**14th Annual Niagara University International Conference on Teaching & Learning**

**Enhancing Active, Integrative Learning Through Learner-Centered Teaching and SoTL**

January 7-8, 2015  
Niagara University

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**CONFERENCE OVERVIEW**

**Wednesday, January 7**

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<td>1:30 - 3:30</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<td>Concurrent sessions I</td>
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<td>2:30 - 3:30</td>
<td>Reception and poster session</td>
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<td>3:30 - 5:00</td>
<td>Keynote Address: Actively Integrating “Inspired College Teaching” in the SoTL Environment</td>
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<td>9:00 - 10:00</td>
<td>Plenary Session I: Application and Obstacles for Active Learning</td>
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<td>-Dr. Maryellen Weimer</td>
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<td>10:15 - 11:00</td>
<td>Concurrent Sessions II</td>
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<td>Plenary Session II: Facilitating Meaningful Classroom Interaction in College</td>
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**Keynote Speaker**

Dr. Maryellen Weimer, Penn State Professor Emeritus of Teaching and Learning, received her Ph.D. in Speech Communication from Penn State. For the next ten years she directed Penn State’s Instructional Development Program. Before returning to full time teaching, Dr. Weimer was the Associate Director of the National Center on Postsecondary Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, a part of the Center for the Study of Higher Education at Penn where she was a senior research associate. During her career at Penn State she taught a variety of courses to business students and in 2005 won Penn State’s Milton Eisenhower award for distinguished teaching. Dr. Weimer has numerous publications including articles in referred journals, book chapters, book reviews, and service on the editorial boards of journals. She has consulted with over 600 colleges and universities on instructional issues.
Session 1A: St. Vincent’s Hall, #301
Faculty Attitudes and Behaviors Towards Bain’s Hallmarks of the Best College Teachers
Peter Butera, Niagara University
Paul Schupp, Niagara University
This research project is a follow up to a survey designed by seven faculty members from the colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, and Education who were part of a Faculty Learning Community during the 2013-2014 academic year. In April 2014, the survey was disseminated to all faculty members teaching courses at Niagara University. The study’s purpose was to examine the degree to which faculty members view their own teaching and their students’ learning relative to the principles that Bain (2004) identified has hallmarks of the Best College Teachers. The study evaluated the degree to which faculty shared the attitudes and behaviors of Bain’s Best College Teachers, even if they experienced barriers and have not yet mastered all of the latter’s practices. To our knowledge, the study is the first attempt to operationalize Bain’s influential, largely descriptive treatment of the Best College Teachers and empirically examine the prevalence of Bain’s hallmarks of teaching excellence at a Catholic and Vincentian liberal arts university in Western New York. The survey was constructed around six broad questions: (1) what do our teachers know and understand, (2) how do they prepare to teach, (3) what do they expect of their students, (4) what do they do when they teach, (5) how do they treat students, and (6) how do they check their progress and evaluate teaching and learning? Faculty respondents (n=109) were diverse in their fields, rank, and years of experience. Faculty responses to many of these questions were consistent with the hallmarks of the Best College Teachers. Implications for future research and applications will be discussed, including ways in which the survey or a comparable instrument can be utilized at other institutions.

Session 1B: St. Vincent’s Hall, #306
Readability of math content and usability of learning environment
Lisa Casper, University at Buffalo
Jeanne Myers, University at Buffalo
Chris Yuen, University at Buffalo
Past research often focuses math knowledge as a gestalt, but some (e.g., Fleck, 1997) has taxonomized knowledge into two categories: authentic (formal and instrumental) and contingent (informal, tacit, and cultural). This methods paper juxtaposes the accessibilities of authentic and contingent knowledge by examining readability of content materials and usability of the learning environment respectively. One aims to address the interface of the two with a goal of fostering authentic over contingent learning. Readability. Authentic knowledge is defined as content that can be transferred from one learning environment and another. A topic will be chosen and math text passages will be reviewed to assess the readability of these texts. The criteria include review of texts using multiple readability formulas/tools, providing content analyses of sample texts and explore the impact of readability on learning engagement. Usability. The usability of learning environment refers to the efficiency of navigation, ease of use in finding information, and interaction with the learning materials (Goto and Cotler, 2002, and Wood, 1998). Users will interact with two simulated courses and complete usability ratings with a perception survey to investigate the impact of course design on them. The goal of this phase is to inform course design to increase focus and time spent on authentic learning activities, and to increase learners’ motivation to stay on course. This study aims to gain an understanding of the assumptions
about what constitutes learning. As a cultural presupposition, learning has been perceived as a gestalt event rather a polyphony of intertwining of authentic knowledge for skill development and contingent knowledge to operationalize the learning process in specific contexts. Audience will be engaged in a discussion of the design of the research as well as the potential models to be developed as a result.

**Session 1C: St. Vincent’s Hall, #307**

**Active Learning in the Classroom Using Student Response Systems**

*Emma Bojinova, Canisius College*

*James Oigara, Canisius College*

Technology is becoming a vital component of the modern classroom and twenty-first-century learners need twenty-first-century tools to enhance their learning. Student Response Systems (SRSs), also known as Personal Response Systems or clickers, cater exactly to this need, and represent some of the best and newest educational technologies available today. SRSs integration in the classroom offers an opportunity of engaging students, as well as to conduct formative and summative assessments of student learning. This can improve student accountability, attendance, and class performance. Two approaches were incorporated in the study – the Dufresne and Mazur sequence for in-class discussions. According to the first approach students answered a question and a pie chart displayed the correct answer. A class-wide discussion was initiated to explain the reasons for this response. With the Mazur sequence, the pie chart revealed only the distribution of class responses. Students were given another chance to answer the question after a short peer discussion. In many instances the second voting improved significantly the class ability to select the correct answer. The findings of our study suggest that the use of SMART clickers had a positive impact on student achievement and perceived satisfaction. Our results show that using SRSs in the classroom matters in improving active learning, class participation, and student academic performance. Clicker questions enhanced student-student and student-instructor interactions during class. Students felt that using SRSs created an environment where everyone in class had an opportunity to think through and answer each question that was raised by the instructors during clicker sessions. Overall, students who used SMART clickers as part of their course instruction received 4.7% higher course grades on average compared to the students in the non-clicker class when controlling for student abilities and characteristics. Audience will be engaged through an interactive quiz using personal response systems and a short discussion will follow.

**Session 1D: St. Vincent’s Hall, #311**

**How Four Unsung Faculty Members are Harnessing Competitive Activities to Excite and Motivate Their Students**

*Carol Tutzauer, University at Buffalo*

Often, we hear about the negatives of competition: students who become paralyzed due to fear of failure, shortcuts taken that undermine learning solely to attain the ultimate prize. But the truth is, put students into a competitive situation and they embrace it. Not all competition leads to positive outcomes. However, there are guidelines for harnessing competition to effectively motivate students. In our interactions and consultations with faculty, we have uncovered several innovative applications of competition in courses that have proved highly effective in engaging students and bringing out their best. This workshop will review four case studies, and invite attendees to analyze and reflect on whether these competitive activities actually furthered learning or fell short, and why. The four innovations to be addressed include: (1) Borrowing The Amazing Race format to send students out to discover and observe their world (2) Tournament competitions that require students to develop strategies based on their understanding of the intricacies of the subject matter (3) Engaging groups to accumulate points that can be “cashed in” for preferences going forward in the course (4) In-class, peer-judged debates where students are challenged to convince their peers of their position on a topic of importance. The workshop will ask attendees to look critically at the pros and cons of these approaches, with the goal of suggesting constructive ways to engage students through a little bit of competition.
Session 1E: St. Vincent’s Hall, #312
The Benefit of Peer Observations and Student Perceptions in Faculty Development
Robyn Goacher, Niagara University
Barbara Iannarelli, Niagara University
Cynthia Kline, Educational Consultant
Paul Vermette, Niagara University

Session attendees will enjoy a casual discussion with the “presenters” about the inspirations found among a group of diverse individuals who came together in Fall 2014 with the goal of mutually improved teaching in higher education. The diversity of our group (in discipline, age, experience, gender, course format (online/in-person), and course level (undergraduate/graduate)) triggered remarkably valuable insights during observations of one-another’s teaching. We were also surprised by the number of similarities we identified in the challenges faced by academics despite such diversity. In addition to our peer observations and subsequent reflection, each of the university instructors in our group also implemented student perception surveys in at least one of their recent classes. These surveys provided objective data of how our students viewed our instruction. We would like to discuss how these surveys informed the continued development of our teaching, as well as the history of developing effective and informative student perception surveys.

Session 1F: St. Vincent’s Hall, #315
Active Learning in the Online Classroom: It Works!
Danyelle Moore, Niagara University

There is a concern that active learning is lost when moved to the virtual world. This does not have to be the case. When assignments are planned and active learning is integrated as a key part of the class the online classroom can be just as engaging (or more so) than the face-to-face classroom. This session will model 5 strategies that promote student-student, student-instructor, and student-content interaction and presence. The participants will experience at least one strategy in the face-to-face setting and then explore how it adapts to the virtual classroom. Many of the strategies have been incorporated into a public speaking course taught online. The other strategies have been successfully employed in other content areas.

Guided Inquiry Learning in the Physical Chemistry Laboratory: Implementation of the POGIL-PCL Model at Buffalo State College
Maria Pacheco, Buffalo State College

The NSF-funded POGIL-PCL project implements the principles of Process Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL) to improve student learning in the physical chemistry laboratory (PCL) course. The POGIL framework has been used to develop inquiry-based physical chemistry experiments that emphasize modeling of both macroscopic and molecular chemical phenomena as well as experimental design and data analysis. In each experiment students follow two or more learning cycles and work as a class to make predictions, select the appropriate parameters to vary or compare, carry out a general protocol, and analyze their results. In this presentation we will discuss the utilization of some of the experiments developed by the POGIL-PCL project (specifically in the areas of kinetics and quantum mechanics/spectroscopy) in the second semester physical chemistry laboratory course at Buffalo State College. The authors gratefully acknowledge the support of the NSF.
Daemen TEC Lab: Classroom Design to Foster Learning & Collaboration through Technology
Mimi Steadman, Daemen College
Kelly Duran, Daemen College
Mike Berta, Daemen College
The new TEC (Technology Enhanced Collaboration) Lab at Daemen College is a joint Project of Daemen’s Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning and the Office of Information Technology, made possible by a US Department of Education Title III Grant. The design team visited local vendors, other colleges’ labs and classrooms, and consulted with faculty and students about their preferences for various features and layouts. The TEC Lab features five six-person tables with a laptop computer for each student and a large projection monitor at each table to enhance teamwork and collaboration. The technology uses simple interfaces so that faculty can focus on teaching students rather than on managing the instructional technology. At the touch of a button, faculty members can project work from students’ individual screens to a large monitor at each table, or to the front of the room. In this poster session, we will showcase photos of the TEC Lab, discuss the design process, and share the results of a survey of faculty and student users of this innovative space.

How a Non-Techie Used Google to Enhance Student Learning During Tutor Training
Lindsay R. Masters, Daemen College
Carol McPhillips, Daemen College
Daemen College was recently awarded a Title III five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education Strengthening Institutions Program. This past summer a grant-funded project was completed that redesigned the pre-existing training program for student tutors. It transformed the lecture/print-only based training materials into a hybrid approach that incorporates online components (e.g. modules, videos) and interactive exercises (e.g. role playing, group/partner activities). New online tracking methods allow for assessment of new coach understanding and utilization of the material presented during in-person training sessions. This poster presentation will exhibit the ways in which the training program has been enhanced through the use of free Google technology tools such as Slideshows, Forms, Spreadsheets, and Calendar.

Thematic Instruction for Adult Basic Education Highlighting Two Generation Literacy
Lisa Casper, University at Buffalo
This poster will highlight the use of thematic instructional design method within Adult Basic Education classes to facilitate the development of two generation literacy. Research has shown that the use of thematic instruction is highly beneficial to adult learners; however it also provides the learners the chance to impact the literacy development within their family structure. This poster will demonstrate how to select and develop themes; provide examples of instructional activities, and the creation of family literacy extensions.

Using TitanPad for Collaborative Learning to Support Teacher Candidates’ Teaching and Learning
Camille M. Pontrello, Canisius College
In teacher education, methods courses particularly, are intensive in nature and give rise to many challenges for both teacher educators and teacher candidates. These courses are packed with pedagogical content knowledge to ultimately be recognized and applied in their classroom field experiences. In view of the demands placed on preparing teacher candidates, the commitment of teacher educators to deliver rich experiences, to enhance student learning, and model best practice is ongoing. While on campus, teacher educators look for innovative ways enhance learning by providing opportunities for collaboration. Teacher educators can utilize collaborative, document sharing technology to support these essential experiences. Contemporary teacher candidates’ requirements are more demanding than ever and they are expected to actively participate in the development of their professional knowledge base as well as becoming integral, functioning members of the school communities in which they grow and learn. The challenge of “helping preservice teachers link new knowledge learned through coursework to instructional practice during field experiences” is daunting (p. 269). The purpose of this study was to investigate if teacher candidates’ use of Titan Pad, an online collaborative writing space, enhanced their learning of literacy development, facilitated engagement, and promoted communication.
Participants were undergraduate students enrolled in a 6-credit methods course developing literacy learning for teaching elementary level students. During their class time on campus, teacher candidates were invited to participate in the use of TitanPad, along with their professor and it was projected on the screen in the front of the classroom. Teacher candidates described experiences using TitanPad as beneficial in sharing pedagogical information and collaboration for enhanced learning while supporting engagement. The results of this investigation suggest that the using TitanPad technology with teacher candidates may be a promising practice for teacher educators to consider in literacy methods courses. At this concurrent session, audience participants will be invited to join TitanPad an participate in an authentic demonstration.

Reducing the amount of feedback to improve student learning
Vince Rinaldo, Niagara University
Mark Gallo, Niagara University

Providing students with feedback is an integral part of teaching, however, like praise, it has recently come under scrutiny with respect to how much feedback is appropriate and how much is too much. As the ability to self-assess is integral to the development of critical thinking, students must be engaged in the learning process. The focus of this presentation is on the application of selective feedback as both a motivator and method of instruction to enhance the quality of student learning. Two graduate classes in research and statistics, one of which was taught face-to-face through a cohort design and one online and two undergraduate science classes were involved. Students in the graduate classes were required to complete weekly journal responses. These were based on constructivism from a Piagetian perspective focusing on the student as the individual making meaning of the materials. The only other person able to view the journal was the instructor. That being said, because this was about the student’s own learning, feedback on journals was not provided. The reason for this was that if it were, the purpose would shift from what the student thinks, to what the student thinks the instructor wants in the form of a response. Students were told that although direct feedback was not provided, journals provide insight into how students are thinking and about what they are thinking. In addition, students were also required to complete weekly discussions. The discussion board is based on social constructivism which provides the opportunity for students to enhance their learning by interacting with others as they learn. In responding to the questions posted and in reading the responses of others, students were provided with a variety of perspectives which enabled them to engage in meaningful conversation focused on the readings. Once again, feedback was not provided as the focus needed to be on group sharing for the purpose of learning rather than on instruction. Weekly quizzes on the reading material were completed and students were provided with immediate feedback. Finally, three major assignments were required each of which provided detailed feedback for the student within one week of submission. Undergraduate students were provided optional learning assignments which they could complete to enhance their learning experiences. Unless they specifically requested it, feedback was not provided. The focus of this exercise was to examine the motivation of students to master the material and to take advantage of additional opportunities to work through concepts with which they may have struggled. This poster session will provide a detailed analysis of the data collected in each of the four classes and is meant to act as a guide to engage participants in discussion about the ways in which they may provide feedback to students and the benefits perceived or otherwise of their practice.
PLENARY SESSION I
THURSDAY 9:00-10:00 AM

Application and Obstacles for Active Learning
*Fourth Floor Amphitheatre, St. Vincent’s Hall*
*Speaker: Dr. Maryellen Weimer*

CONCURRENT SESSIONS II
THURSDAY 10:15 - 11:00 AM

Session 2A: St. Vincent’s Hall, #306
Bringing it all together: “Argumentation and Advocacy” as a cornerstone course in General Education
*Carol Tutzauer, University at Buffalo*
*Frank Tutzauer, University at Buffalo*
The predominant model for General Education continues to be a smorgasbord of choices: One from column A to fulfill Learning Outcomes 1 and 2; one from column B to fulfill Learning Outcomes 3, 4, & 5; a sequence of 2 courses from column C to provide depth and fulfill yet another Learning Outcome. The problem remains: Too often, students just don’t find General Education courses relevant or engaging. And those “core” courses that are supposed to develop essential skills continue to fall short. No General Education learning outcomes loom larger than these: (1) Written communication (2) Oral communication (3) Research (4) Critical thinking What if a single course could effectively address all 4, while also involving the students in an engaging topic of social significance? And what if that course were more effective at developing those core skills than the standard courses in Writing or Composition? And what if students actually looked forward to each and every class meeting, and enthusiastically dove into the out-of-classroom research and preparation necessary to perform at the highest level? This workshop session will outline an innovative course in Argumentation and Advocacy, one that offers students the opportunity to delve deeply into a social topic of personal interest, while actively developing a broad spectrum of competencies expected of college graduates. This isn’t your traditional Argumentation course with a focus is on stodgy Greeks, logic, and argument modeling. This course challenges students to research, prepare, write, speak, and ultimately to make a difference in the world.

Session 2B: St. Vincent’s Hall, #307
Project-Based Learning: Expanding Beyond Classroom Boundaries
*Mitchell Alegre, Niagara University*
*David Taylor, Niagara University*
During this session participants will identify and discuss the process of learning new skills. They will then learn how to apply project-based learning methods to facilitate student skill development inside and outside the classroom. Participants will learn: the essential elements of project-based learning, the conditions that support PBL, how to facilitate PBL, the benefits of PBL, and, challenges associated with PBL. Examples will be given of campus and community projects that moved students out of the classroom to learn skills and course content through application. Participants will be engaged in cooperative exercises exploring innovative ways to implement PBL within their own disciplines and courses.
Session 2C: St. Vincent’s Hall, #311
Detailed Assignment Directions in Online Instruction: How much is too much of a good thing?

*Dennis Mike, Canusis College*

Because the online instructor does not physically meet with students, students do not have the same opportunities to ask clarifying questions about assignments as do face-to-face students. For this reason, when constructing assignment directions, the online instructor should carefully consider all possible areas of confusion and address them from the onset. Consequently, online written assignment directions are often much longer and more detailed than would normally be the case in face-to-face instruction. However, in trying to provide clear and detailed directions, can the instructor go too far? Can directions become so long and complex that they actually interfere with the student’s ability to understand the assignment? This is the question that this session is intended to address. We will explore one online instructor’s ongoing experiences with assignment directions. The presenter has been teaching online for five years. He will show examples of directions from his first semester and then display subsequent examples, over time, as he attempted to make his directions as clear as possible. He will then show a set of directions which two students described as “too long and overly detailed” in confidential course evaluations. This session will be interactive in the sense that the presenter will be asking participants for their input on the directions shown. In this sense, it is intended to be more of a conversation than a presentation. Those factors that impact on the clarity of assignment directions will be identified and described. These factors include, but are not limited to: format of the directions sheet, use of headings, word choice, overall length, effect of detailed directions on students with learning problems, audio or video supplements to directions, and, last, the absolute necessity for the online instructor to respond to student questions about assignments as fully and quickly as possible.

Session 2D: St. Vincent’s Hall, #312
Is There a Multiple-Choice Testing Advantage?

*Donna Fisher-Thompson, Niagara University*

*Burt Thompson, Niagara University*

Many educators and students have a negative view of multiple-choice exams. Compared to exams that require students to construct answers (e.g., short answer, essay, or problem-solving), a common criticism is that students do not need to understand the material to succeed on multiple-choice exams (Simkin & Kuechler, 2005). Students simply need to recognize correct answers, or guess their way to a good grade. Recent research, however, suggests that memory for and comprehension of material can actually be improved through multiple-choice testing (Glass & Sinha, 2013). For example, in a recent study (Little et al., 2012), practice tests consisting of well-written multiple-choice questions—questions that forced students to rule out incorrect but plausible alternatives—led to improved performance on later exams compared to practice questions that required students to simply recall information. Multiple-choice testing may improve learning because students must retrieve and think critically about information related to all of the alternatives, rather than simply recalling one piece of information. In the current research, we attempted to incorporate this multiple-choice testing advantage in the classroom as an active learning strategy. In our presentation we will describe our experiences with the activity and summarize data on the effectiveness of this method for enhancing learning. Each co-author, in multiple classes, had students engage in a multiple-choice quiz activity to review concepts presented earlier. One of us used a group activity in which students answered multiple-choice review questions, and the other used clicker questions during lectures. A comparison of student exam performance on reviewed versus non-reviewed concepts will be presented (data collection still in progress). These data will be used to assess the effectiveness of the multiple-choice review activity. We will illustrate the activity and engage the audience by incorporating multiple-choice questions during and at the end of the presentation.
Session 2E: St. Vincent’s Hall, #315
Pedagogy Meets Technology
Howard Slepkov, Niagara University

The digital revolution has created more than one conundrum for higher education. At one level there has been the ongoing debate about the physical structure of the university and the role online learning will or can play in extending the reach of any institution or university. At another level there has been the struggle to come to terms with the need for technologies on campus, in classrooms, in labs and so forth. Now there is an increasing awareness that the tools of Web 2.0 coupled with wireless access and the prevalence of devices that fit into a palm or on the top of a small surface like those in many lecture halls has changed the dynamics of even the largest classrooms. It was long argued that these changes would make it possible to deepen learning and ENHANCE the classroom experience. There are those who would argue that rather than deepening the quality of learning, it has had the opposite effect. This presentation will put forward the counter argument in which the case will be made that until pedagogy meets technology and classrooms are reorganized to complement rather than ignore wireless SmartPhones and social networking sites, nothing will be resolved. The presentation will review some of the literature pointing the way to the classrooms of the 21st Century and put forward how the learning styles of students can be complimented through the judicious use of digital tools. Practical, useful examples of how this can be done will be shared. The presenter has spent the better part of two decades learning for himself and then sharing with colleagues how to capitalize on digital tools to maximize the engagement of learners and direct them towards open ended problem solving and exploration of a variety of different topics in classrooms at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary level. He has learned that once we engage our students as digital learners and challenge them to explore topics where they can put those skills, real profound, life changing learning can occur.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS III
THURSDAY 11:15 AM - 12:15 PM

Session 3A: St. Vincent’s Hall, #306
Embracing the Introvert
Mollie Ward-Crescente, Villa Maria College

Since most people are extroverts, introverts can be unfairly judged and misunderstood. Research supports that extroverted students and introverted students perform differently in an active and integrated classroom. Come to this seminar to learn the research about introverts: how they best receive their energy, how they process information differently, and how they learn best. Participants will be engaged through well-structured questions, pairing activities such as "think, pair, share", and a one-minute paper reflection.

The Motivating Power of Peers
Susan Mason, Margot Hickey, Amanda Smith, Amber Markham, Niagara University

Students influence each other in a variety of ways. Although their influence can be negative, as it is when individuals feel peer pressure to engage in unhealthy or unethical behaviors, students can and often do have a positive effect on each other. In this session, we discuss the ways that students contribute to the academic success of their peers. We consider three types of relationships that may develop. In the first type of relationship, one student views another student as a leader or a role model. Examples of the student as leader or role model include mentoring programs and group assignments where one student is named the project leader. In a second type of relationship, one student views another student as part of the support system. Tutoring would be an example of the student playing a supportive role for peers. In the third type of relationship, one student views another student as a colleague. The colleague relationship is a relationship of equals, two students working collaboratively, challenging and supporting each other. When students view each other as colleagues, they rely on each other to proofread papers, provide feedback on presentations, meet for study sessions, and work together on research projects. We review the relationship types and consider the potential benefits to
students, in terms of both their academic performance and their professional development. Participants are invited to discuss the issues and share their own experiences.

Session 3B: St. Vincent’s Hall, #307
Flipping the classroom to engage non-majors in the sciences
Meredith Ezak, Hilbert College
Finding ways to engage students, especially non-majors, in the classroom is a challenge all educators face. ‘Flipped Learning’ is one pedagogy that provides an opportunity to use class time more effectively to engage students and promote active learning. Flipped teaching moves tasks which require lower levels of cognitive work, like knowledge and comprehension, out of the classroom by assigning video lessons, recorded lectures and/or readings to students outside of class time. The time spent in class then becomes an opportunity to engage students in higher forms of cognitive work like application, analysis and evaluation. I have found that implementing ‘Flipped Learning’ in my non-majors science classes has allowed me to devote class time to activities that encourage students to explore scientific concepts and engage in subject matter, like hands-on laboratory experiments and case studies that examine real world applications. This approach has been especially useful in science courses which lack a separate, required laboratory section where additional time could normally be dedicated to some of these types of activities. In addition to sharing my experiences with the challenges and successes faced in implementing and assessing this pedagogy in a non-majors science course, I will also provide interactive demonstrations of many of the methods, and readily available resources and tools, that can be used to successfully ‘flip’ any course.

To flip or not to flip: The journey from podcast to pencast online lectures and the in-class engaged learning in general chemistry.
Matthew Ward, Daemen College
A case study for the transition from traditional in-class lecture to an entirely flipped classroom will be presented. The traditional in-class lecture was first transitioned to audio postings of lecture, eventually “flipping out” the traditional lecture of the classroom into homework or pre-class preparation with in-class problem solving sessions facilitated by the course professor. With the changes to the classroom environment, it is important to assess the success or failure of the changes to student satisfaction and learning. The assessment results for both student satisfaction and student learning - via value added and standardized test scores - provides evidence that the “flipped out” classroom environment improves student satisfaction (over time) and enhances student learning when compared to the traditional lecture.

Session 3C: St. Vincent’s Hall, #311
Increasing Student Engagement in Reading by Creating YouTube Videos
Sharon Green, Niagara University
CRL 101, “Critical Literacy,” is a combined developmental reading-writing course at Niagara University. Because CRL 101 students are not strong readers, the course includes a Book Project. Each student reads one of six high-interest books, takes a comprehension test on the book, and does a project to demonstrate their understanding of the book. In 2014, the Book Project required students, in small groups, to write and conduct interviews to post on YouTube (www.youtube.com). The goals of this project were to increase student engagement with the book; increase active learning as students considered which people/characters to interview and composed questions to reflect a close reading; appeal to students’ affinity for technology; practice writing skills; give students an opportunity to be creative; and place information on YouTube that might be useful to others teaching or reading these books. Students decided which people/characters to interview and wrote a script that reflected the book’s theme, setting, historical context, significant details, and ending. Interviews that demonstrated a deeper, more thoughtful reading earned higher grades. Most students filmed the interviews on their smart phones. Students without smart phones could borrow a camera and tripod from Instructional Technology. Each group decided whether their video would be unlisted on YouTube (so only those to whom they send the link can view it) or public (so anyone can view it). Each group sent me the link and submitted
their written script so I could assess their work. Students then “debuted” their video in class. My presentation will describe this project, summarize student feedback, and invite audience suggestions on how to improve this project and do similar projects in their courses. I will also show sample YouTube videos created by my students.

Gamification in the Classroom – How to Incorporate Game Elements into Your Teaching
Jeremiah Grabowski, University at Buffalo

Gamification theory, when properly applied, has the potential to improve many fields. Marketing, fitness and education are all areas where gamification has been successfully applied and garnered attention. But what exactly is Gamification? Is it just playing games in class? How does it work? And how can it be applied to the classroom? We will briefly discuss the elements and characteristics of games. What makes a game a game? Is there a difference between games and playing? What is it about these game elements that keep us coming back for more? Once we've identified the various characteristics that make up games, we can then begin to discuss how to incorporate them into the classroom and design course activities which utilize game elements. We will culminate by presenting a framework to help educators design Gamified activities.

Session 3D: St. Vincent’s Hall, #407
The 8 Principles of Learning from Teaching: Using research findings to Improve College Instruction
Paul Vermette, Niagara University
Danyelle Moore, Niagara University
Cynthia Kline, Educational Consultant

A focus has been turned towards the instructional effectiveness of teaching in Higher Education in a way that questions, what does good college teaching look like? Numerous institutions have a commitment to “excellent instruction” (while few have attempted to define it). Support can be found for everything from extensive reliance on MOOCS, integrating cooperative learning, using blended and/or flipped classrooms, and even the value of the lecture. Two things are missing from this debate: (1) any reference to an established body of teaching & learning principles and (2) a deep discussion of how good teaching results in deep student understanding. While p-12 education has answered these questions, higher education has not. The 1987 Seven Principles of Chickering and Gamson are the closest work. Recent efforts on learning by Carey (2014), Persellin and Daniels (2014), Ambrose et al (2010), works on teaching by Weimer (2010), Bain (2004), and Svinnicki (2004) are noteworthy and shed light on the essential question but do not create a definition. Over the past four years, a diverse group of scholars have codified a set of 8 research-supported principles that support deep learning from formal teaching. This session offers an interactive and engaging workshop where participants will analyze, critique, and assess the meaning of each of the 8 principles and identify opportunities in their own teaching to integrate the principles. Working in collaborative groups, the participants will work to reveal the power and depth of each principle. Examples will be drawn from face-to-face and on-line classrooms across disciplines.

Session 3E: St. Vincent’s Hall, #312
Serendipity in the Classroom - Teaching Social Media and Lessons of Letting go of Control
Heather Harris, Villa Maria College

Many subjects that are entering the curriculum of higher education today did not exist 10 years ago, and the jobs that students will obtain upon graduation may not exist today. Our digital age has ushered in dynamic changes in the market place that have dramatically altered the landscape of business and challenged educator’s role in preparing students. Allowing serendipity to rule the classroom may be exactly what is needed to help students be successful in today’s dynamic environment. The subject of Social Media, with it’s “ever-evolving” nature, is the perfect subject to discuss how to teach a subject where the students know more than the professor. My experience developing and teaching a Social Media Marketing class taught me to humbly embrace the “loss of control” over the subject and to allow serendipity to define the classroom experience. Preparing for the unknown in the curriculum, using transparency to your advantage, and embracing strategies for creating
serendipity in the classroom are discussed and explored. Student feedback on relevance of course, teaching methods, and key learnings are shared in this presentation.

**An empirical study on college students’ utilization of reading comprehension strategies and study skills: implications for instruction**

*Youngsoo Choi, Niagara University*

*Kathleen McGrath, Niagara University*

An empirical study on college students’ utilization of reading comprehension strategies and study skills: implications for instruction Youngsoo Choi, Ph.D. Assistant Professor College of Hospitality and Tourism Management Niagara University, NY 14109 & Kathleen McGrath, Ph.D. Assistant Professor College of Education Niagara University, NY 14109

Research suggests that many students may enter college with weak metacognitive skills related to reading and comprehension, and lack adequate learning strategies necessary for academic success (Alexandar & Fox, 2011; Alvarez & Risko, 2009; Freebody & Freiberg, 2011). The primary goal of this project is to identify and implement effective instructional tools in the hospitality human resource management class in order to help students better understand the key concepts of critical HR practices and be able apply their knowledge to business situations described in the exam questions. By applying a mixed method approach, we implemented a survey (Taraban et al., 2000) to examine the student’s level of reading comprehension strategies. We found a correlation between the level of reading comprehension strategies students used and their exam performance. An interview with four students was conducted to further explore the plausible causes of their generally poor exam performance, where they discussed comprehension and study strategies they have used. Based on the findings from the survey and focus group interview in Spring 2014, the instructor has introduced new instructional tools to the Fall 2014 classes, and plans to measure the effectiveness of those tactics by comparing the students’ exam performances between the Spring 2014 class (control group) and the Fall 2014 classes (treatment group). Preliminary findings from the data gathered from both Spring and Fall 2014 classes will be shared to emphasize the importance of understanding the college students’ reading comprehension and study skill-related strategies and its instructional implications.

**Session 3F: St. Vincent’s Hall, #315**

**Online Faculty Development: Extending Reach and Purpose**

*Anne Reed, Roberta (Robin) Sullivan, Martha Greatrix, Athena Tsembelis, University at Buffalo*

A four-week online faculty training course (Designing an Exemplary Course) has been developed by a cohort of staff from across departments and schools at the University at Buffalo. The course was originally adapted from a MOOC created by Blackboard to support their Exemplary Course Award Program. It was customized to fit the needs of UB via a Creative Commons license which enabled reuse and adaptation of this open resource. This course has been offered to multiple cohorts and has been modified with each offering. The original intent at UB was to assist faculty interested in teaching online. Multiple changes have been made to the course to make it more inclusive and relevant to instructors that are working in all teaching environments: traditional (“on-ground”), web-enhanced, hybrid, and fully-online. This presentation highlights the collaborative efforts of the group to adapt, modify, and expand the course’s reach and purpose. Effective course design and sound pedagogical practices transcend the learner’s modality.

**Educators’ Perspective of Institutional Shift in Focus to Online Programs**

*Christopher Aquino, Lei Han, Danyelle Moore, Joe Winter, Niagara University*

Online courses and programs have become increasingly common in higher education institutions. Some universities have even gone as far as to redefine themselves from predominantly “brick and mortar” to predominantly online in a very short period of time. Compared to traditional face-to-face course delivery, online offer greater flexibility in terms of time and location and has the potential to reach students in every corner of the world. The implementation of online delivery in traditional colleges often requires a large capital outlay for infrastructure and significant time for training of educators. A small liberal arts school that has invested heavily in teaching and learning resources, emphasizes active and integrated learning in its classrooms, and believes
good teaching can make a difference in learning effectiveness is poised to fully embrace online delivery. However, before embarking on such a massive shift in strategy it would be wise to collect and analyze data on the views of the educators who would be affected by the decision and who could affect its outcome. In our study, we intend to gather information from educators within this institution to provide the decision makers with greater insight on how best to structure and achieve buy in for such a monumental change. The survey will include questions related to the choice of technology, appropriate implementation strategy, issues of academic integrity, challenges and opportunities of such a significant shift in focus, costs and benefits, etc. During our presentation, we hope to refine our survey document by eliciting feedback from our peers in the audience. The session will be informal, involve much open discussion and small group work, and collect suggestions from the audience for use in fine-tuning our survey document before it is administered in the spring of 2015.

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS IV**
**THURSDAY 1:30 – 2:30 PM**

**Session 4A: St. Vincent’s Hall, #301**
**Case Study: Competition-Based Collaborative Learning**
*Yonghong Tong, Niagara University*

In Fall 2014, I initiated a challenging new teaching and learning approach in “CIS490: Mobile App Development II”: competition-based collaborative learning. The prominent characteristic of this course lies in the creation of some advanced technologies in mobile app development. Using a traditional approach, each component is taught separately, and students may not integrate these components together with previously learned knowledge. The competition-based collaborative learning approach tries to fill this gap. The class is divided into teams of 2-3 students and I select the team members. Students are required to attend AT&T Western NY Civic App Challenge, a mobile application development contest organized in Buffalo, NY. The competition project is worth 30% of the final grade. Each group submits their proposal for the contest at the beginning of the semester. I give students guidelines and suggestions on the proposal. During class discuss, I offer pedagogical support on each project. After class, students do assigned exercises on the particular topics that are covered in class. Students have their own after-class schedule for group meetings to collaborate on their project. I make myself available in case students have questions or ideas to discuss. Each team presents on their progress 3 times in class to get feedback and suggestions from peers and me. By the end of the semester, students submit a project report, make a presentation, and demonstrate their developed applications in a teamwork format. Using this competition-based collaborative learning approach, students gain many benefits. Students exchange ideas actively, creatively, and critically. The new approach increases students’ motivation and awareness of challenging real-life problems, improves teamwork skills, and engages students in learning. Preliminary surveys indicate students like this teaching and learning.

**Developing an Effective Career Panel**
*Mollie Ward-Crescente, Villa Maria College*
*Heather Harris, Villa Maria College*

Learn how to develop a networking event that allows students to network with professionals about the world of work. We will discuss different models we have trialed and the pros and cons of each of the models; how to find the right professionals for the panel; and how to get students engaged in networking with the panelist. Discussion will include how to tweak our career panel model to achieve a variety of objectives.
Evaluation of Case Studies and Learning Groups in teaching Analytical Chemistry

Robyn Goacher, Niagara University

Session attendees will learn about how case studies were integrated into Analytical Chemistry, a content-rich sophomore level science course. The cases used posed situations in which the students needed to learn important (and often dry) concepts about data quality, calibration methods and statistics and apply them to laboratory-based situations which mimic career-relevant scenarios. The intended outcomes of integrating case studies were for the students to have more fun, explicitly link course content to important real-world applications, recall the concepts at greater depth in the future, envision greater career relevance of the course material, and build research and communication skills. It was also hoped that they would gain a greater sense of classroom community through permanent learning groups, who did group quizzes in class, as well as the case studies together. The success in meeting these ideals will be evaluated based on how case studies did or did not impact student grades, and how students viewed the case studies and learning groups as assessed through student perception surveys.

Expanding Access to Ecology Field-Based Research Techniques for Students at a Distance using Open Educational Resources

Nathan Whitley-Grassi, Empire State College & Niagara University
Audeliz Matais, Empire State College
Kevin Woo, Empire State College

We are developing six ecology/earth science virtual field experiences as OERs, based on the need to develop resources and expand access to scientific field-based research techniques for students learning at a distance or with other barriers to access. The OERs will consist of a series of broad and adaptable field activities supplemented with handouts and videos from the field site to provide immersion online. Our goal is to provide students with research skills needed to increase competency in the field after graduation by engaging them in common research techniques and methods for data collection and analysis. In an effort to ensure quality, each OER will be reviewed and examined for quality and accessibility. Importantly, these OERs will be part of the larger resource in an online repository.

Paris today, Antarctica tomorrow!

Kayla Jaehn, Niagara University

Many schools nowadays do not have enough funding to send students on field trips anymore. Some teachers simply do not have enough time to devote an entire day to a field trip that is only benefitting one subject. The most recent and very exciting technology that has seen an influx in popularity is virtual field trips. Many museums have started to put pictures and descriptions up of the exhibits that they offer. Le Louvre offers tours of some of their big exhibits as well as some rooms that are off limits to the public. Many teachers have started using Google Earth within their classrooms to have students take “tours of the world”. Virtual field trips are not only inexpensive and easy they can provide so much more to students than a real field trip. Students with special needs will be able to be accommodated in a more feasible way; students who use English and as a second language can get the descriptions or videos translated. In my presentation I will talk about virtual field trips and how they can be incorporated into many topics across the curriculum. Virtual field trips promote involvement of students in the material they are learning directly because they have control of their learning. This is also a fun and easy way to utilize technology within the classroom for both teacher and student.
**Curriculum Collaborations: Creating Thematic Instruction that Facilitates Collaboration with Grants & Partnerships**  
*Lisa Casper, University at Buffalo  
Krystle Januale, University at Buffalo*

This presentation will focus on the use of thematic instruction to infuse the curriculum with the shared goals represented in collaborative relationships that are created through grants and community partnerships. We will discuss planning, instructional models, and outcomes and/or data tracking. We will share specific examples and models that are in current practice, specifically highlighting developmental reading & writing instruction within the theme of career development.

**Session 4D: St. Vincent’s Hall, #312**  
**Supporting the Changing Nature of Faculty in Institutions of Higher Education**  
*Micheal Berta, Becca Bley, Bruce Shields, Daemen College*

The demands and nature of being a faculty member are evolving rapidly. Massive shifts in information, technology, and learning theory come with increased demands on faculty to focus more on the media versus the message leaving them to wonder, “When will I be able to start teaching the content?” Reactive support models where technologists, librarians, and designers are on call for issues in the class leave faculty struggling with incorporating current technology and information skills effectively into their courses along with updating the relevance of their course content. This session proposes a more proactive model of embedded professionals that directly engage with students on projects and assignments under the guidance of the faculty member. By embedding the technologists and librarians into the course, they are more keenly aware of the course objectives, faculty direction, and needs of the students to better answer questions, provide supplementary instruction, increase student success, and course satisfaction. Audience members will participate through live discussion, polling, and twitter activities at key points of the session.

**The lived experience of studying abroad in Finland: Impact on pre-service teachers’ beliefs as future educators**  
*Chris Yuen, University at Buffalo  
Riikka Alanen, Daemen College  
Elizabeth Wright, Daemen College*

The success of Finnish education shown in the PISA study (Simola, 2007; Lavonen & Laaksonen, 2009) has caught much attention in recent years. Through studying abroad in Finland, U.S. based pre-service teachers may find novel ideas that could impact their belief system on education, on the educational system, and on their self-concept of how one serves the system. This methods paper provides a research design, through an in-depth examination of the lived experience of studying abroad, to extrapolate one’s evolving belief before, during, and after the abroad experience. Using van Manen’s (1990) phenomenology, one devises a series of three unstructured, individual interviews to explore each participant’s four-month long exchange. Each interview involves (1) phenomenological exploration during the first half, and (2) a discursive approach (Potter, 2003; Riley, Sims-Schouten, & Willig, 2007) in the second half to co-create ideas between the researcher and the participant. Meanwhile, each participant is asked to keep a field journal to document his/her firsthand experience; photographs and videos (Alerby & Bergmark, 2012) may be included in the journal with written descriptions to accompany these visual data. Because the data are subjective in nature, trustworthiness will be achieved through verification with the participants to affirm that collected data are discerning, sensible, and reliable. Coding of data will be used to develop hermeneutic themes to address the impact of the experience to one’s belief as a future educator. Implications of this study include challenging one’s existing assumptions about U.S. education, and one may gain insights about how to improve education through revising these assumptions. Theoretically, this study employs the use of phenomenology and hermeneutics as a form of researching human experience, and one may find an interface of a discursive approach can potentially galvanize the descriptive power in reaching sensibility by studying lived experience.
Session 4E: St. Vincent’s Hall, #315

The Buddy System

Christopher Aquino, Niagara University
Ian Burt, Niagara University

Intermediate Accounting I and II are high content and very complex courses. As such, traditional lecture style (modelling) dominates in-class activities at most institutions. In addition, peer tutoring opportunities are rare because top students from previous years often have internships and other career enhancing opportunities. In other words, students often have few resources beyond their textbook and practice questions and attrition rates are often very high. To enhance learning and reduce attrition, a program referred to as the “Buddy System” was implemented in two Intermediate Accounting II classes in the spring of 2014. Students performing well after the first two of four exams were encouraged (optional) to “buddy up” with those who were not. This was based on the premise that high performing students are motivated by grades and low performing students by survival. Other goals for the program included compensation for the lack of tutoring resources, encouragement of collaboration, and development of a safer learning environment. The program was well received with nearly 50% of students participating on exam #3. “Mentors” were offered 30% of their “Buddy’s” improvement on exam #3 versus the average of exams #1/2. The STD of exam #1/2 scores of 17.39 dropped by over 30% to 12.12 on exam #3. In addition, the grade distribution approached a standard bell curve as many Buddies saw their overall grade in the class improve. The goals of this interactive session are to present the Buddy System and solicit feedback from peers on how best to refine its specs and determine when it should be used. The authors hope to tap the collective experience of the audience before engaging in more formal testing of the program’s effectiveness in their spring 2015 accounting classes.

Creating "Reflective Practitioners": Fostering Connective Learning in an Accelerated Course

Kris Principe, Niagara University

Professors are often required to teach courses in an accelerated format rather than over a traditional 15 week semester, in either graduate programs or summer and inter-semester sessions at the undergraduate level. The education literature has noted, however, that a successful accelerated course requires a different strategy and organizational structure but that there is not sufficient guidance as how to redesign traditional courses. This paper develops a model of connective learning to guide accelerated course design. The principal goals of the Connective Learning Model are to facilitate students’ intellectual growth, to ignite their desire for lifelong learning, and provide them with tools by which to engage in learning throughout their career by introducing them to discipline specific resources. The model is designed to foster connections to: knowledge and relevant issues, industry experts, and the global community. The theoretical foundations of the model are drawn from Fink’s Taxonomy as well as the Adventure Learning and Transformation Teaching models. The model is operationalized in a hybrid format, with online modules followed by in class active learning components. The author will demonstrate the application of the model to the redesign of an accelerated graduate health policy course. Examples of content modules and assignments will be provided. Results from the student evaluations regarding this course model will also be presented. In addition, measures of effectiveness will be shown, based on a comparison of final exam scores between the redesigned hybrid course and the originally structured face-to-face course. The audience will be asked to apply this model to their own teaching, identify a portion of their course that could be conducted in an online format, and develop an outline for an assignment reflecting a component of the connective learning model.

Facilitating Meaningful Classroom Interaction in College

Fourth Floor Amphitheatre, St. Vincent’s Hall

Speaker: Dr. Maryellen Weimer