

Decentering the Frame: expanded ways of knowing
CTL Fellowship
School of Art; Photography Department
Year: 2021

Fellow: Tori Purcell

MID-YEAR REPORT

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS (JANUARY - MAY 2021)

I. Creation of Faculty Learning Communities with a focus on inclusive pedagogy

- A. Six Faculty Learning Communities were established
 1. Photo BFA Freshman Year Courses (Group A)
 2. Photo BFA Freshman Year Courses (Group B)
 3. Photo BFA Sophomore Year Courses
 4. Photo BFA Junior Year Courses
 5. Photo BFA Senior Year Courses
 6. Assessment in the Classroom
- B. Each of the FLCs met once in Fall 2020, and twice in Spring 2021
- C. Each FLC had 4-5 faculty members; all Photo Faculty voluntarily participated.
- D. The goal of the FLCs: to create a space where faculty can share teaching resources and ideas including, texts, assignments, ice breakers, critique strategies, strategies for how to best facilitate potentially uncomfortable or unfamiliar topics in class discussion, etc. Faculty were asked to re-examine their own syllabi and modes of delivery in an effort to reimagine course content away from dominant histories and implicit biases.
- E. Closing the Loop
 1. In May, 2021 we had a half-day Curriculum Intensive/Retreat. The final section of this meeting was dedicated to faculty sharing anecdotes regarding inclusive pedagogy and establishing classroom norms - individual faculty shared with the faculty at large things they had learned over the course of this year; strategies they had tried that worked well in the classroom; strategies that failed; conversations and questions that had come up in the FLCs, etc.
 2. Many of the FLCs created an archive of shared resources (shared Google drives, shared documents listing readings, discussion topics, etc.). The individual FLCs shared those resources with Tori (fellow) and she shared them with the larger faculty. They are all working documents.

II. Student Engagement

- A. Student Forum hosted by the student organization, The Photo League - Tori held an open forum with Photo undergraduate students to tell them about the fellowship, its goals, solicit participation from students who are interested in getting involved, and to answer student questions. The forum happened on 2/18 at 8pm.
- B. An anonymous student survey was distributed electronically asking for student feedback. The survey aimed to measure based on student experience, whether

students feel the Photography curriculum and classroom environments are inclusive and deliver anti-racist content. The survey was distributed in March 2021.

- C. In April 2021, Tori began one-on-one and small group (5 people or less) meetings with students who had volunteered to participate. The meetings were structured as interviews where Tori asked 5 open questions and then listened to student responses. The questions asked were the following:
- 1) How do you define an inclusive learning environment? What are the ingredients?
 - 2) What qualities do you value most in a teacher?
 - 3) What qualities do you value most in yourself as a student?
 - 4) How can we create a better sense of community in the Photo Department?
 - 5) Do you have any anecdotes or suggestions that you would like to share?

III. Programmatic Changes

- A. The Photography Department Curriculum Committee proposed a BFA program change, which includes the addition of a new required seminar course focusing on the ethics of representation within media and specifically photography. The proposed new course and program change will be submitted to the School of Art Curriculum Committee in Fall 2021.
- B. The Photography Department plans to implement a common reading experience across the 4 years of the BFA. In the past, readings have always been integrated into classes, but never standardized. The common reading experience will allow for standardization while allowing professors to build on this foundation by requiring additional supplemental readings of their choice pertinent to individual course content. In the selection of the standardized readings, the department can have the larger goal of anti-racist pedagogy in mind and be more inclusive of non-white and non-western perspectives.

IV. Program Assessment and Assessment in the Classroom

- A. The FLC focusing on *Assessment in the Classroom* dedicated one session to building more inclusive and less biased assessment strategies. Student self assessment was a point of focus.
- B. A Program Assessment Sub-Committee was formed and one topic addressed was how can assessment of the BFA program be less biased.
- 1) The sub-committee discussed how students can be more active in the assessment process.
 - 2) More indirect assessment measures (e.g. student self-assessment)
 - 3) Sub-committee created a survey for incoming students.
 - 4) Based on sub-committee recommendation, Tori revised the exit survey for graduating seniors. A section on community and DEI values was added.

SUMMARY OF DATA

I. Student Survey - gaining student perspective on inclusive classroom and antiracist pedagogy (See Attached Data spreadsheet)

- A. Participation
- 1) Survey went to 106 students.

- 2) 28 students responded.
- 3) 18% freshman; 32% sophomore; 32% junior; 18% senior
- 4) 8/28 students were willing to participate in a follow up interview with Tori Purcell (fellow)

B. Key Findings

- 1) 64% of students feel their overall classroom experience has been inclusive.
- 2) 71% of students feel that teachers welcome the expression of diverse perspectives, opinions, interests, lifestyles, etc.
- 3) 75% of students feel that teachers show a broad range of artists in the classroom. (broad in terms of gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, nationality, age, photographic genre/style)

II. Exit Survey - Anonymous survey sent to all graduating seniors. Survey asked questions pertaining to curriculum, facilities, community, and inclusivity. (See Attached Data spreadsheet)

A. Participation

- 1) Survey went to 19 students.
- 2) 4 students responded.

B. Key Findings

- 1) 75% of students are likely to recommend the Photography Program to others.
- 2) 50% of students feel the Photography Dept. fosters a diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning environment. 50% of students feel it does not.
- 3) 100% of students said they felt valued as an individual in the classroom.

III. Faculty Participation (See Attached Data spreadsheet)

A. Curriculum Intensive, May 4, 2021

- 1) 23/25 department faculty who teach in BFA Program were present

B. FLCs

- 1) 24 faculty members participated

IV. Student Interviews

A. Participation

- 1) So far 4 students have been interviewed.
- 2) 1 graduating senior; 3 juniors

B. See notes attached from interviews

GAUGING SUCCESS - TAKE AWAYS

- A. We had nearly 100% faculty participation in various aspects of the fellowship research. All participation was voluntary. Over 26% of undergraduate students were involved in various aspects of the fellowship research. This high-level of participation by faculty, staff, and students demonstrates an overall commitment and value in creating inclusive classrooms and antiracist curriculum.
- B. The fellowship is achieving its primary goal of engaging the department as a whole - faculty, staff, students, and administration - in collective conversations to cultivate a shared commitment to inclusive pedagogy and a variety of strategies to enhance learning and understanding.

- C. The fellowship involves building a culture - expanding a way of thinking and understanding through productive dialogue, and therefore, with goals such as these there are fewer tangible deliverables that can be produced and easily quantified.

FALL 2021 PLANS

- A. Launch a peer mentor program for upperclass students to mentor incoming students.
- B. Launch a survey for incoming students. This survey would be a way to measure students' knowledge, expectations, interests, confusions, etc. coming into the program. It will be interesting to compare responses and data from the incoming surveys and the exit surveys.
- C. The Photography Department would like to hold a separate orientation session for transfer students, because many of them in the past have not attended the "new student orientation," that is required for freshman during Orientation Week. Transfer students have unique needs and a forum specific to them as a group will hopefully help them transition more smoothly into the program. This is planned for late August 2021.
- D. The Photography Department has a new curricular initiative called "Photography Intersections" which helps BFA students select elective courses around a particular area of interest (a point where photography interests with other disciplines). This initiative will allow Photo Faculty to play a more active roll in advising of undergraduate students. As part of this fellowship, I will be leading and mentoring the faculty through this process. Students being able to engage with faculty outside of the classroom in an advisor setting will positively impact the student experience.
- E. Tori will continue the student interviews in the fall semester and continue analyzing the feedback from the interviews.

Decentering the Frame: expanded ways of knowing - Event Description and Attendance

| EVENT NAME | DESCRIPTION | DATE | PARTICIPANT NAME | PARTICIPANT DESCRIPTION | NOTES |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|---------------------------|--|---|
| Curriculum Intensive | Half-Day Curriculum Meeting; focusing on BFA curriculum and pedagogy; | 5/4/2021 via Zoom | Shannon Ebner | Photo Dept. Chair | Event organizer; full time staff |
| | | | Tori Purcell | Photo Dept Assistant Chair; Visiting Associate Professor & CTL Fellow | Event organizer; full time staff |
| | | | John Lehr | Associate Professor, Tenured; Chair of Photo Curriculum Committee | Event organizer |
| | | | Tyler Coburn | Adjunct Associate Professor | |
| | | | Stephen Hilger | Associate Professor | |
| | | | Jim Costanzo | Adjunct Associate Professor, CCE | |
| | | | Anne Turyn | Adjunct Professor, CCE | |
| | | | Sarah van Ouwerkerk | Professor, Tenured | |
| | | | Patrice Helmar | Visiting Assistant Professor | |
| | | | Peter Kayafas | Adjunct Associate Professor | |
| | | | Matt Leifheit | Visiting Assistant Professor | |
| | | | Julie Pochron | Adjunct Associate Professor, CCE | |
| | | | Nick Relph | Visiting Assistant Professor | |
| | | | Aura Rosenberg | Adjunct Professor, CCE | |
| | | | Tiffany Smith | Visiting Assistant Professor | |
| | | | Ellen Wallenstein | Adjunct Professor, CCE | |
| | | | Carissa Rodriguez | Visiting Assistant Professor | |
| | | | Ashley Clark | Asst to the Chair; Visiting Assistant Professor | Full Time Staff |
| | | | Andy Todd | Labs Manager; Visiting Assistant Professor | Full Time Staff |
| | | | Anna S. | Associate Professor, Tenured | Currently on Sabbatical, but joined for part of session |
| | | | Sara Greenberger Rafferty | Director of Graduate Studies; Associate Professor, Tenured | Full Time Staff |
| | | | Anna Collete | MFA Production Manager and Program Liaison; Visiting Associate Professor | Full Time Staff |
| | | | Sarah Smith | Assistant Professor, MWP | 23/25 Department Faculty who teach in BFA were in attendance |
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Decentering the Frame: expanded ways of knowing - FLC Participation

| FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITY NAME | PARTICIPANTS | PARTICIPANT DESCRIPTION | NOTES | | | |
|--|---------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| FLC Freshman Year Courses (Group A) | John Lehr | FLC organizer; Associate Professor, Tenured | | | | |
| | Anne Turyn | Adjunct Professor, CCE | | | | |
| | Sarah van Ouwerkerk | Professor, Tenured | | | | |
| | Ashley Clark | Visiting Assistant Professor | | | | |
| | Dan Estabrook | Visiting Assistant Professor | Fall semester only | | | |
| | Jim Costanzo | Adjunct Associate Professor, CCE | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| FLC Freshman Year Courses (Group B) | Tori Purcel | FLC organizer; CTL Fellow; Assistant Chair; Visiting Associate Professor | | | | |
| | Ellen Wallenstein | Adjunct Professor, CCE | | | | |
| | Peter Kayabaş | Adjunct Associate Professor | | | | |
| | Andy Todd | Visiting Assistant Professor | | | | |
| | Patrice Helmar | Visiting Assistant Professor | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| FLC Sophomore Year Courses | Tiffany Smith | FLC organizer; Visiting Assistant Professor | | | | |
| | Nick Relph | Visiting Assistant Professor | | | | |
| | David Smucker | Visiting Assistant Professor | Dept. of Social Science; teaches HAD 360: Survey of Photography and SS 255: Between Image and Word - two required sophomore-level Liberal Arts classes | | | |
| | Stephanie Powell | Adjunct Associate Professor | | | | |
| | Anna S. | Associate Professor, Tenured | Fall semester only | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| FLC Junior Year Courses | Julie Pochron | FLC organizer; Adjunct Associate Professor | | | | |
| | Stephen Hilger | Associate Professor | | | | |
| | Matthew Leifheit | Visiting Assistant Professor | | | | |
| | Sarah Smith | Assistant Professor; MWP campus | | | | |
| | Carissa Rodriguez | Visiting Assistant Professor | Fall semester only | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| FLC Senior Year Courses | Tyler Coburn | FLC organizer; Adjunct Associate Professor | | | | |
| | Shannon Ebner | Dept. Chair | | | | |
| | Sarah van Ouwerkerk | Professor, Tenured | | | | |
| | Aura Rosenberg | Adjunct Professor, CCE | | | | |
| | Stephanie Powell | Adjunct Associate Professor | Spring semester only | | | |
| | Anna S. | Associate Professor, Tenured | Fall semester only | | | |
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| Assessment in the Classroom FLC | Julie Pochron | FLC co-organizer; Adjunct Associate Professor | Sessions were open to all faculty | | | |
| | Tori Purcell | FLC co-organizer; CTL Fellow; Assistant Chair; Visiting Associate Professor | | | | |
| | | | Session 1: 15 faculty participants | | | |
| | | | Session 2: 10 faculty participants | | | |
| | | | Session 3: 8 faculty participants | | | |

