

**Deliberative Dialogues:
Dedicated to Diffusing Divisive Discussion**

March 2018

Volume 11, Issue 6

Individual Highlights

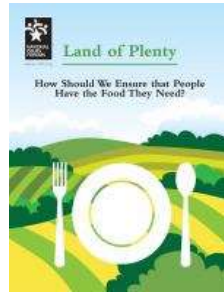
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President's Higher
Education Community
Service Honor Roll
Member With
Distinction



Carnegie Foundation
Elective Classification in
Community Engagement



Samples of
*National Issues
Forum Institute
materials*

People's responses to the issues of our day have become so divisive that divisiveness, itself, is an issue.

One of the steps that SUNY Cortland faculty, staff, and students are taking to help address this situation is the Institute for Civic Engagement's Deliberative Dialogue series.

Deliberative Dialogues are civil and facilitated small-group discussions about controversial issues through which participants can identify common values.

Dialogues are based on materials developed by the National Issues Forum Institute (NIFI, <https://www.nifi.org/>). Each participant receives a "placemat," which provides topic-related information.

Seven students, two faculty/staff members, and two community partners will participate in a Deliberative Dialogue Facilitator Training Workshop on March 19 in the Exhibition Lounge.

Professor Lisa Straley, SUNY Broome's Chair of Teacher Education/Early Childhood Education, and Coordinator of Civic Engagement, will conduct the training.

A second, "in-house" facilitator training for other interested individuals is tentatively scheduled for Friday, March 23.

The first Deliberative Dialogue event is scheduled for Monday, April 16, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in Corey Union's Exhibition Lounge. The topic will be, "Where have all the voters gone?"

The event will begin with an overview of the event's goal and guidelines, followed by facilitated small-group discussions. The event concludes with a large-group debrief session.

The Institute's nine *Action Team* interns are helping to guide this effort, which is part of the Team's Regional Voter Education Project. Some of the interns will "table" at Neubig on March 28 to learn topics that students would want to explore in a second Dialogue.

Deliberative Dialogues can help "set the stage" for civil and productive discussions of controversial topics that will energize the mid-term elections in November.

The Institute participates in related projects, such as the *SUNY Voter Education ad hoc Committee* and the *All-In Challenge*, which works to register and energize student voters.

In addition, three Action Team' interns have taken the initiative of creating a Generation Vote SGA Club.

North/South Central New York Coalition for Applied Learning: Learning by Doing Videoconference

Coming Events

Thursday, March 8

Noon to 1 p.m.

Sandwich Seminar:

Fraud Notification

William Veit, Kayleen Decker, Mariah Asencio, Edie Pennell, and John Suarez

Monday, March 19

4 to 6 p.m.

Corey Union's Fireplace

Lounge: **Deliberative**

Dialogue Facilitator Training

Wednesday, March 21

3 to 5 p.m.

Corey Union's Function

Room: **The State of Poverty**

Simulation

Monday, April 16

4 to 6 p.m.

Corey Union's Exhibition

Lounge: **Deliberative Dialog**

– Where have all the voters gone?

Tuesday, April 17

12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

North/South Central New

York Applied Learning

Coalition's Video-

Conference

By Shannon Hanmer and Nicole Powers



Elise Newkirk-Kotfila, Director,
SUNY's Office of Applied Learning

It's 2018. Education is adapting to a more modernized society. The traditional method of learning is transforming from sitting at a desk reading a textbook to going out in the field and *learning by doing*.

On Wednesday, February 7th, the Institute for Civic Engagement hosted a video conference for members of the North/South Central NY Applied Learning Coalition. The 12 participants explored three applied learning topics:

1. Ways of engaging students in applied learning activities. Ideas included:

Institute for Civic Engagement *Action Team* Interns Mariah Asencio, Kaley Decker, and Austen Johnson encouraged faculty and qualified students to explain their courses' relevance to students in concrete terms.

Laurie Worrell (Executive Director, NY Campus Compact) described a fall 2016 student-designed, two-hour outdoor event at Ithaca College at which elected officials discussed issues related to the presidential election. Students and others "bridge[d] polarized political discourse."

Elise Newkirk-Kotfila (Director, SUNY's Office of Applied Learning) proposed the idea of "study-away" courses in which students from different colleges would swap campuses for a semester, opening a broader range of experiences for students.

She also noted that SUNY has provided grants for fifteen campuses' "Community of Practice" events that include applied learning professional development opportunities.

SUNY Cortland received one of these grants in February 2018,

2. Ways of strengthening community impact, especially regarding social justice.

Alison Twang (Assistant Director, Center for Civic Engagement, Binghamton U.) noted that many of her Honors *Introduction to Civic Engagement* students tend to have a single political viewpoint. Because of this, she makes sure to teach her students how to think critically, and to recognize that many issues typically do not have one right or wrong answer.

John Suarez emphasized the importance of an apolitical approach by recounting a mid/late November 2016 survey conducted by SUNY Cortland's SGA, NYPIRG, and campus political clubs to inquire about students' political views.

Students crafted their survey prompts so as to not favor one political perspective over another.

3. Reasons for using the term "applied learning" vs. "experiential learning."

Newkirk-Kotfila said that SUNY prefers *applied learning* because it shows an active connection between learning and career, but she also said that SUNY understands that many people are more familiar with experiential learning, so colleges should feel free to use that term.

Micro-Credentialing An Option for SUNY Cortland?

CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT
PROJECT

Micro-credentialing can be a way to motivate students to complete a degree program

By Shannon Hanmer and Nicole Powers

Many of the skills and much of the knowledge that students gain throughout college are learned in classrooms, but what about the skills that are learned through participation in projects outside of the classroom?

One way of acknowledging such learning is through micro-credentialing, which connects noncredit and credit-bearing coursework with experiences.

For employers, micro-credentialing provides specificity regarding students' skills. It is a way for students to prove to employers that they have acquired skills and experience that make them stand out from competing applicants.

The SUNY Micro-Credentialing Task Force defines micro-credentialing as a way for institutions to verify, validate, and attest to students' achievement of specific skills and/or competencies.

Micro-credentials can take many forms, such as an award or a digital "badge." A series of micro-credentials can serve as credit toward a degree. They can be offered online, on-campus, or as a hybrid of both.

According to the SUNY Micro-Credentialing Task Force, Micro-credentials differ from traditional degrees and certificates in that they are generally offered in shorter or more flexible time spans and tend to be more narrowly focused.

Because of this, they can provide opportunities for industry/education connections and partnerships.

Academic quality is paramount for micro-credentialing, so the active involvement of faculty governance and the administration in the micro-credentialing process is key.



Micro-credentials that have been developed at other SUNY campuses were initiated locally, and they were developed and approved according to local campus policies and procedures. They are consistent with campus mission and strategic goals.

SUNY Cortland could benefit from implementing micro-credentialing because it can be used as a new and innovative way to motivate students to work towards completing a degree or credential program. This is achieved by highlighting progressive attainment of competencies. Micro-credentials supplement a student's existing degree program by including a complementary skills set and by providing short-term, immediate competency development opportunities that are valuable for professional development.

If SUNY Cortland decides to apply micro-credentialing to students' curricula, it will provide a new, hands-on learning platform for students to work towards their degrees.

SUNY Cortland's Risk Management Office and the Institute for Civic Engagement are exploring the possibility of an applied-learning approach to a Risk Management micro-credential.

SUNY Cortland's Risk Management Officer, William Veit, connected his interns' experiences to a possible Risk Management micro-credential:

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SUNY Cortland seniors and Political Science Association (PSA) members Adesola Belo (PSA SGA Rep), Gabriella Park (PSA President), Conner Vick (Institute for Civic Engagement Intern), and David Boodram went to D.C. last week to participate in a mock session of congress.

Watch for the full article in the Institute's April newsletter!

Applied Learning Videoconference, from page 2

SUNY Cortland is hosting the Coalition's second video-conference on April 17.

- Topics will be
- Ways of addressing college students' food insecurity.
 - Ways of convincing students to register to vote, to participate in voter education, and to vote.
 - Ways of assessing applied learning that go beyond students' self-assessment.
 - Renaming the Coalition to more accurately reflect its geographic reach (time permitting).

That last topic is important because the Coalition has grown from a Central NY organization to one that stretches from the I-81 corridor to eastern Long Island.

The Coalition's 41 members represent 26 institutions.

Participants of the February 7 video-conference were: Sara Alpert, SUNY Dutchess; Mariah Asencio, SUNY Cortland Intern; Kaley Decker, SUNY Cortland Intern; Linda Drake, SUNY Oneonta; Austen Johnson, SUNY Cortland Intern; Merissa McKasty, SUNY Office of Applied Learning; Elise Newkirk-Kotfila, SUNY Office of Applied Learning; Glenetta Phillips, SUNY Westchester; John Suarez, SUNY Cortland; Laura Trottier, SUNY Office of Applied Learning; Alison Twang, Binghamton University, and Laurie Worrell, NYCC.

Individuals interested in joining the Coalition and/or in participating in the April 17 video-conference should contact John Suarez at john.suarez@cortland.edu.

Deliberative Dialogues, from page 1

Binghamton University students are providing guidance.

Generation Vote is a non-partisan organization that focuses on voter education, voter registration, and get-out-the-vote efforts.

The Institute's Community Outreach Coordinator, Cyndi Guy, praised the interests and actions of SUNY Cortland students, who represent a spectrum of political thought, saying that

"Our future leaders are showing us that they are interested in exploring different points of view, and that they want to do that in a civil and informed way. That gives me hope."

For further information about the Dialogues, contact John Suarez at john.suarez@cortland.edu.

Micro-Credentialing, from page 3

"While Cortland's Enterprise Risk Management Program is focused on process improvement, compliance, and the internal control environment, our interns report that they've always learned a great deal, and that they've had fun while learning – it's a requirement!"

Students in any major could benefit from a Risk Management micro-credential. In addition to the obvious benefits to Business Economics and Sport Management majors, students in programs such as Childhood Education to Kinesiology to Community Health to Chemistry could also benefit.