

Northwest 5 News

Newsletter of the Northwest Five Consortium
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Spotlight on 2015.

“Progressive” is the keyword describing the first three years of the Northwest Five Consortium. **What makes the Consortium unique?** Collaborative efforts that expand the traditional boundaries of academic disciplines in ways that are creative and forward thinking. **What makes the Consortium work?** Commitment from academic leaders, faculty members, and professional staff who are dedicated to making a difference. Progress happens when the focus is on working together to achieve efficiencies that would be more challenging within a single institution.

These experiences have informed our understanding of great ways to enhance academic offerings and faculty connections. Year four of NW5C work will be dedicated to identifying the strongest intersections of focus aligned with the greatest benefits, and planning for the sustainable continuation of identified Consortium efforts. In addition, faculty mini-grants and workshops have gained exciting momentum over the years and will continue to provide innovative opportunities and benefits (see pp. 2 and 3).

Consortium members look forward to 2015’s continuing series of workshops, projects, and infrastructure connections that strengthen our campus environments.

NORTHWEST FIVE CONSORTIUM

- ◆ Lewis & Clark College
- ◆ Reed College
- ◆ University of Puget Sound
- ◆ Whitman College
- ◆ Willamette University

With the generous support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Lewis & Clark, Reed, Puget Sound, Whitman, and Willamette have formed the Northwest 5 Consortium (NW5C).

Working toward the regular sharing of expertise and resources, the mission of NW5C is to enhance the student academic experience at our five liberal arts colleges through enrichment and development of faculty as teacher-scholars.

Collaborative Inquiry projects and workshops.

Faculty scholars and professional staff will engage in several cross-campus projects during 2015

Through the financial support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the NW5C is able to provide competitively awarded mini-grant opportunities for faculty and professional staff through its Fund for Collaborative Inquiry (FCI). FCI grants support academic innovation and cross-institutional projects. Also, mini-grants are available to support thematic workshops in which participants from NW5C institutions gather for in-depth discussions of curricular, academic, or pedagogical topics of common interest. The workshops are either discipline-based or cross-disciplinary. Many initiatives utilize hybrid approaches, including workshops and other activities; all projects include representatives from two or more of the five institutions.

Each initiative advances at least one of four shared outcomes: 1) *enhance existing and develop new learning opportunities for students*; 2) *determine best practices for faculty growth and development*; 3) *improve teaching on each of the five campuses*; and 4) *expand curricular offerings through efficiencies*.

Following are the 2015 initiatives:

Bioinformatics and Genomics Workshop—Life Science and allied disciplines will benefit from shared expertise in the areas of bioinformatics and genomics. Faculty sponsors will host a “root” workshop for NW5C faculty and students with modules presented by specialists in the field. Materials from the workshop will be available to faculty for “nodal” re-use in their classes, individual student training, and future workshops. The “root and nodal” approach is successful in helping to keep scholars up-to-date in rapidly changing areas of inquiry.

Building Queer Studies and Gender Studies—Over the past couple of years, NW5C funding

has supported faculty and students representing a broad range of disciplines in identifying several pedagogical challenges and opportunities for course offerings in Gender Studies. In this initiative, faculty will seek to develop a wider range of course content and syllabi sharing. Through collaboration, faculty anticipate finding ways to expand curricular offerings to address the new and rapidly expanding field of Queer Studies.

Data Curation Workshop—Data management and curation are increasingly important components of the research process across a wide range of disciplines. The workshop organizers and an outside facilitator will bring together teams from each NW5C institution to learn and practice a model for librarians and researchers working together. Teams will consist of a faculty researcher, student research assistants, a librarian, and optionally, an information technology professional.

Experiential Learning in Classrooms of the Future & Assessing Experiential Learning—The focus of this project is on strengthening existing, and developing new, experiential learning initiatives and approaches that will benefit students at NW5C institutions. Through the identification of common challenges and shared solutions in experiential learning, faculty and academic support staff will strive to enhance student learning in non-traditional environments. The team will seek to develop a clear but flexible experiential learning assessment tool that can be used across the five campuses.

Faculty of Color Network—Building on momentum from NW5C’s first Faculty of Color Workshop, held in spring 2014, institutional organizers will establish a network for faculty of color and allies at NW5C campuses.

NW5C Steering Committee

- ◆ **Jerusha Detweiler-Bedell**, Interim Dean, Lewis & Clark
- ◆ **Gary Reiness**, Associate Dean, Lewis & Clark
- ◆ **Erik Fast**, Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations, Lewis & Clark
- ◆ **Nigel Nicholson**, Dean of the Faculty, Reed
- ◆ **Diane Gumz**, Director of Corporate, Foundation and Government Support, Reed
- ◆ **Kathy Oleson**, Professor of Psychology, Reed
- ◆ **Kristine Bartanen**, Academic Vice President and Dean, Puget Sound
- ◆ **Sunil Kukreja**, Associate Dean, Puget Sound
- ◆ **Jane Kenyon**, Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations, Puget Sound
- ◆ **Patrick Spencer**, Interim Provost and Dean of the Faculty, Whitman
- ◆ **Lisa Perfetti**, Associate Dean, Whitman
- ◆ **Rachna Sinnott**, Director of Foundation & Corporate Relations, Whitman
- ◆ **Marlene Moore**, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean, Willamette
- ◆ **Gretchen Moon**, Associate Dean, Willamette
- ◆ **Christine Shanaberger**, Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations, Willamette



The following components are included in this initiative: senior academic leadership exchanges in which virtual meetings will be held to identify a variety of best practices, development of a database and listserv, and facilitated workshop discussions.

Integrating Middle East & Arabic Studies Across the NW5C— Addressing needs that are difficult to accomplish by member institutions individually, faculty will explore concrete strategies for enhancing the Middle East curriculum by coordinating learning and research opportunities, sharing resources, and establishing an ongoing framework for cooperation. In addition, faculty will examine opportunities for the institutionalization of an Arabic language curriculum that facilitates student access across the Consortium.

Philosophy in an Inclusive Key— This project seeks to investigate and implement practical curricular changes within Philosophy Departments at NW5C institutions, with a focus on increasing diversity in the philosophy curriculum. Faculty investigators will bring together students and faculty to pool data, discuss curricular goals, develop curricular changes, and create strategies for teaching philosophy in more inclusive ways.

729 Miles of Instructional Technology: Developing a Strong, Sustainable Model for Technology Support Across the NW5C— Due to limited resources and the rapid pace of technological advancement, IT staff at small liberal arts colleges face challenges in developing

campus support. This initiative includes a summit of feature presentations, breakout sessions, site visits, and networking that will capitalize upon and enhance combined NW5C knowledge.

TEACH: Teaching Excellence Across a Consortium in Higher Education— This initiative seeks to increase the capacity for NW5C institutions to provide faculty development programming around pedagogy across a broad range of teaching and learning topics. Academic leaders at each NW5C institution will collaborate to identify specific needs and available resources, share enrichment activities, and develop workshops. Efficiencies of offerings and meaningful areas of focus will further assist pedagogical development efforts that seek ultimately to benefit all students at each campus.

fall 2014 events

NW5C Annual Conference

“**Cross-Consortium Enrichment of Faculty as Teacher-Scholars**” was the theme of September’s NW5C annual conference.

Participants examined ways of integrating teaching and research, and explored issues related to faculty development and the impact of the NW5C community. The program included focused idea-sharing and work-time dedicated to identifying potential areas for partnership and moving collaborative projects and initiatives forward.

Visual Culture Colloquium

Students and faculty from NW5C institutions gathered in October at Willamette University for a **Visual Culture Colloquium** entitled “**Convergence**.” Faculty members representing a variety of disciplines used NW5C mini-grant funds to plan and coordinate the activities.

“Convergence” represents an important theme in the contemporary scholarship on media, art and visual culture. Faculty and student scholarship and collaboration were showcased during the meeting.

AASHE 2014 conference presentation

“**Food Systems Northwest: A collaborative traveling summer course**” was presented at October’s Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) conference in Portland, OR. Bringing their innovative work to a national audience, Professors Emelie Peine (Puget Sound) and Jennifer Johns (Willamette) reflected on the experience of developing and teaching a course that involves students, faculty, and administrators from three campuses.

With support from an NW5C mini-grant, a faculty team created an experiential course to provide a cohort of students exposure at University of Puget Sound (urban food security, particularly in low-income communities); Willamette University (practices of organic production at Zena Forest and Farm); and Whitman College (eastern Washington’s commodity agriculture in the northwest food system). The course is designed to link a personal understanding of food to a broader study of the politics and science of sustainability.



NW5C Staff Update Co-ordinators!

NW5C welcomes Yvette Webber-Davis, Ph.D. as Coordinator. Following three years with Willamette University's Graduate School of Education, in September 2014 Yvette joined Coordinator Carie Faszholtz in providing oversight for daily NW5C operations.

Utilizing a job-share approach, Yvette and Carie assist the Steering Committee and liaise with campus and external contacts who are involved with NW5C-sponsored initiatives. Both have extensive experience and commitment to higher education. With eyes toward collaborative progress, they strive for vibrant outcomes within the Consortium.

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*Regional Collaboration in
Liberal Arts Education*

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