**Launching the GLCA Digital Liberal Arts Initiative by W. Pannapacker**

The Digital Liberal Arts (DLA) Initiative is a major component of GLCA’s $2.5M Expanding Collaboration Initiative, launched in 2013, and generously supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The purpose of the DLA initiative is to cultivate digitally-enabled or enhanced cross-institutional collaborations among the thirteen member colleges of the GLCA, as well as the 14 international institutions that participate with GLCA colleges in the Global Liberal Arts Alliance. Some projects in this program could ultimately include external partnerships with research universities and other regional consortia.

It is called the Digital Liberal Arts, rather than the more commonly used term, “Digital Humanities,” because the initiative is intended to be inclusive of a wider range of disciplines. It is guided, most of all, by our complementary missions as liberal arts colleges strongly dedicated to teaching and service—the development of students as whole persons—as well as to scholarly research and creative production.

During the first year of the grant, I travelled with Gregory Wegner, Director of Program Development, and Program Officer Sumita Furlong, on an “Odyssey of GLCA Colleges”; attending luncheons, explaining the initiatives, speaking with interested individuals, and conducting what GLCA calls a “sounding of interest.” Essentially, getting to know as many faculty and instructional staff members as possible, building a database of potential collaborators, and looking for ways to bring those colleagues into conversation with one another with the goal of producing fundable grant proposals. By the conclusion of the extended, wintry road trip of more than 1,000 miles, nearly 200 faculty members expressed an interest in the Digital Liberal Arts initiative, and I am sure there are many that we have not yet met.

Among the faculty, the basis for their interest in DLA were varied, and usually defined more by discipline than by prior engagement with the digital per se; however, many librarians and instructional technologists—and not a few administrators—expressed enthusiasm for the initiative as a means of fostering innovation in teaching and building connections between different kinds of college professionals. There is an emerging consensus that traditional teaching and research will be expanded to include more collaborative work and project building – not just in the sciences but in the non-
quantitative fields as well. Many also believe that the campus library will become a crossroads and support center for that kind of activity, even as it extends, increasingly, beyond the brick-and-mortar boundaries of our institutions.

The first major event of the DLA Initiative was the convening of a three-day meeting in Ann Arbor at the end of May. It was attended by 90 faculty and staff members representing all of the GLCA colleges, as well as by consulting representatives from digital studies programs and projects at the College of Wooster, Davidson, Denison, Grinnell, Hamilton, Hope, Kenyon, Mount Holyoke, Oberlin, Vassar, Lawrence Technological University and The Philadelphia Center. Roundtable discussions took place on “Defining the Digital Liberal Arts” and “Digital Project Building,” and keynote presentations were made by Janet Thomas Simons, co-director of the Digital Humanities Initiative at Hamilton and Gabriele Dillmann, the Robertson Endowed Professor of German at Denison. In a series of structured events over the course of the meeting—described by Ric Sheffield, Professor of Legal Studies and Sociology at Kenyon, as “academic speed-dating”—the participants, consultants, and GLCA program officers brainstormed ideas for collaborative projects, ultimately producing more than a dozen draft proposals, which they announced in the last session of the meeting.

Since the meeting in Ann Arbor, the number of exploratory proposals has grown to more than twenty, with collaborators from nearly all of the GLCA colleges and some external partners. Many of those project teams already have held meetings to plan and have formally submitted proposals, some of which have been funded. For the larger-scale projects, it generally has been an iterative process of conversation, revision, and planning for phased implementation. Projects in the digital liberal arts often develop in unforeseen directions as the proposers become more engaged with technology, discover new tools and resources, and find new possibilities for collaboration. The DLA review process is intended to support that kind of longer-term flexibility.

One particularly notable outcome of the Ann Arbor meeting—and several adjacent convenings—was the initial planning of a national workshop and conference for the digital liberal arts that is being directed by Janet Thomas Simons and Mark Christel, director of libraries at Wooster; it will take place next summer (July 26-August 2) at Hamilton College in New York and will welcome, with GLCA support, faculty and instructional staff who are looking to develop their digital skills and engagement with the wider DLA community. A formal announcement and registration site will be available soon. GLCA is exploring digitally enabled partnerships on the international level with the Global Liberal Arts Alliance (GLAA), potentially including initial partners at Al Akhawayn University in Morocco and the American University in Beirut.

Many DLA project teams have expressed interest in the creation of hybrid courses, sometimes disciplinary, sometimes cross-disciplinary, that could be taught across multiple institutions, giving us a deeper bench of expertise and possibilities for collegial partnerships. A substantial gathering to explore a consortial “DLA 101” curriculum took place at the Network Detroit and Great Lakes THATCamp conferences sponsored by Lawrence Technological University at the end of September. Another large gathering will take place at Kenyon College in October to explore projects and strategies for digital storytelling and oral history. Supporters of the proposed Digital Scholars Program and I will meet at The Philadelphia Center in November just ahead of the second convening of the digitally-inflected Institute...
for Collaborative Urban Research. Other groups have been developing proposals for a badging system for digital skills, a platform for sharing project information and metadata, and a textual analysis toolkit. There are several projects that could be described as public scholarship: a collaborative online journal of literary translation, a regional environmental dashboard, multidisciplinary cultural explorations in India, East Asia, and Mexico, and a “Digital Great Lakes” project that has been developed, in the first instance, by the Mellon Scholars of Hope College.

Ideas from individuals and collaborative teams are welcome at any time. Typically, individuals will be supported by GLCA in their search for potential collaborators, and—once a cross-institutional team is established (often starting with two)—there will be a series of email exchanges and conference calls or Google Hangouts, concurrent with the drafting of a proposal, often as a collaborative document. Sometimes participants will arrange a planning meeting with GLCA support at a convenient location. GLCA reviews the formal proposals it receives for DLA and Expanding Collaboration Initiative projects on a rolling basis.

The guidelines for preparing and submitting proposals can be found on the GLCA web site. Ongoing announcements about the DLA initiative can be followed on Twitter @DLAGLCA. Inquiries may be directed to Pannapacker@GLCA.org or Wegner@GLCA.org.

William Pannapacker of Hope College is Faculty Director of the GLCA’s Digital Liberal Arts Initiative.

Expanding Collaboration Initiative—A Neuroscience Faculty-Student Research Collaboration

A neuroscience research project involving faculty members of five GLCA member colleges took place in the summer of 2014. Entitled “Summer Teaching, Learning and Professional Development Seminars for Neuroscience Faculty and their Research Students,” the project was funded in part by the GLCA Expanding Collaboration Initiative to support the faculty members’ participation; funding for students was provided by other sources including institutional contributions and grants from NSF and HHMI.

This project was a collaboration involving professors of psychology and biology drawn together by a common interest in neuroscience. Faculty members and their students traveled together in the summer of 2014 to the home colleges of each of the participating faculty members. At each setting the faculty-student teams visited the lab and observed a demonstration by faculty members of the college hosting the visit.

For students and faculty alike, the program made possible a significant enhancement of perspective, suggesting the range of questions it is possible to ask and pursue in the study of neuroscience.

This project yielded rich opportunities for conversation and reflection with peers from other GLCA institutions.

For students, the opportunity to meet and work with an extended community of interest in neuroscience across GLCA’s member colleges provided a formative experience of participation as members of a scientific community.
The project took place over eight weeks through the summer of 2014. Reflecting on the final convening in which students presented their research demonstrations, Amy Jo Stavnezer, one of the project leaders, wrote:

“Let me tell you what a wonderful experience this summer seminar series has been. The enthusiasm by all participants was just incredible. The students bonded immediately. The work and presentations of most students were of a similar caliber to any regional conference that I have attended. And the faculty have truly enjoyed the opportunity to meet, talk and collaborate as well. We all learned a ton from one another. We have traded equipment and expertise, and have plans to use each other’s knowledge this coming semester.” Amy Jo Stavnezer, Wooster, and Jennifer Yates, Ohio Wesleyan, were faculty leaders of this project, which was supported by the GLCA Expanding Collaboration Initiative. In the time since the completion of this summer’s program, Stavnezer and Yates have written a scholarly article describing the project, which has been accepted for publication by the online Journal of Undergraduate Neuroscience Education in its Fall issue.

Other faculty participants in the research program were Christian Fink (Ohio Wesleyan), Grit Herzmann (Wooster), Hewlet McFarlane (Kenyon), Tracy Paine and Siobhan Robinson (Oberlin) and Robert Rosenberg (Earlham).
Faculty-Student Research at the Library of Congress  cont’d


A collaborative effort of the Library of Congress and the GLCA, this program offers the unique opportunity for undergraduates to conduct research in the world’s premier research library, with the oversight of their faculty mentors and the assistance of a Library of Congress research specialist for each team. This intensive engagement offers a research experience more often associated with senior scholars or advanced graduate students than with undergraduates of liberal arts colleges.

Halls of Knowledge

The Library of Congress is the world’s largest research library and the largest that has ever existed in human history. It contains 158 million objects in multiple formats, including 24 million books. It collects books written in 500 languages; 40 percent of its volumes are in English. The Library has 20 reading rooms in three buildings, with some 600 miles of bookshelves in its Capitol Hill location.

The early stage of the teams’ research process consisted of an orientation to the research tools and strategies for locating information in the Library’s general holdings as well as several special collections the teams will consult.

On the closing day, the three teams convene, and each member presents a first research briefing to the other participants in the program. Following these initial research briefings, each team commits to remain in contact with the others by posting a research update to a program blog site on three occasions in the 2014-15 academic year: in late October, early February, and early April. These blog postings and commentaries help ensure that the dialogue begun within and among the three research teams on site will continue through the ensuing academic year.

GLCA has issued a Request for Proposals from faculty of GLCA and the Global Alliance member colleges for the GLCA-Library of Congress Faculty-Student Research Program of 2015. The request for proposals is accessible at this link from the GLCA web site. Faculty proposals will be due February 6, 2015 and decisions announced by March 5, 2015.

For more information on the GLCA-Library of Congress Faculty-Student Research Program see the GLCA web site: or contact Gregory Wegner at GLCA: wegner@glca.org.

Boston Summer Seminar Encourages Faculty-Student Research

The GLCA has created a new program that invites proposals from faculty-student teams to engage in collaborative research, drawing on the resources of several major archival institutions in Boston, Massachusetts, for three weeks in June 2015.

Developed in conjunction with Natalie Dykstra, English, at Hope College, the GLCA Boston Summer Seminar is sponsored by GLCA’s Expanding Collaboration Initiative and hosted by the Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS). The seminar program will bring together three to five faculty members from GLCA colleges, each with a team of two to four undergraduate students, for three weeks of intensive primary
source research in Boston archives. The 2015 partner institutions are the MHS; the Schlesinger Library at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study (Harvard University); the Center for History of Medicine at the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine (Harvard University); and Northeastern University’s Archives & Special Collections.

Faculty participants will submit research proposals on a broad theme, such as “Gender and the Civil War,” “Nineteenth-century Food Culture,” or “Personal Narratives of WWI.” Teams from a wide range of humanities disciplines are encouraged to apply; all projects centered on primary source research will be considered. Each seminar participant will be paired with a librarian or archivist from one of the partner institutions who will provide on-site support and expertise prior to, during, and after the residency period.

The Seminar Director for this program is Natalie Dykstra. She has taught for the last fourteen years and is also a biographer. Clover Adams: A Gilded and Heartbreaking Life, her biography of the photographer and wife of the historian Henry Adams, was published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in 2012 (nataliedykstra.com). The idea for this seminar came about through her research in Boston archives, principally at the MHS, where the Adams family papers are located. Working with unpublished primary sources, which had not been the main focus of her doctoral work in American Studies, changed the course of her writing and teaching career. Recounting the impact of her own experience, she says, “Being able to see first-hand the letters exchanged, photographs taken, albums of ephemera, account books, and scraps of papers long kept in desk drawers made the past vastly more present. It helped me to discover aspects of people and events in ways that I might never have understood otherwise. I hope this program will allow other faculty and students to have a similar experience – and to learn together what the past can teach.”

The seminar, to be held June 1 – 18, 2015, will center on primary source research, requiring participants to spend fourteen days working in the archive. In addition, the program will include Tuesday and Thursday evening group meetings for guest lectures and discussions, as well as a day-one orientation and a closing celebration when participants will present their work. Students and faculty members will also have scheduled individual meetings with archivists and with the coordinator of the seminar.

GLCA in the News

This summer, GLCA was featured in two prestigious higher education journals.

From Inside Higher Ed, please check out the article, “Teaching with Tech Across Borders” which discusses the GLCA Global Course Connections project managed by GLCA Senior Program Officer, Joyce Budai. Click here to read the article.

In addition, Times of Higher Education published an article, “At the Heart of the Higher Education Debate” about digital literacy. The article features Hope College’s Bill Pannapacker and GLCA’s Greg Wegner. Click here to read the article.
Albion:  U.S. News Counts Albion Among the top 100 National Liberal Arts Colleges

While student and alumni successes are the real proof of the quality of an Albion College education, the annual rankings and lists issued by a variety of outlets provide further evidence.

This year is no exception, as Albion is featured among the top 100 national liberal arts colleges (at No. 99) in the latest U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges ranking, recently released. The highly scrutinized publication also places Albion at No. 4 for Best Colleges for Veterans in the national liberal arts college category, and includes the College in its “A-Plus Schools for B Students” list. Read the full story here.

Denison: Recognized for Outstanding Economic Diversity

The New York Times has released a new ranking of America’s “Most Economically Diverse Top Colleges,” and Denison is included among the leaders.

Denison is ranked at No. 11 in the list of the nation’s top colleges and universities, just behind such schools as Harvard (No. 5) and Columbia (No. 7), and just ahead of Stanford, Brown and Williams (all tied at No. 16). Also included on the Times’ list of the top 100 schools are Ivy League colleges Penn (No. 27), Dartmouth (No. 28), Cornell (No. 32), Princeton (No. 34), and Yale (No. 41). Vassar led the ranking of the top 100 at No. 1, and Kenyon is the only other Ohio school on the list, ranked at No. 80. Read the full story here.

DePauw: Shares Distinction of Being USA’s Top Small College Contributing Alumni Talent to Teach For America

DePauw University and Spelman College are the top small colleges in the United States for graduates participating in Teach For America this year. The organization announced today that DePauw and Spelman each have 20 graduates in TFA's 2014 corps.

Corps members are top college graduates and professionals who commit to teach in urban and rural public schools and become lifelong leaders in expanding educational opportunity.

Among large schools, the University of Michigan contributed the greatest number of alumni to the corps, with 73 graduates beginning their Teach For America commitment this fall. Howard University topped medium-sized schools, contributing 40 alumni. DePauw is consistently among the nation's top contributors to TFA and has had almost 170 alumni serve as corps members since the program's inception in 1990. Click here to read the full article.
Earlham: New $22M Building Showcases Importance of the Arts

Earlham College is making a bold statement about its commitment to the arts. This fall, the College opened the doors to the $22 million Center for Visual and Performing Arts, a 47,200-square-foot complex that is home to the Music, Theatre Arts and Art departments.

“The building increases the profile and visibility of the arts at Earlham,” says Bill Culverhouse, Music. Click here for the full article.

Kalamazoo: K-Plan expands to certain GLCA Schools

Beginning in the fall of 2015, Kalamazoo Public Schools (KPS) students may use the Kalamazoo Promise Scholarship to attend GLCA member colleges: Albion, Hope, and Kalamazoo, as well as other private colleges that are members of the Michigan Colleges Alliance (MCA). The news was announced at a press conference at Kalamazoo sponsored by the Kalamazoo Promise and the MCA. The Promise was launched in 2005 and provides a four-year scholarship to KPS graduates who reside in the district and attend KPS through high school. The addition of the 15 MCA member institutions to the 43 Michigan public colleges and universities increases the number of Promise eligible schools to 58 throughout the state. For KPS students who enroll at Albion, Hope, K and other MCA schools, the tuition and fees will be fully and jointly funded by the Kalamazoo Promise and the MCA member institution. The Kalamazoo Promise will fund at the level of the undergraduate average tuition and fees for the College of Literature, Science, and Arts at the University of Michigan. The MCA member institution will cover any difference between that amount and the amount of its yearly tuition and fees.

Kenyon: Isolating Ebola

The latest outbreak of the Ebola virus has infected more than 1,700 people and claimed the lives of nearly 1,000 of them. Since March, the disease — which has no known cure — jumped borders from Guinea to Sierra Leone, Liberia and, most recently, Nigeria. While contracting the disease requires direct contact with an infected person, fears of a worldwide epidemic are spreading.

Joan Slonczewski, Biology, teaches about Ebola in her virology class. She is also the co-author of Microbiology: An Evolving Science, a textbook for science majors that includes a section on the Ebola virus. She is working on a similar book for allied health majors called Microbiology: The Human Experience that covers such topics as how diseases, including Ebola, are transmitted. Click here to read more and see questions and answers about the disease from Slonczewski.

Wabash: Leaders Speak of Value of Liberal Arts

Liberal arts education is alive and needed now more than ever before. That was the resounding sentiment when more than 100 college presidents, administrators, foundation leaders, and representatives from business, law, medicine, and politics...
Wooster: Mastodon Mystery Intrigues Young Researchers

Scattered remains of an ancient mastodon some 50 minutes west of campus have young researchers and their faculty mentors from The College of Wooster buzzing.

The long-extinct species, which roamed this part of Ohio between 12,000-15,000 years ago, is similar in size and stature to the elephant. Morrow County farmer Clint Walker discovered the remains while digging a trench on his property.

“When he saw the first item, he knew it was significant,” said Nick Kardulias, Sociology, Anthropology, and Archaeology. “He notified the Ohio Historical Society and several others, including a colleague of ours, Nigel Brush, who heads an archaeological consortium in Ashland, Columbus, and Wooster.” Read more about it here.

Antioch: Breaks Ground on New Solar Farm

Antioch College recently broke ground on a 1+ Megawatt solar farm, marking a major milestone on its path to carbon neutrality. The College plans to hold an official ribbon-cutting ceremony for the project later this fall.

The solar farm—a collaboration between Antioch College, Solar Power and Light (SP&L), and SolarCity, the nation’s largest solar service provider—will include approximately 3,300 solar panels, built on five acres of College property adjacent to the Antioch Farm. Under the agreement, SP&L will build and maintain the solar array on College property under contract with SolarCity, while SolarCity alone will finance and own the installation, selling the generated power to Antioch. The 1.2 million kilowatt hours per year of solar generation capacity are expected to completely offset the electrical consumption of the College’s $8.8 million central geothermal plant, currently under construction. A brief ribbon cutting for the event is scheduled for October 10, 2014 at 4:00 pm. Click here to read more.

Oberlin: Hayes named Executive Director of the Oberlin Project

As the new executive director of the Oberlin Project, Sean Hayes is shepherding an ambitious effort that aims to transform the local economy. The long-term goals of the Oberlin Project—reducing the city’s greenhouse gas emissions 50 percent by 2015; developing a local food hub that can meet 70 percent of the community’s consumption; and creating one of the first climate-positive cities in America, becoming climate positive by 2050, to name a few—could be perceived as lofty, but Hayes sees all of these goals as attainable. Read the full article here.
Faculty News

Allegheny: Professor Matthew Venesky’s Work Featured as Cover Story in Top Science Publication.

One of the leading international science journals, Nature, recently featured the research of Matthew D. Venesky, Biology, at Allegheny College, and his colleagues on vaccinating frogs against a harmful fungus. The paper appeared as the cover story and was published July 9, 2014. To read the full article, click here.

Earlham: Professor’s book of conversations with Muslims emphasizes peace-building, truth-telling.

The conversations of Michael Birkel, Religion, with 25 leading Muslims is the subject of a new popular book. Qur’an in Conversation (Baylor University Press, 2014) has garnered a lot of attention with interviews with CBS and other international newscasters. Publishers Weekly called it, “groundbreaking.” Not only that, but Birkel’s book seems to be meeting a great need in the Muslim community.

“This book creates an occasion when Muslim voices speak for themselves,” Birkel says. “It offers an alternative to the prevailing negative perspective in the media for those interested in the Muslim community.” Click here to read the full article.

Hope: Book Examines Life for Amputees in Post-War Sierra Leone.

The civil war in Sierra Leone has been over for more than a decade, but changes are needed if thousands of survivors, and the nation itself, are to move beyond the conflict, according to a new book by Dr. Ernest Cole, English, of Hope College.

Cole, who was born, raised and began his teaching career in Sierra Leone, explores the practice and aftermath of punitive amputation during the 1991-2002 war in “Theorizing the Disfigured Body: Mutilation, Amputation, and Disability Culture in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone,” published earlier this year by Africa World Press of Trenton, New Jersey. Read more here.

OWU: Book Examines ‘Ovid, Metamorphoses X’.

Lee Fratantuono, Classics, is publishing his fifth book, “Ovid, Metamorphoses X,” a guide to and examination of the epic-style, narrative poem that Fratantuono considers “one of the great literary and artistic monuments of Augustan Rome.”

Bloomsbury Academic will publish Fratantuono’s book in paperback in the United Kingdom and electronically in December 2014 and in paperback in the United States in February 2015. Read about it here.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

2014
STUDENTS OF COLOR LEADERSHIP
CONFERENCE

2014 GLCA Students of Color Leadership Conference (SOCLC)

DePauw University

"Who am I? Navigating the Depths of Intersectionality
as a Student Leader and Activist"

November 7-9, 2014

Click here to register and for additional information.

Please note: Conference is limited to GLCA Colleges.

CICEE Members at the SOCLC at Kalamazoo College in 2012
Members of the Earlham College team outside the Jefferson Building of the Library of Congress.


GLCA Staff 2014-2015

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GLCA Calendar 2014

October 10-12  GLCA Academic Leadership Innovation  Ann Arbor, MI
November 10-12  Alliance Globalization Studies Meeting  Paris, France
November 7-9  Students of Color Leadership Conference  DePauw
November 8  CICEE Meeting  DePauw
November 17-18  Deans’ Council Meeting  DePauw
December 9-10  Sexual Respect Summit  Columbus, OH
December 10  Board of Directors Meeting  Columbus, OH