Put aside your notes, your powerpoint presentation and textbook. You can walk around the campus and Megan Hall and breathe some fresh cold air. Feel the cold air coming in and going to your nostrils.
2. **Exercise** – this is an important activity to reduce your stress level. Exercise helps to improve your mood and reduce depression and anxiety. It stimulates your hormone endorphin that will relax you and leave you feeling happier. People might think that exercising will drain your energy. On the contrary, you will increase your energy level by exercising.
3. **Socialize** – we are called for relationships. We cannot live an isolated life. While you might not have a lot of time for partying before your exams, go out and spend some time with your friends, to study together or to have some simple conversations to relax your brain.
4. **Mindfulness exercise** – as I mentioned in some of my short articles, a mindfulness exercise will help you to be more relaxed and focused on what you are doing. Breathing is one of the simplest and powerful mindfulness exercises to reduce stress, anxiety and depression.
5. **Smile** – smile and the world will smile with you. It might sound strange, but research has shown that the act of smiling can reduce stress. Laughter also has been proven to reduce stress levels. Even, one of the cognitive-behavior-therapies is using laughter as an alternative treatment that has been proven to have a positive effect on mental well-being. So, watching a comedy movie will help you to reduce your stress level.

The Counseling Center is open daily to support all of you especially at this time. Maybe you want to learn more about Mindfulness or Laughter Therapy. Please feel free to contact auntarto@dwci.edu or Room 220, ext. 377 for an appointment.



January

2 Sr. Duong Y, IMM

4 Sr. Monica Wanjiru Kabiru, SE

5 Ann Maiers

6 Vuong Vu

6 Ronna Brown

7 Fr. Raymond Akumbilim, SVD



VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMISSIONS

Mr. Len Uhal

Advent and Christmas Joy!

From all of us in the Vocations and Admissions Offices, we wish the entire DWC community blessed Advent and Christmas Seasons. While there are still some final papers to complete, presentations to give and exams to pass, we take this moment to thank everyone for your support in helping our office invite and welcome new students to Divine Word College. From referrals to the office and hosting Come and See visitors to sharing your stories and experiences of the SVD and DWC, our team is grateful for the support we receive as we continue our ministry.

As people leave campus for the Christmas break, please consider taking some vocation literature with you—some prayer cards and/or brochures. Share them with those you encounter over the Christmas break—leave them with friends or in the back of churches. Consider talking with youth groups or encouraging parents and grandparents to talk with the young people in their lives about religious vocations. Again, our team appreciates all the help in getting the word out about the Divine Word Missionaries and Divine Word College. Thank you!



VICE PRESIDENT FOR OPERATIONS

Mr. Steve Winger

Important Reminders

The open enrollment period ends on **Wednesday, November 30**. If you have not turned in your Health and Dental election form please do so. You can turn the form in to Ann in the Business Office.

Just a friendly reminder that Santa is watching to see who has finished their Vector training (SafeColleges) assignments. I hope you are not on his naughty list. Remember, Vector assignments are due by **December 31**.

If you are having trouble logging in to your account please let me know.



FR. THINH NGO, SVD
VOCATION DIRECTOR

HOBBIES

Skateboarding and cooking

FAVORITE PLACE TO EAT

Kogi Food Truck in
Los Angeles



**SMALL THING THAT
MAKES YOUR DAY**

My favorite song
coming on the radio

FAVORITE DRINK

Cherry lemonade from Sonic

RANDOM FACT

Loves to collect
rubber ducks

SURPRISING FACT

Loves EDM music





DIALOGOS

διάλογος

The Academic Newsletter for Divine Word College

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CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: SEVEN FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES FR. JOHN A. SZUKALSKI, SVD, PH.D., VPAA



As a Roman Catholic seminary college in the tradition of the Society of the Divine Word, every student should achieve DWC's five Core Competencies by graduation. Instructional faculty, consequently, should neces-

sarily be conversant with what each Core Competency requires. One Core Competency—Social & Global Responsibility—requires basic knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching (CST). The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Seven fundamental CST principles can be gleaned from papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents (usccb.org):

1/ Life & Dignity of the Human Person—Human life is sacred, and the dignity of the human person is foundational for a moral vision of society.

2/ Call to Family, Community, and Participation—How society is organized (in economics, politics, law, and policy) directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community.

3/ Rights & Responsibilities—Human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and corresponding responsibilities are met.

4/ Option for the Poor & Vulnerable—How well a society cares for the most poor and vulnerable constitutes a basic moral test, since deprivation wounds the entire community.

5/ Dignity of Work & Rights of Workers—The economy must serve the people, not people the economy; workers have rights to productive work, fair wages, and economic initiative.

6/ Solidarity—Love for all our sisters and brother, as one human family, demands that we promote peace in a world surrounded by injustice, violence, and conflict.

7/ Care for God's Creation—Stewardship of creation requires the protection of people and planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation.

Faculty may review the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops website (usccb.org) to learn more about Catholic Social Teaching as part of their own professional development efforts.

GRAZ, PHILADELPHIA, CHICAGO: WRITING CENTER REFLECTIONS & ASSESSMENT
DR. YASMIN RIOUX—ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF COMMUNICATION & WRITING
DIS DEPARTMENT CHAIR & DIRECTOR FOR INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS



In July, Dr. Richard Garrett and I coauthored and co-presented a virtual presentation titled *“Empowering multilingual peer tutors in a multi-geographic environment – Considering labels, linguistic realities, and establishing inclusion in multilingual Writing Centers”*. The presentation was part of the European Writing Centers Association annual conference and was scheduled to take place at Universität Graz in Austria. Due to COVID regulations, however, Dr. Garrett and I were able to present virtually. Concerning content, Dr. Garrett and I outlined our experiences as former and current Student Resource Center Directors, multilingual tutor training and tutee preparation, and matters pertaining to positive vs. negative labels associated with language learner status.



In September 2022, I attended and presented at the Drexel University Assessment Conference with a piece on *“Starting from the Very Beginning: Reflections on the Experiences of Totally Revamping an Assessment Program in the Setting of a Small Midwestern College”*. Here, I virtually discussed our DWC experiences with implementing a new assessment approach from its beginning stages up to what we have in place today. I covered important things such as software selection, creation of rubrics and signature assignments, faculty evaluators of signature assignments, inventing and creating Communication channels (website, LMS groups, newsletter columns, etc.), and various other topics.



At last, I joined Fr. John Szukalski, Dr. Cathi Cleary, Kimberly Burnett-Hackbarth, and Dr. Mathew Kanjirathinkal at this year’s HLC Assessment Academic Roundtable Meeting in Chicago from October 26th to October 28th. While we did not explicitly present anything, we were involved in various important conversations about our assessment progress, milestones, challenges, and our path ahead. We were able to narrow our assessment scope, discuss important aspects of the Core assessment plan, and create an Action Plan for the upcoming two years.





In mid-October I attended the Iowa Library Association's annual conference in Coralville, IA. The keynote speakers were the highlight of the conference. Hayden Kristal, Mitali Perkins, and Ty Rushing each challenged the audience with poignant calls to action based on the conference's theme: "It's all Connected: Libraries, Communities, Equity, and Information."

Hayden's lively talk was laced with humor (check out their TedTalk and America's Got Talent performances), but the most powerful punchline was a story they told. Hayden had previously given a talk to first-year students at a Catholic college in the northeast. To start the talk, Hayden asked the students to give an example of how they may be differently abled ("disabled") as they entered the college environment. One student related how she was a twin and this would be the first time she had done anything without her sister. Another student related how they would be the first foster child in their family to attend college and that the weight of being successful was difficult to handle.

These are not typical examples of disabilities, but Hayden inspired the audience to look beyond medical standards and to see disabilities as not inherent to the person, but situational. As such, it is impossible to preempt every need. Instead, it is the willingness to address deficiencies that matters. Specifically, Hayden delineated three steps that each of us can do to tackle intersectional accessibility head on: 1) Make it clear that you want feedback 2) When an issue arises, address it 3) Don't moralize. The last point may need further clarification. Many people view differently abled people with pity, Hayden challenged the audience to see deaf, wheelchair-bound, and blind people the same way they view the twin without her twin or the foster college-student. In other words, different people require different things in different situations, it's not morality game.

Mitali Perkins was the next keynote speaker. She spent a good portion of her talk discussing her childhood, which saw her move from Kolkata, India, to New York City, to a suburb in California. Throughout the myriad of moves, Mitali relied on stories to empower her. She was a voracious reader and a captivated listener. The heroines of L.M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* and Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* inspired confidence and resilience, while the tales

her father, uncles, and aunties told her grounded her cultural identity and excited her imagination.

Mitali challenged the audience to embrace stories—old stories, new stories, flawed stories, innovative stories. As a children's author primarily, Mitali advanced the idea of a multistory childhood, which means allowing children to read widely and without censor. The multistory childhood 1) puts the child in charge 2) reveals the vices and virtues of different cultures 3) embraces flawed humans and champions individuals who identify and overcome those flaws.

Finally, Ty Rushing took the stage. Ty's boisterous personality and humor permeated his talk, but again, it was the call to action that took center stage. After documenting the numerous ways in which librarians have stood up to censorship, racism, and intolerance, he reminded the audience that the fight is not over. 2022 has seen the highest number of attempted book bans since the American Librarian Association (ALA) began documenting this information 20 years ago ([ALA 2022](#)). Ty made it clear that librarians are on the frontlines of the censorship battle and must continue to fight by championing the principles of the ALA's [Library Bill of Rights](#). Ty's call to action extends beyond (not-so-quiet) librarians to every person, especially college students, faculty, and staff.

A common theme emerged through these three talks. It is imperative that we see diversity not as an ambiguous concept, but as a call to action: Make spaces accessible by intentionally inviting people in and listening to them. I have a lot of ideas about how to make the library more accessible, but I would like to hear from You. Please let the library staff know what you need. We are listening.

Read the Library Bill of Rights: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>



IOWA
LIBRARY
ASSOCIATION

DESIGNING DWC ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT A CULTURE OF LEARNING
DR. CATHLEEN CLEARY—ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (DIS)



During October 26th – 28th, I joined members of the DWC Assessment Academy Team at the HLC Assessment Academy Midpoint Roundtable, in which schools that started the Program in 2020 came together to re-

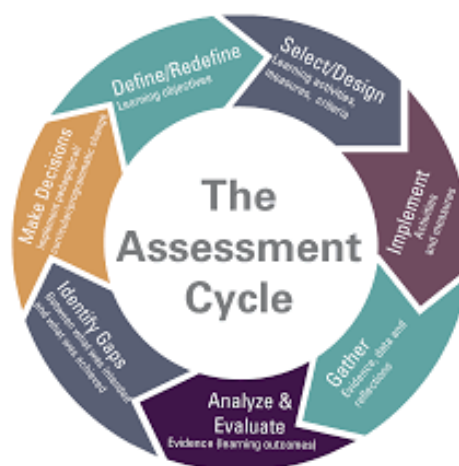
view their accomplishments, refocus their efforts where necessary and adjust action plans for the 2nd half of the program with the goal of improving assessment of student learning (and ultimately student learning itself). The activities at the Roundtable quickly validated the work we at DWC have done to initiate and implement our Assessment Pilot Program. Our progress to date places DWC in the 3rd stage ('refine and evaluate') but closer to the 4th stage ('expand and sustain') of the Assessment Academy Program, which is notably ahead of the progress of other schools in our cohort. Noteworthy lessons include the distinction between *proving* student learning (for the sake of reporting) and *improving* student learning (for the sake of student success); how to use assessment data to inform changes intended to improve student learning; acknowledging barriers while working to mitigate them; and that communication of our progress towards the goals of the assessment program at DWC and adjustments to the education program/curriculum are both critically important to improving student learning.

More specifically, we discerned that DWC could/should use previously generated data in a more informative way, and in "Team Time" sessions we planned such use. Analysis will include, in addition to average scores, disaggregating data to report the distribution of scores for each criterion of a rubric – the percentage of students that achieved each score (1-4) on each criterion. This will give us a clearer view of student strengths/weaknesses for each criterion within a Core Competency or Program Learning Outcome. We will also opt in future Assessment Projects to instruct the OAP to disaggregate data to report on particular demographics that DWC will specify. Other important observations were also made, and were incorporated as important elements of the team's more focused Action Plan.

One quote I found particularly impactful was from Susan Murphy: *"You can have a culture of assessment without impacting learning, but you can't have a culture of learning without assessment."* (You may have heard this quote before!)

Another significant take-away from the Roundtable is the principle that the Core Curriculum is not the responsibility of any one department, discipline or faculty member, but the responsibility of all faculty, since all courses at higher levels will be impacted by the success of students in mastering the Core Competencies.

Most memorably, I left for the conference as a mere mother of 4 and returned to meet my 1st grandchild, Willow Rosemarie!



"You can have a culture of assessment without impacting learning, but you can't have a culture of learning without assessment."

ASSESSMENT AIN'T EASY: PRESENTING ON COMMUNICATION ASSESSMENT IN THE BIG EASY
DR. JOSHUA YOUNG—ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF COMMUNICATION & ENGLISH
DEPARTMENT OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (DIS)



I had the honor of attending the National Communication Association annual conference in New Orleans, LA. I presented on a panel called, "Liberating the Introductory Communication Course from it's Structural Bias." My role was to present research on how the most com-

monly used textbooks, course design, and assessment rubrics in Public Speaking marginalize people with disabilities and those from diverse cultures. I was joined on the panel by Pat Gerhke, a historian of the communication discipline, Leila Brammer, democratic pedagogy expert, Angela Housek, editor of the Basic Course Annual, and Allison Brenneise, an advocate and scholar of critical communication pedagogy. It was a very engaging panel and was a topic of the Basic Communication Course (Public Speaking) Division business meeting. Specifically, our panel has advocated that this division, one of the largest and most influential of NCA, should form a task force to develop more inclusive assessment practices for oral communication.

While I was at the convention, I mostly attended sessions on the Public Speaking course, including a panel on ungrading, a pedagogical approach that abandons traditional grading structures. I also attended business meetings for the different divisions I am a member of and serve. I was elected the Awards Chair for a second term for the American Studies Division. In this role, I chair a committee to award the top journal article, book, dissertation, and Master's thesis in Communication and American Studies. I was also asked to serve on the Nominating Committee for the Basic Communication Course Division. My role, a three year term, is to help recruit diverse candidates for elected office for the division, including individuals that will plan future conferences and lead our inclusivity efforts.

Finally, I was afforded the opportunity to meet with editors from W. W. Norton about writing instructional materials for Contemporary Public Speaking, a textbook authored by Pat Gerhke and Megan Foley. I was also invited to consider submitting a textbook proposal in the future. Overall, my time at NCA was very beneficial to my development as a teacher and scholar. I have been proud to represent Divine Word College and our communication curriculum.



"My role was to present research on how the most commonly used textbooks, course design, and assessment rubrics in Public Speaking marginalize people with disabilities and those from diverse cultures."

EMPOWERING MULTILINGUAL PEER TUTORS IN A MULTI-GEOGRAPHIC ENVIRONMENT: CONSIDERING LABELS, LINGUISTIC REALITIES, AND ESTABLISHING INCLUSION IN MULTILINGUAL WRITING CENTERS

DR. RICHARD GARRETT—ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE

DEPARTMENT OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (DIS)



In July, Dr. Yasmin Rioux and I coauthored and co-presented a virtual presentation. The presentation was part of the European Writing Centers Association annual conference and was scheduled to take place at Universität Graz in Austria. Due to COVID

regulations, however, Dr. Rioux and I were able to present virtually. In this paper, Dr. Rioux and I outlined our experiences as former and current Student Resource Center Directors, discussed multilingual tutor training and tutee preparation, and examined matters pertaining to positive vs. negative labels associated with language learner status.

In our presentation, we aimed at addressing the following research question: *How do we effectively design a tutor training that addresses and incorporates our tutors' and tutees' uniquely diverse linguistic backgrounds while empowering and not reducing them?* In order to avoid limiting the students' sense of self-ascribed and externally constructed identities (Costino & Hyon, 2007; Harklau, 2000; Ortmeier-Hopper, 2008; Rioux, 2016) by imposing and honing in on restrictive labels while still trying to take into account the realities of multilingual writers, we had to be mindful of several specific tutor recruitment and training considerations, such as the inclusion of ELL/ESL materials that deal with student-specific issues (pronunciation, multilingual writing developments, etc.) or how much to focus specifically on ELL/ESL aspects, not "just" writing tutoring. It was therefore a primary focus and cornerstone of the tutor training design strategy to ensure that the multilingual aspect of everyone's identity was respected and considered, but didn't become central to all aspects that affect the multifaceted space that marks the Writing Center to avoid imposing potentially reductionistic labels on all involved.

To empower the tutees and tutors then, we underscored their prior knowledge and unique skill set that several multilingual students possess as they encounter the local language as language learners therefore possessing a syntactical understanding of the language that is oftentimes superior to their peers. Instead of examining and focusing on multilingualism as a potential hindrance in language tutoring, we maintained that multilingual tutors bring a wealth of linguistic experience, knowledge, and skills to their position as peer tutors.

We argued that exploring the richness of a multicultural writing center is not only important when constructing and creating tutor training opportunities, but that it is integral to the integrity of all involved.

By exploring and incorporating our tutors' linguistic backgrounds, we can increase inclusivity, equity, and empowerment while increasing the effectiveness of the Writing Center and its various components. We relied on qualitative research design of a case study and analyze our own reflective narratives and present our findings. The goal of our presentation, therefore, was to share firsthand insights into a unique learning experience that encompasses all stakeholders of our Writing Center and has the potential to empower multilingual writing tutors, tutees, and student writers. In our presentation we shared our tutor training design, its specific components, and our perceptions and reflections regarding its effectiveness.

"How do we effectively design a tutor training that addresses and incorporates our tutors' and tutees' uniquely diverse linguistic backgrounds while empowering and not reducing them?"

SKRIB
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EUROPEAN WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION

THE CALL-IS, NEWSLETTER AND A FEW FREE WEBINARS
MR. LARRY UDRY—ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ESL
INTENSIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE (IELI)



Since 2007, I have edited and published an on-line journal for the CALL-IS Interest Section, a group devoted to Computer Assisted Language Learning and Instruction, within our professional organization, TESOL. This newsletter goes out to 1,500 TESOL members bi-annually. All the articles in the September

edition as well as all the back issues of the newsletter can be found [here](#). This newsletter featured articles from Chair Jane Chien of the National Taipei University of Education in Taiwan, myself and other articles related to pedagogy and even a graduate student book review. Sadly, this newsletter also commemorated our dear friend Vance Stevens, who passed away unexpectedly in early September. He was the first chair of the CALL-IS in 1984 and he has been a major player and one of the people responsible for establishing our IS. As many online tributes said, Vance was “an online pioneer who was a giant among his peers”, “a mentor, role model, and our friend [our] guide, and an inspiration,” “the go-to guy in the Electronic Village...at TESOL CALL-IS”. This is how I knew him. I met him at many a conference troubleshooting problems, webcasting, tweaking and always tinkering with technology to get it to do what we wanted. He was the master, and he will be greatly missed.

I've also begun attending online workshops, especially workshops put on by [Bridge Universe](#). These workshops are free and generally they offer the PowerPoint after the demo and of course online professional development and interaction in a zoom type experience. I've attended five since my last Dialogos article:

- "Making Grammar Interesting, Interactive and Inclusive",
- "Integrating Creative and Critical Thinking Skills in ELT",
- "Tech Tools to Engage Online ESL/EFL Learners",
- "Scaffolding in the ESL and CLIL Classrooms: Steps for Success" and

The last, “Teaching English Pronunciation: Addressing Stress, Rhythm, and Intonation in the Classroom” was on October 18, 2022 10:00 AM MST. Hosted by Erin Hernandez Owner Larchmere Language Services, it featured Jason Levine, English Tracher, Trainer and Materials Writer and Peggy Tharpe American Pronunciation Coach and Fluency and Accent Reduction Coach. Their presentation was excellent. What I what I liked about it the most was that it emphasized suprasegmentals in discourse analysis. So rather than focusing on individual consonants and sounds, (a virtually impossible proposition in English) an instructor focuses on the prosody and the larger chunks of language. We do these periodically when we explicitly

teach *Pronunciation Power* or if we teach poetry. But it's good to hear that this is still the best practice.



PROMOTING STUDENT SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
MS. JEAN FLOYD—SENIOR INSTRUCTOR OF ESL
INTENSIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE (IELI)



How can we create a classroom environment that fosters the social and emotional development of our students? This question was addressed in one facet of a presentation that I attended virtually on October 15th in

the Illinois Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages – Bilingual Education Fall Workshop. Maria Barragan Ortiz from Seville, Spain is currently working on a Ph.D. in the Psychology of Education and presented: “Relationships First: Academic and Social-Emotional Success in DL [dual language] Classrooms” at the conference. In her presentation, Ms. Barragan Ortiz shared background information pertinent to dual language classrooms, such as identity development, multiculturalism, and dealing with students coming from experiences of trauma as well as practices in Restorative Learning. However, the part of her talk that I found most relevant to our learning environment at Divine Word College dealt with creating a classroom environment as one element leading to the students’ social-emotional success.

A learning environment that promotes mutual respect and a strong rapport among participants is our goal in setting the path towards student success. Barragan Ortiz believes such an environment is necessary because students need mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual readiness to learn and succeed in their studies. As the basis for this environment, there needs to be no fear of any ridicule or put-downs from others in the learning environment. I think it is safe to say that this is no challenge for us at DWC because how students naturally treat one another or are permitted to treat one another and the way our education professionals respond to students is not an issue.

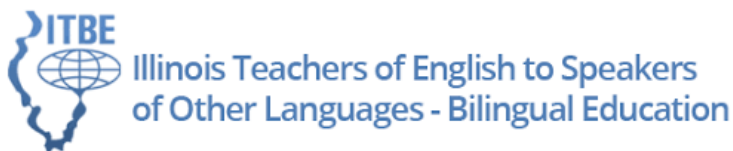
The presenter then enumerated twelve strategies that serve to create an ideal learning environment. First among these is to ensure that classroom expectations are clearly established in collaboration with the students, and once set, must be upheld with consistency. For example, in setting a phone policy in a particular course, make sure everyone is involved in establishing the rationale for the policy and understands why it should be followed. Her second point was to have par-

ticipants “tell their stories” to humanize the classroom and build stronger relationships. She encouraged the workshop attendees to set aside a couple of minutes every day in class to talk and listen to one another. The third strategy ties in with this: to listen to students and allow some “venting” time. She reminded us that we all want our potential to be recognized, and we all want to be afforded the opportunity to be heard and excel. I asked how we, as class managers, can steer this “venting time” away from becoming too negative or critical of exams or program requirements. She replied that we should not view such feedback as negative, but rather an opportunity to affirm to students that their views are heard and acknowledged, and then refer them to a counselor or administrator, or invite them to discuss the issue with us further after class. She encouraged us not to be afraid of students expressing their emotions or uncomfortable with their reactions.

The fourth strategy is for professors and instructors to get involved in the college community because when students know they matter, we inspire them to become better at what they do and more confident in who they are. Fifth, we should be cognizant of modeling pro-social behaviors for students to emulate. In class, we should: 6) establish simple routines to help students know what to expect and anticipate each day, 7) assign seats based on students’ needs, and 8) allow time in class for students to start homework so they can confidently proceed on their own after class. The ninth strategy is more relevant to the K-12 education system than college: to contact the students’ parents to garner support for their studies. The tenth strategy is to introduce conflict-resolution skills and stress reduction techniques to help students cope with these challenges. While we may not be able to devote time to these skills and techniques in our fast-paced courses, we can remind students of these resources and student-support opportunities available to them on campus. Barragan Ortiz then encouraged educators to introduce students to certain responsibilities and assign roles to them in class activities. Finally, she said that she posts photos of her students in the classroom to send a message that the students belong to a family of learners. She keeps photos of former students and introduces them as family members and friends of her current students. DWC does this on an institution-wide basis, posting pho-

PROMOTING STUDENT SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
MS. JEAN FLOYD—SENIOR INSTRUCTOR OF ESL
INTENSIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE (IELI)

tos of every communal celebration, sporting events, field trips, and other special events. Barragan Ortiz emphasized that all of these strategies support equity, safety and trust, a sense of responsibility and ownership, and connections in which everyone has a voice. Such strategies may seem so “second-nature” to educators or so much a part of our modus vivendi that we no longer notice the significant impact these routines have on supporting student success, yet we should reflect on these strategies on a regular basis and shore up any shortcomings.



“A learning environment that promotes mutual respect and a strong rapport among participants is our goal in setting the path towards student success..”

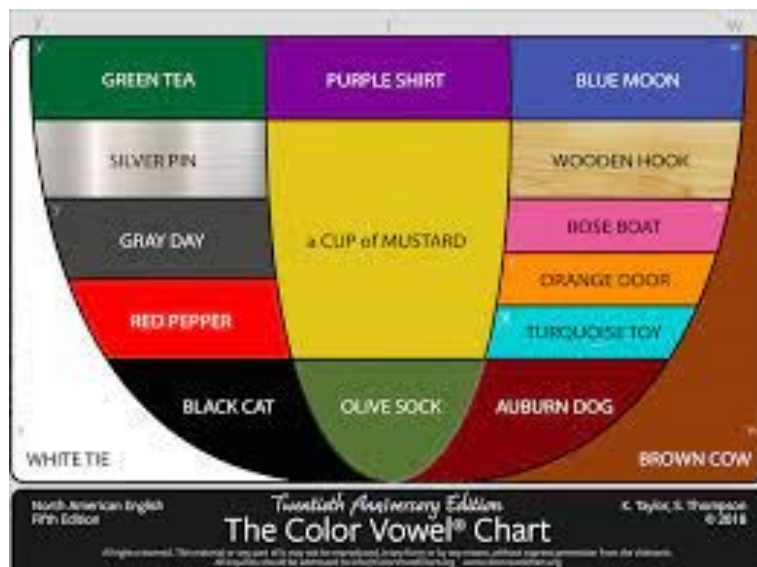
COLOR VOWEL

MS. MICHELLE VARGO—SENIOR INSTRUCTOR OF ESL INTENSIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE (IELI)



As an ESL instructor I am always on the lookout for practical teaching methodologies to use in my classroom to help improve my teaching as well as my students learning. In October, I was fortunate enough to stumble across the interactive Color Vowel® chart. While I had heard of the Color Vowel® chart, I did not have any knowledge of the teaching/learning system that went along with it. Much to my delight, I was able to quickly link to the English Language Training Solutions website where I could explore the methodology behind the Color Vowel® system. In short, the Color Vowel® system allows students to visually organize the pronunciation of words into color groups that correspond to the position of the mouth as they pronounce the various vowel sounds of English. In turn, this helps students recognize that English words are not spelled phonetically (i. e. do, you, through, new, shoe). Finally, it incorporates simple hand and yoga like movements to reinforce the concept that English is a stress-timed language.

After viewing several videos of the system in classroom use and reading through the available material, I requested professional development funds to register for the Color Vowel® Basics - Level One Training course and to purchase a "Fully Equipped Classroom Kit." I am currently enrolled in the Color Vowel® Basics course and have already begun to implement what I have learned in my communication classroom activities. As with all new instructional techniques, it was a rough beginning. However, after two weeks of working with the program all of my students have embraced this system and readily use its simple techniques to navigate the pronunciation, syllable stress, and spelling of academic vocabulary. Like my students, I too have enjoyed learning and using this system in the classroom so much so that I have requested more professional development funds to take the Color Vowel Level One Practicum.



“[The Color Vowel System] incorporates simple hand and yoga like movements to reinforce the concept that English is a stress-timed language.”

BENDING THE RULES
MS. SHARON SINTON—SENIOR INSTRUCTOR OF ESL
INTENSIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE (IELI)



Watching a student catch on to new content or skill is exceptionally rewarding as an instructor. It is what keeps us going. However, seeing a student struggle and lag behind despite our best efforts is frustrating, to say the

least. I recently attended an online conference (Cambridge Live 2022) and participated in a webinar that touches on the issue of students who have fallen behind. While the presenter, Johanna Stirling, focused on K-12 learners, I believe that many of her principles are fitting for all students.

One of Stirling’s suggestions was flipping the classroom and giving students homework before the class. If the instructor has prepared a video, the students can watch it several times to familiarize themselves with the material before doing their homework. To make the videos more engaging, make them interactive. The websites Eduzzle and PlayPosit allow instructors to create their own interactive videos for the class and give students a task to do after reviewing the content.

Mediation (or peer-to-peer learning) is the next step that she recommended. Many of us are doing this already. However, for struggling students, working with their peers allows them to hear that other students understand their problems and that those same peers can share useful study skills and strategies. This is real life communication with a very meaningful purpose.

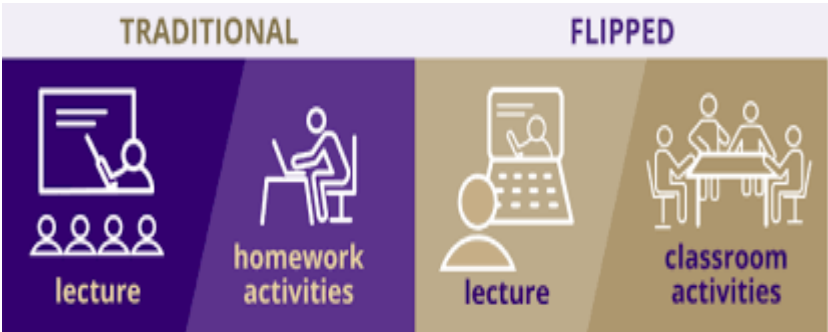
To further accommodate those who have fallen behind, Stirling suggested that the teacher allow for different learning paces and different lengths of time for students to complete a task. This led into an explanation on the differences between scaffolding and differentiation.

Scaffolding is useful for all students to help them build their skills or knowledge and is a temporary support. Differentiation is only for those students who need individualized support. The purpose of differentiation is to make learning easier, rather than to complete a task. For example, when writing, she might break down the task into smaller chunks for all students (scaffolding), but she might tell a specific students to write fewer sentences or

paragraphs (differentiation).

As instructors, we are constantly juggling the needs of our students and the realities of meeting the student learning outcomes for our classes. Perhaps a way to merge these two requirements is to break some of the conformity of our expectations in low-stake assignments so students who need some extra support might achieve their own successes and academic growth by being allowed to “bend some of the rules.” Having different expectations for task completion, rather than being unfair, might be just another way of treating students more equally.

“As instructors, we are constantly juggling the needs of our students and the realities of meeting the student learning outcomes for our classes.”



IMAGINING RELIGION BEYOND ECONOMIC LIBERALISM: IS GOD NOTORIOUSLY BIASED?
FR. AKIZOU KAMINA, SVD—INSTRUCTOR OF THEOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY (DTP)



“Heaven has strict immigration laws; Hell has open borders”. This was a sign that was placed by the Apostolic Faith Church in Springdale, Arkansas in 2019 at the

high point of immigration crisis on the US-Mexico border. The current liberal economy - with its economic philosophy that limits government spending - has infected all aspects of our various societies, including religious traditions. Religion has become a political ideology that is deeply rooted in a divisive sectarianism that literally decides whom one chooses to care for and about. Yet, the forced globalization that we live and experience today has been a true challenge to people who call themselves believers. In addition, our world is now facing global catastrophes that impel all of us, especially people of faith, to uplift a belief system that does not become a fallacy that obstructs us from living out the fundamental and essential value of faith: love for our neighbor. Moreover, the religious obscurantism that has given birth to a new form of religious idolatry is something to be fought in all theological and religious fields. Our theologies and religious education have to be first and foremost de-colonized. For so long, we have contributed to colonization through theologies that continue to oppress and discriminate. Whether this is done naively or with full knowledge, the colonial education with its supremacism in all forms is outdated. It is time for a type of theological education that is done as an intersection between the experience of the people, love and reason. Otherwise, we might fall into a kind of *“theological Darwinism.”*

Furthermore, our theological and religious educations have to be liberative. We cannot portray God as a Being that rejoice over the sufferings of humanity. In the face of global catastrophes such as immigration, racism, extreme poverty, environmental disasters, antisemitism, islamophobia, wars etc, religion has to be a liberative force that not

only listens but challenges the structures that enable them. In order to fulfill this innate goal of religion in the midst of the difficulties that the world has been undergoing since the beginning of Covid 19 pandemic, the American Academy of Religion has chosen the theme *“Religion and Catastrophe”*. Through several sessions that range from Religion and ecology, Religion and economy, Religion and International development, to the study of Quran and Contemporary Islam, we have approached the issues that our world is currently facing not only from an academic standpoint but also one that looks at possible responses through the lens of religion. It is now our call, as scholars of religion, to empower our students to move away from a *“nihilist theology”* to a theology beyond economic liberalism.



“ For so long, we have contributed to colonization through theologies that continue to oppress and discriminate.”

AN ANNUAL CONFERENCE: FEDERATION OF SEMINARY SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS
FR. SIMON THOI HOANG, SVD—INSTRUCTOR OF THEOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY (DTP)



It was my first time to attend this conference, which was very intensive and informative. It was three full days of workshops, discussion, fellowship, liturgy, and prayer with 28 spiritual directors from different seminaries and institutions of priestly formation around the country.

The first part of the conference was about the report of the USCCB on the Program of Priestly Formation (PPF #6). This report addresses several important issues regarding changes in priesthood formation. It calls us as spiritual directors to pay attention to these changes, since priestly formation involves both the internal and external forum of candidates. Generally speaking, formators work with the external forum while spiritual directors accompany seminarians in the internal forum. The seminary is a formative community where faith, hope and love are fostered. The formation for priesthood begins with the focus on the seminarian's relationship with Jesus Christ that begins with baptism and includes the ongoing human development of each candidate.

There was an acknowledgement that the declining number of seminarians in all seminaries since the Covid-19 pandemic was alarming, and this has an impacts on seminary life and on seminarians, on formation work, and on the ministry of spiritual direction. Virtual (online) spiritual direction has its own limitations. Face-to-face or in-person spiritual direction seems to be more desirable and best serves the directee, especially for seminarians.

The second part of the conference was mainly on the topic of Spiritual Direction: Preparation for Spiritual Direction, An Important Toolbox, Christian Anthropology of the Human Person, and Criteria for Spiritual Direction that Direct Men in Theology.

Besides revisiting and learning important skills of spiritual direction, we were invited to consider many current issues that are very important in accompanying seminarians in their spiritual life. One of the most dominant topics of discussion and dialogue among the attendants was about the impacts of digital world/information on the spiritual life of seminarians. There were questions such as: How can we find a healthy balance in a stream of blessings

and challenges? How can we find spiritual nourishment in the midst of uncertainty and ambiguity of life?

For better or worse, the pandemic has created a void that needs to be filled in the life of many seminarians. The isolation, social distancing, and quarantines have called for the life of solitude and prayers that many young seminarians are confronting. There are increasing danger areas such as addiction, pornography, entitlement, sexual confusion, and other psychological issues. How are we now accompanying them during this post-Covid-19 pandemic? It calls our attention to depend also on other professions in the field of human development and wellbeing such as psychotherapy, counseling, etc. We need to be aware of all available resources around us.

The conference has left me with one of the thorny issues that I continue to contemplate, the question of the relational nature of these two ministries: spiritual direction and formation in the setting of the seminary. For the wellbeing of candidates and of the church, how can we, spiritual directors and formators, work together to assist candidates to discern their vocation, to nurture a healthy way of living, and to foster good workers in God's vineyard. In what way can spiritual directors contribute to the process of evaluation of candidates that will not violate the core principles of spiritual direction?



DUO PIANO MASTERCLASS
DR. EVELYN DIAS—ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MUSIC
DEPARTMENT OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (DIS)



For the developing musician, no summer is complete without music festivals. They present the perfect opportunity for the intense study of an instrument with renowned artists, collaborations with other musicians and perhaps

the chance to visit beautiful locations and perform at exceptional venues. The Duo Piano Masterclasses at Northwestern University check many of these boxes.

Open to college and graduate students, young professionals, serious amateurs, and advanced high school students, the program focuses on the art of playing duo piano through the study of repertoire for 4 hands and 2 pianos. Associate Professor of piano Dr. Sylvia Wang is the director of this festival.

After a successful debut in 2018, it was cancelled twice due to the pandemic. The July 2022 festival was thus highly anticipated. It was held in the newly-constructed Ryan Center for the Musical Arts in Evanston. The masterclass and the final concerts were held in the performance auditorium Galvin Hall with breathtaking views of lake Michigan. Participants also performed an outreach recital for the residents of the Mather—a local senior residence in Evanston.

Performers worked in pairs on a duo piano piece (4 hands, 2 pianos) and a duet (4 hands, 1 piano). Daily sessions in Galvin Hall were conducted in the masterclass format— a performance by participants followed by a coaching session with an expert teacher. In addition, to Dr. Sylvia Wang, guest teachers included Dr. Lydia Brown (chair of the Collaborative Piano Department at The Juilliard School) as well as performers from the Chicago area (the Liang-He Duo and the Estrella Duo).

As the program assistant, I was responsible for many organizational details and enjoyed performing with festival participants. All participants arrived at the festival, ready to perform. Yet the transformations to their playing after a week of intense coaching and practice were incredible.

The week culminated in two full recitals that were open to the public. I was glad to be able to invite some of my DWC students to attend one of the recitals.



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION MEETING CONFERENCE REPORT: “CONSPIRITUALITY”
DR. BENJAMIN WINTER—ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY (DTP)



The American Academy of Religion (AAR) Annual Conference is a massive gathering of approximately eight thousand scholars and students of the Bible, theology, and the scientific study of religions. Of the many sessions I attend-

ed, one I would like to highlight is: “A World of Hidden Masters: Conspiracy Theories, Religion, and the Occult.” The four speakers on this panel were Egil Asprem (Stockholm University), Fredrik Gregorius (Linköping University), Giovanna Parmigiani (Harvard University), and Joseph Laycock (Texas State University). It was helpful to hear a combination of both European and American perspectives on the recent rise in this type of thinking, and to see it framed within the broader history of Western Esotericism. One of the guiding questions for this panel was, “Perhaps one in ten thousand of the people who believe conspiracy theories act on their beliefs in some way – how can we predict that behavior?”

Attending this panel, I learned quite a bit about how conspiracy theories take shape in / about / as religious practice. Esoteric spiritualities and conspiracism have often been connected in the past, particularly when arrayed against state, church, and medical establishments (e.g. today’s false notion of a “Plandemic”). Many of these patterns arose as a result of the Thirty Years War between Catholics and Protestants in Europe.^[1] In addition, today’s extremists who speak of Democrats murdering children (“Pizzagate”) to bring about a New World Order are simply repackaging “Jewish Blood Libel” prejudices held for centuries. These examples show how conspiracy theories employ “fact / fiction reversals.” Fiction becomes the only real way to present dangerous ideas that “they” don’t want you to know.

Ethnographic studies of conspiracy-minded groups have been difficult to conduct due to problems of access and trust. Nevertheless, there are two primary schools of thought concerning the social (and sometimes religious) element of conspiracy theories:

(1) Conspiracy theories are always political and used for social *belonging*

(2) Conspiracy theories are instruments of power used to create scapegoats for social *control*

The first school of thought sees conspiracism as a mere symptom of the human condition, while the second sees it as a course-driver for human action. The speakers on this panel explored the tension between these two approaches by referencing a wide variety of topics: Q-Anon, dispensationalism, the satanic panic of the 1980’s, the “blood moons,” covid-19, and the results (legitimate or illegitimate) of elections. Consensus moved toward the second approach, which views conspiracy theories as instruments of power. Speakers pointed out how speculation about covid-19 had actual ramifications for health, how the capital was stormed by election-deniers, and how online algorithms reward and encourage extremism. Police often make things worse by arresting leaders. This often serves to confirm radical suspicions that “they” are out to get “us.” Christians have a responsibility to form identities *relative to Christ*, the suffering and self-giving servant. Conspiratorial “us/them” thinking has no place in Christ’s new community of love.

^[1] Conspiracy theories have certainly played a large role in American Evangelical Christian communities, however, what they actually mean *to the members* of these communities can differ very widely. “Who is the next anti-Christ?” “When will the rapture take place?” ... Questions like these can be seen as elaborate games meant to enhance social belonging. In the same way, Q-Anon—which is not only one thing but truly a “family” of conspiracy theories—can be viewed as a massive LARP (Live Action Role-Playing Game) engaged in for fun and social bonding.



MIDWEST SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S ANNUAL MEETING
DR. MATHEW KANJIRATHINKAL—PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (DIS)



Professional Presentations

I organized a session and presented a paper at the Midwest Sociological Society's Annual Meeting that took place in Chicago, April 13 – 16, 2022. The session consisted of three invited papers, and it was titled: "Sociology's Role in the Making of modern Societies: The Nation-State and Globalization." My paper was titled: "Sociology's Dark Side: Colonialism and Sociological Theorizing." The session was well-attended, and my paper received considerable attention as it contributed to an emerging research on the racism of the founding theorists of sociology, particularly Max Weber. My research is a contribution to decolonizing the curriculum.



Paper Proposals Submitted for MSS 2023 Annual Meeting

I have submitted two paper proposals for the upcoming annual meeting of the Midwest Sociological Society, to take place in Minneapolis, March 23 – 26, 2023. The titles of these papers are:

- "Voices of the Global South and Possible Fissures in the World System: The Missing Element of the North's Media Framing of the Ukraine War"
- "Decolonizing Classical Sociological Theory: The challenge of Teaching Classical Sociological Theory in a Postcolonial Context"

