Hearing from Some of Our Own

Experts say you have to hear a new word seventy times for it to really stick. This holds true unless the word really grabs your focused attention because it is loaded with high emotional value or social currency—if it could help you impress friends, or understand the mysterious and forbidden, or save your life. Imagine trying to teach a 4-year-old the difference between transparent and opaque. It might take a few goes and involve several rounds of juice in various types of cups. (I may have tried to do this.) But if that same 4-year-old overhears a swear word or an R-rated phrase? You know what happens.

J is a student. One of our students. One day her professor reached out and petted her hair, commenting on how pretty it was. J felt like a toddler or an exotic animal in a zoo.

Q is an employee. One of our employees. One day, and another day, and many days after that, he has felt like an outsider. His colleagues are cordial, but they never seem really interested in him. The students are patient but don’t appear respectful. His search for a church has been long and frustrating. He feels he can never laugh unselfconsciously. No one asks for his perspectives or ideas. He doesn’t really belong.

R is a senior. One of our seniors. He has seen how Calvin invites wonderful speakers, organizes engaging learning events, and encourages the whole campus to be welcoming, to practice hospitality, to engage across lines of difference in informed and caring ways. The content of many of his courses could include diverse perspectives, narratives, and texts, but they don’t seem to. Test questions assume he is a Reformed Christian; he is not. He hears that under 40% of the faculty report participating in any learning event to improve how we understand and engage with diversity and how we can be more inclusive in our departments, classrooms, and neighborhoods. He wonders aloud to the associate dean for diversity and inclusion, What’s up with that?

These experiences are real. I hope they help attach value and currency to our stated commitment to diversity and inclusion and to the call to each of us to continue learning and growing our cultural competency.

Pennylyn Dykstra-Pruim, association dean for diversity and inclusion

Congratulations

Adejoke Ayoola was awarded the prestigious Midwest Nursing Research Society (MNRS) mid-career investigator award in Kansas City, Missouri.

New Faculty Senators

Scott Lamanna (Spanish) has been elected to succeed Mark Williams (classics) as the senator for the Division of the Arts, Languages, and Education. Jamie Smith (philosophy) succeeds Jong-Il Kim (kinesiology) for the Division of the Social Sciences and Contextual Disciplines, and Laura DeHaan (provost’s office) succeeds John Witte (residence life) for administrators with faculty status.

WRITE NIGHT

Please encourage your students to participate in Write Night (Wednesday, 7:00 p.m. to midnight), in the library. In recent semesters we’ve had more than 200 students take advantage of the opportunity to get
some serious writing done (term papers, short essays, lab reports, scripts, application letters, creative work—whatever needs to be written). The Rhetoric Center staff will be on hand to help with anything from writer’s block to giving some careful attention to a draft to helping writers polish up a finished product. Hekman Library and RC staff will provide refreshments and encouragement, and will raffle prizes throughout the evening. Questions? Contact Karen Saupe, Rhetoric Center director.

From the Faculty Activity Reports

- **Kevin Corcoran** (Philosophy), “Persons, Bodies, and Relationality” (lecture, University of Athens, Athens, Greece, March 2019).

Be sure to fill out your Faculty Activity Reports regularly. If you have questions, see the FAQ page.

Coming Up on Campus (Check the campus calendar for a full list of events)

**Monday, April 15**
- Chapel. Holy Week: Worship through Scripture and the Arts. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- President’s Coffee. 12:00 noon (refreshments at 11:30 a.m.), CFAC recital hall
- Asian Studies lecture. Jonathan Cady, “Ten Things You Wanted to Know about Christianity in China but Were Too Afraid to Ask.” 3:30 p.m., Meeter Center Lecture Hall
- Nursing seminar. Katie Kunnen, “The Effects of Interprofessional Collaboration and the Use of Theater Students on the Perceived Self-Efficacy, Confidence, and Satisfaction of Baccalaureate Nursing Students.” 5:00 p.m., SB 110

**Tuesday, April 16**
- Chapel. Holy Week: Worship through Scripture and the Arts. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Science and Religion Forum (ScARF). John Walton (Wheaton), “The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Investigating the Intersection of Genesis and Science.” 4:00 p.m., SB 203

**Wednesday, April 17**
- Chapel. Holy Week: Worship through Scripture and the Arts. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Write Night. 7:00 p.m., library

**Thursday, April 18**
- Chapel. Holy Week: Worship through Scripture and the Arts. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Henry Institute panel discussion. Mikael Pelz, Becky Haney, James Skillen, “The Green New Deal.” 3:30 p.m., De Vos lobby
- The 4:04 Gathering. Lee Hardy (Philosophy). 4:04 p.m., Hekman Library, third floor

**Friday, April 19**
- Good Friday. No classes or chapel