TEACHING AND LEARNING AT PRATT

FLC / FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITY

Pratt Institute Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs): Cross-disciplinary Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 2016-17

This analysis of the FLC process and research projects during the first year captures the ground-up, community-building approach to faculty learning through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) across Pratt's schools, departments, and disciplines.

Background and Literature in the Field

During the spring 2016 semester a call went out to faculty asking them to submit proposals for research on assessment for learning through the Scholarship of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (SoTL). Applicants responded to a series of prompts that focused on a specific area of inquiry, how it was aligned with the overarching theme of one of five, multi-disciplinary FLCs, and ideas for collaboration. The applications were reviewed by an FLC steering committee (made up of two facilitators of each FLC). The FLC steering committee also identified necessary resources (stipends

and release time) to support the work. The FLCs committed to making their work public both internally and externally. The five cross-disciplinary FLC's, made up of forty faculty from across Pratt Institute, focused their inquiry on learning in the first year, the transfer of learning, learning in the critique context, narrative and student cognition, and self-assessment through e-portfolios.

The initiative is informed by research in the fields of organizational change (Kezar, 2014; Beach, et al., 2016); SoTL (Boose & Hutchings, 2015) and faculty development (Beach, et al., 2016). Beach et al. argue that collaboration, networking and community-building are essential to creating a teaching and learning culture in which "faculty development is everyone's work" (Beach, et al., 2016, p. 143). Kezar, argues that collective leadership leads to greater participation in the change process, provides a support network that fosters resiliency, and draws on diverse ideas across the institution (2014).

Kezar discusses the advantages of the shared cognition that is part of effective team dynamics of grassroots leadership. Shared mental models about the team and the context can lead to more complex cognitive thinking. In addition, shared beliefs about flexibility of leadership and collective problem solving also contribute to shared cognition (Kezar, 2014). The following analysis suggests that faculty learning communities (FLCs) can contribute to faculty learning and also constitute a form of faculty leadership.

The FLCs launched in September 2016, meeting on average once a month and communicating via the LMS or other sharing platforms. The ten FLC facilitators constituted a leadership body which participated in a retreat prior to the launch of the FLCs to learn about the theory and practice of faculty learning communities and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. The facilitators met monthly to discuss logistics, share challenges, and make mid-course adjustments in the FLC overarching framework.

FLC

"Faculty Learning Communities can contribute to faculty learning and also constitute a form of faculty leadership."

The FLC members participated in a mid-year, one-day session to share their reflections-in-action and learn from each other. Each FLC presented their work in progress and responded to questions from other FLC members. At the end of the 2016-17 academic year the FLCs shared their work publicly at the AICAD Annual Conference at Pratt Institute, June 14-16. The work was also shared in a poster session at the Gateways in Higher Education Conference sponsored by the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE) in Halifax, Nova Scotia, June 20-23 and the Professional and Organizational Development Conference (POD) in Montreal, Quebec, October 25-29. Based on the first year's work, the FLC facilitators proposed that the FLCs continue for another academic year.

FLC

Common Emergent Themes

During the mid-year work-in-progress session, FLC members identified the following emergent themes from the first year:

1. The FLCs constitute a community, not a committee;
2. SoTL has contributed to faculty development as well as the generation of new knowledge;
3. FLCs expanded the concentric circles of faculty learning by establishing a trusting relationship with faculty who opened their classrooms and studios for FLC researchers.

This process reflects Clapp's notion of the "distributed nature of creativity" in which a primary stakeholder group is responsible for shaping ideas but a secondary group can indirectly shape these ideas as well (2017, p.36).

"The FLCs constitute a community, not a committee. FLC expanded the concentric circles of faculty learning by establishing a trusting relationship with faculty who opened their classrooms and studios for FLC researchers."

Due to the multi-disciplinary nature of the FLCs, the first stage of the work involved developing trust among members to be able to develop a common taxonomy and lexicon about their particular topic of inquiry. This process influenced the development of shared research

methodologies. These common taxonomies and methodologies emerged organically out of individual classroom/studio practices and reviews of literature in multiple disciplinary fields. As one of the FLC members noted, the organic nature of this first stage of the FLC work meant that "we have non-structured conversations that lead to structure". Another noted that "we needed this open-ended opportunity to establish trust" and develop "faculty self-awareness". This gradual process not only led to faculty learning but also generated new knowledge in the form of common definitions, ways of seeing, and ways of analyzing across disciplines. With these common understandings and tools, some of the FLCs developed concentric circles of inquiry as they expanded beyond their own classrooms and studios.

One member noted that "it seems we are producing new knowledge at the same time we are changing ourselves." However, the development of common taxonomies and lenses for analyzing teaching and learning processes also reinforced the need to respect and value variations in teaching approaches within disciplines and to maintain a "culture of diversity."

Following is a summary of the FLC work during the 2016-17 academic year. Each summary begins with the original research questions posed by the FLC, a discussion of the multi-disciplinary nature of the FLC and how the FLC members revised the questions as they attempted to define and develop common terminologies, definitions, and analytical tools and processes.

FLC

Beach, A., Scorcinelli, M.D., Austin, A.E. & Rivard, J.K. *Faculty development in the age of evidence: Current practices, future imperatives.* Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Boose, D.L. & Hutchings, P. (2015). Bridging faculty development and organizational development: A faculty learning community on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. *Learning Communities Journal* (7), 25-42.

Clapp, E. P. (2016). *Participatory creativity: introducing access and equity to the creative classroom (1 edition).* New York, NY: Routledge.

Kezar, A. J. (2014). *How colleges change: Understanding, leading and enacting change.* New York, N.Y.: Routledge.
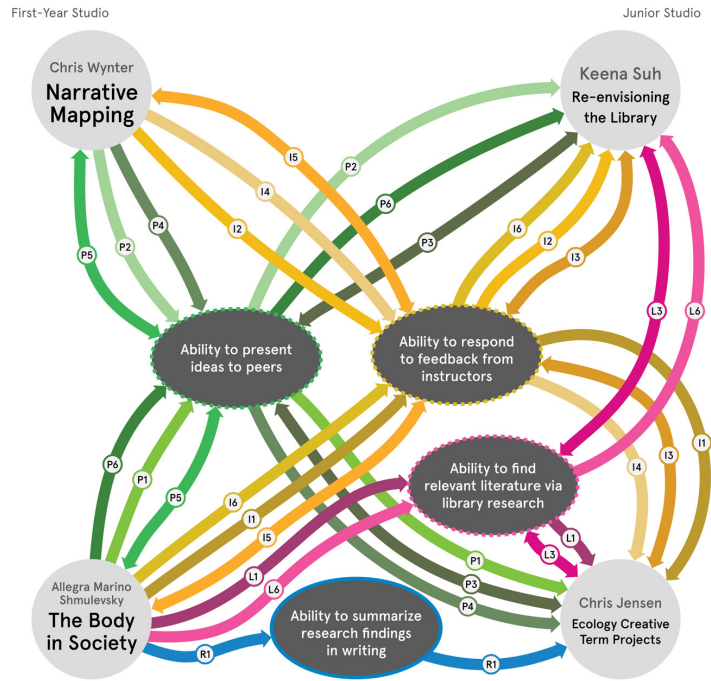
Brian Brooks (Facilitator),
Adjunct Associate Professor CCE,
Foundation Arts

Chris Jensen (Facilitator),
Associate Professor, Math & Science

Allegra Marino Shmulevsky Visiting
Instructor, Intensive English Program

Chris Wynter
Professor, Foundation Art

Eric Godoy
Assistant Chairperson, Social Science &
Cultural Studies

Keena Suh
Associate Professor, Interior Design

Scott VanderVoort
Adjunct Associate Professor,
Industrial Design

Thomas Healy
Lecturer Intensive English, Visiting
Assistant Professor (left in Nov 2016)

Transfer of Learning

Initial Research Theme

A cornerstone of the BFA revisions has been to look deeply into the four-year education of Pratt students. A critical moment in this journey occurs in the transition from the freshman to sophomore year, when students enter their majors. How does the knowledge and experience students gain in Foundation and Liberal Arts transfer to the more specialized education of the major? How can sophomore faculty help students build on this previous knowledge and experience? How can Foundation and Liberal Arts faculty develop teaching strategies that more effectively promote students' transfer of learning? How can they sustain learning?

Summary of Process

The beginning of the FLC process was definitely characterized by a "getting to know you" period. We spent our first couple of meetings becoming

familiar with each other. A successful FLC needs to not only breed professional familiarity (What do you do here at Pratt?) but also personal familiarity (What are you passionate about? What do you feel comfortable contributing?). Although we built these familiarities throughout our academic year together, the early portion of our year was perhaps most intensely-focused on getting to know each other.

In addition to getting to know each other, our early process involved a lot of discussion of transfer as our focus of inquiry. We needed to reach a mutual understanding of what constituted transfer, how transfer might happen at Pratt, and how we might investigate transfer. Transfer is a huge subject area, and it was critical for us to establish the scope/domain of our own investigation of transfer in a manner that created a "reasonable goal" for the FLC.

The need to get to know each other and to define our task led to a prolonged period of what we have come to think of as "productive meandering" (later defined as "ideation", see "findings" below). There were a few informal meet-ups of different members during this first semester, but for the most part we relied on the monthly meetings. Getting together once a month for about ninety minutes led to very slow progress, and limited the amount of meandering that we could do. We would have liked to have the opportunity (and support) to meet more frequently (see "challenges" below).

Towards the end of the first semester we realized that if we wanted to complete any kind of meaningful exploration, we needed to meet more than once a month. Getting the entire group together more than once a month was nearly impossible, and we were not even sure that having all eight of us in the room for all discussions was necessary or most productive. So we decided to break into two working groups - Group Red and Group Blue - based on our disciplines. Each of these working groups initially contained an IEP and Foundation instructor (representing the

FLC

"A successful FLC needs to not only breed professional familiarity (What do you do here at Pratt?) but also personal familiarity (What are you passionate about? What do you feel comfortable contributing?)."

first year) and a Liberal Arts and Design Studio instructor (representing the second year and beyond). Breaking into groups ultimately proved quite valuable, as both groups made different discoveries. But there were also challenges associated with the establishment of Group Red and Group Blue: meeting logistics got better but still presented a challenge, and overall we all had to do a lot more work (both because we were meeting more frequently and because we had to communicate our findings to the other group).

Group Red and Group Blue each established a research focus at the end of our first semester, and then worked independently for most of our second semester together. Regular monthly meetings of the entire FLC gave each group the chance to present progress to the other group and get feedback on that progress. Towards the end of the second semester, we came together to synthesize our findings. Much of May and early June was spent in multiple "extra" meetings that were used to refine our presentation of findings and to make new discoveries at the interface between Group Red and Group Blue. It's important to note that much of our work was completed outside of the meeting schedule imagined by the original charge to FLCs: the extraordinary work that we completed emerged from the extraordinary will and effort of this FLC to overcome logistical barriers.

An important tool that aided our process throughout the academic year was Pratt's Learning Management System (LMS). Although we tried and failed to use the LMS to overcome some of our communication problems (see "challenges" below), we did use the LMS very effectively to provide centralized access to information (When are meetings happening? What are we supposed to be working on between meetings?) and to archive our work throughout this process (What have we already discussed? What have we created?). Moving into our second year as an FLC, it will be great to be able to look back at our full history on a single site.

FLC

"The extraordinary work that we completed emerged from the extraordinary will and effort of this FLC to overcome logistical barriers."

An important part of the FLC process is the constant guidance and support provided by FLC facilitators. This "logistical" element of the process is in the background at all times, and you know that facilitation is working well if it becomes less visible or prominent in the overall FLC's process. Chris and Brian whole-heartedly believe that having two complementary facilitators is crucial to establishing a functioning FLC. Not only are there more tasks that need to be undertaken by the facilitator than a single person's personality and skillset could ever handle effectively, but Chris and Brian discovered that it was crucial to externalize their facilitation plans in order to get those plans right. Our facilitators engaged in regular dialogue to highlight where we were unsure about the direction of the FLC and to check in on the vibe/morale of individual members and the collective whole. And there were a lot of logistical problems that the facilitators had to deal with on a regular basis (see "challenges" below).

The Value and Challenges of the Inter-Disciplinary Context

Starting in the earliest days of our work together, our FLC really came to value our inter-disciplinary composition. Members of our FLC frequently used adjectives such as "valuable" and "refreshing" when describing the interdisciplinary nature of our community. We greatly enjoyed "getting beyond our own silos" and learning what other people teach in other programs. Part of that enjoyment was in learning new approaches and ways of thinking from other FLC members, but we also found an extraordinary amount of continuity between our various ways of teaching, even between faculty members whose teaching content differs radically. This finding was both surprising and reassuring, and motivated our collective work.

We also valued the "general education" the FLC participation provided. Everyone in our FLC arrived with both specific understanding of their role in a Pratt education and a general lack of

FLC

"We also found an extraordinary amount of continuity between our various ways of teaching, even between faculty members whose teaching content differs radically. This finding was both surprising and reassuring, and motivated our collective work."

understanding of the overall education that our students receive; this knowing well the specific, knowing not well enough the general is probably typical of Pratt faculty and results from the very insular nature of our different programs.

In striving to understand transfer we also had to gain a better understanding of what other programs at Pratt are trying to achieve educationally. On many occasions our community had to engage in mini-tutorials wherein some members would have to explain an idea native to their own discipline to members of the community outside of that discipline. These tutorials forced those "in the know" to explain their discipline in basic terms, not relying on the dense vocabulary and set of cultural assumptions that permeate each of our individual disciplines.

A final value of the interdisciplinary nature of our FLC was the chance to see a Pratt education through the eyes of a student (at least partially). Although our FLC was not large enough to fully recreate the pathways that Pratt students take throughout their four years in the programs of Art & Design, by tracing partial pathways through each of our courses we began to see the students' experience. Just knowing what a student has experienced or will experience in their Pratt education makes it possible to be a more effective teacher in one's own "segment" of a student's overall educational pathway.

Our challenges in being from different disciplines are not surprising or new: we had to work to see past superficial differences in the way that we approach teaching problems, to root out the deeper pedagogical concerns that each of us bring to our teaching at Pratt. We all teach using different content, vocabulary, culture, and media. Seeing the equivalence between what we teach required seeing past these differences. The approach that best dealt with this challenge is also not surprising: the more time that we had for dialogue and discussion, the more we were able to communicate through the thicket of our disciplinary differences (see "challenges" below).

FLC

"We all teach using different content, vocabulary, culture, and media. Seeing the equivalence between what we teach required seeing past these differences."

Reflections-in-Action and Revisions in Research Process

At the beginning, our FLC members did not know what to expect from our research work or have a very clear sense of what was expected of us. The idea that we had to end up with a "product" was present in our early discussions but given how much work needed to be done to transform our group into a community, what ended up being most "productive" was to not focus on the community as a research body.

In the middle of our work as a community, we mostly let go of the idea of producing something. The formation of Group Red and Group Blue gave us the chance to meet more frequently and explore ideas without a strong sense of what product might emerge (this was "productive meandering" or what we now call "ideation". See "findings" below).

As the end of the academic year approached - and especially as the goal to present at AICAD was undertaken - the pressure to output some tangible product definitely helped to focus our research. Both Group Red and Group Blue came up with clear questions that could be pursued in the time remaining, and the opportunity to communicate what we had discovered provided needed motivation.

This year of exploration has placed us in the position to have a much clearer view of both what's needed and possible as we consider "next steps" for understanding transfer of learning at Pratt. We anticipate a very different process and relationship to the task of research during academic year 2017-2018 (see "continue" below).

Literature in the Fields

Early on our FLC decided to focus its efforts on investigating how transfer happens at Pratt rather than delving into the literature on transfer of learning. There were strengths and weaknesses

FLC

"This year of exploration has placed us in the position to have a much clearer view of both what is needed and possible as we consider next steps for understanding transfer of learning at Pratt."

associated with this approach. By not getting too focused on the literature we maximized the use of our limited time (see "challenges" below) and were able to look at the idea of transfer without prejudice generated by external definitions. But we also never developed clear context for our work beyond Pratt; we will have to delve into the literature to better place our findings in context as we work on our planned publication of this year's exploration (see "communicate" below).

Revisions and Refinement of Research Questions

Although our FLC was themed in a way that implied some general questions about transfer, we really discovered the questions that we wanted to address over the course of the academic year. Rather than "changing", it was more like our research questions came into focus over the course of the year: we started out with vague and fuzzy ideas about what we wanted to explore and converged on more specific questions over time. One of the clear changes in research focus that we experienced was a dramatic narrowing of our questions in response to the limitations we experienced as an FLC (see "challenges" below).

Whereas at the beginning of the first semester together we might have conceived of trying to understand transfer of learning across Pratt's curriculum, it soon became clear that just understanding transfer in the context of our own teaching was a substantial task for the FLC as constituted.

FLC

"In this sense we may have shifted from a discussion of what should transfer to a more modest question of what could transfer between our courses."

"Overlap" and "commonality" were key ideas that found their way into our research questions. Both Group Red and Group Blue (see above) asked questions that were focused on similarities in our teaching. In this sense we may have shifted from a discussion of what should transfer to a more modest question of what could transfer between our courses. A major "discovery" that shifted our research on transfer was made by Group Blue, who began to look at

transfer of process rather than just transfer of skills. The idea that processes of working - often in radically different contexts - might be the most significant form of transfer our students experience shifted the direction of our inquiry.

Early Findings

Our main finding - perhaps not surprisingly - is that there are many potential transfer of learning pathways between particular elements of a Pratt education. We have mostly focused on discovering and illuminating these pathways: we did not try to assess how well the potential of these pathways is being realized by analyzing actual transfer of learning. We liken our first year of inquiry to "natural history": like an ecologist looking for a research question in a mostly-unchronicled ecosystem, we first sought to discover What's there? and What patterns are commonly-observed? rather than jump right into conducting "experiments". We see the natural history of transfer of learning that we have uncovered as the first step towards asking more pointed research questions, questions that might assess the effectiveness of transfer of learning between the first and subsequent years of a Pratt education.

Group Red decided to take a very granular approach to discovering pathways of learning. Each of the four members of the group selected a single major project taught in a particular class and presented the process and product of that project to the other three members of the group. Three major findings emerged from the resulting analysis of these projects. Chris Wynter became inspired to map transfer of learning as it supported his project, tracing back to individual skills learned in the first year of Light, Color, and Design that students had to transfer into his second-semester project. Chris Jensen focused on how considering "circuits of transfer" might allow us to better understand the potential for transfer between different elements of a Pratt education. The resulting diagrams suggested that some transferable skills/vocabularies/processes

FLC

"We see the natural history of transfer of learning that we have uncovered as the first step towards asking more pointed research questions, questions that might assess the effectiveness of transfer of learning between the first and subsequent years of a Pratt education."

FLC

(for example, "the ability to present ideas to peers") maintain pathways that interconnect all aspects of students' educations, whereas other transferable elements (for example, "development of sustainable design strategies") are only connected via particular aspects of students' educations. Keena Suh wanted to understand how particular pathways of transfer might be visualized by looking at the work that students produce. She asked members of the FLC (at first just members of Group Red, but ultimately all members) to contribute sample students works and showed how transfer of particular kinds of learning could be followed through these works.

Group Blue decided to focus on how processes of working might transfer between various projects that students complete in their classes. After discussing the work processes that each member asks students to undertake, members of this group realized that even though the products they required of their students were quite different, there were strong similarities between their processes. Scott VanderVoort had been considering a schema for describing his own student project process, which involved three stages of work: ideation, iteration, and presentation (IIP). Group Blue decided to adopt this IIP framework as a hypothesis about how process might be transferable between different courses that students take. They asked all members of the FLC to highlight how ideation, iteration, and presentation happen in their classroom; the resulting table of IIP across eight different student assignments allowed members of the group to make an initial assessment that IIP might be a good way of conceptualizing transfer of working processes at Pratt.

IIP became a major point of discussion for the entire FLC, inspiring individual members to reflect on how well their class assignments leveraged the potentials of these three stages of process. Although still unrealized, we began to discuss how IIP practices for particular courses or assignments might be diagrammed, which might

"IIP became a major point of discussion for the entire FLC, inspiring individual members to reflect on how well their class assignments leveraged the potentials of these three stages of process."

allow for enlightening comparison of processes across disciplines and thus better understanding of the potential for students to transfer "ways of working" across their educations.

One of the more important "meta-findings" made by our FLC is that transfer of learning can be considered to occur in a variety of dimensions and at different scales of student understanding. Perhaps the most obvious transferable element is a basic skill learned in a particular class: a student might understand how to compose a color palette, or how to organize the sequence of information in a written paragraph. These granular skills are critical, but are not the only kind of transferable learning that goes on at Pratt.

We also found that vocabulary was critical to transfer, as students learn to bring both visual and verbal vocabularies out of their first year and into the courses and work of subsequent years. As students transfer vocabulary they must also bring with them the broader understanding that meaning is not fixed across all contexts; the "skill" of being able to interpret the meaning of words within different contexts is inherently less granular than other transferable skills that we discovered, and it is less clear when and how students might obtain this skill during their Pratt education.

And perhaps our most prominent discovery was that process could be a crucial transferable form of learning at Pratt. As much as we teach skills we also teach ways of working, and inasmuch as there are commonalities in the working processes we teach our students, there may be strong potential for students to transfer their creative processes across their four-year education. Further exploration of the IIP "hypothesis" would allow us to better understand this process-transfer potential. Most of our findings are summarized in our AICAD Student Success Conference presentation, which can be downloaded here: http://www.christopherxjjensen.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/2017-Suh-et-al-AICAD_v10.pdf

FLC

"Transfer of learning can be considered to occur in a variety of dimensions and at different scales of student understanding."

As the attached presentation suggests, a major focus for our FLC was on creating visual depictions of pathways of transfer. We chose to focus on visual depictions for two reasons. First, we believe that visual depictions of transfer are the most accessible and have the greatest potential to inform a broad audience, in particular the Pratt community. Second, because much of our students' work is visual in nature, we found it easier to allow the work to demonstrate the transfer. This sort of visual depiction of transfer can be seen in the Light, Color, and Design pathways (pages 5 & 6 of the presentation) and in the four-year depictions of potential pathways of transfer (pages 13-27 of the presentation). As these diagrams suggest, the challenge of how to visually depict the learning demonstrated by non-visual work (such as student writing) remains an obstacle to fully visualizing transfer of learning at Pratt.

It's important to note that the scope of our investigation of transfer was very narrow. Not only did we consider transfer of learning solely between elements of our own teaching: we also generally focused on particular projects that each of us teach. The fact that we were able to discover so many potential pathways of transfer within the limited scope of our investigation suggests that a much larger potential for transfer must exist within the overall Pratt curriculum. Expanding our inquiry to encompass a larger fraction of that curriculum is a possible future direction for our FLC (see "continue" below).

Challenges

It was clear from early on that our members really valued the opportunity to be a part of our FLC. We all experienced regular positive exchanges and an unprecedented chance to learn about teaching at Pratt. In many ways it was our enthusiasm for those opportunities that overcame the many challenges that we faced.

Our biggest challenge was that our FLC was under-resourced, both in terms of time and in

FLC

"The fact that we were able to discover so many potential pathways of transfer within the limited scope of our investigation suggests that a much larger potential for transfer must exist within the overall Pratt curriculum."

terms of compensation. Pratt faculty are busy people. Many teach at more than one institution, and some do not know their schedule until just before the semester begins. Many aren't just faculty members: they are also professional practitioners with substantial responsibilities beyond Pratt's gates. And many are heavily involved in various forms of on-campus service beyond FLC participation.

We quickly learned that it is a "big ask" to place eight Pratt faculty members into a faculty learning community without any prior planning and then expect that this community would meet at least eight times during the academic year. As facilitators, Brian and Chris spent a lot of time just arranging for meetings. The effort required just to get us all in the same room consumed time that might have been focused on the research charge of the FLC.

We dealt with this time challenge in a variety of ways. First, we tried to get out in front of the scheduling task. Meetings for each semester were scheduled well in advance of the beginning of classes with an eye for minimizing absence due to scheduling conflicts. Second, we decided that in order to have enough productive working time we would need to break into two smaller working groups, Group Red and Group Blue (see "process" above). The fact that these working groups involved three or four people rather than eight made it somewhat easier to arrange face-to-face meetings, but the lack of any administratively-scheduled FLC meeting time still presented significant challenges.

Compensation rates for FLC participation also presented challenges. Our part-time members received $1000 per academic year and our full-time members received no compensation. As facilitators, Brian and Chris felt limited in what they could reasonably ask from FLC members given this limited compensation. We recognize that FLC participation is a form of "service" and therefore should be considered part of the regular duties of a full-time faculty member.

FLC

However, several factors make this idea that "FLC participation is just a form of service" problematic. The first is that productive FLC participation as we experienced it involves a substantially larger commitment of time than most other uncompensated forms of on-campus service. The fact that FLC's are "a community, not a committee" also means that they require a lot more face-to-face time than other service commitments. A second problem is that department chairs and faculty who serve on peer committees are generally unaware of what the FLC's do and how much work is involved in FLC participation; without a clear understanding of how much "service" is involved in these FLC's, it is hard to know how well this work is acknowledged within departments. The third problem is that FLC members are "the usual suspects", people who are regularly tapped to fill service roles across campus. Were it the case that being on the FLC was the only form of service that members were committed to, perhaps the lack of compensation might have been less of an issue. But given how much most of our members are already involved in, one of two things needs to be done: either members need to be relieved of other service commitments or they need to be compensated for service above and beyond the call of duty.

We dealt with this problem of "effort constraint" by tempering our ambitions: at several junctures we had to realize that what we might have wanted to explore was going to be "too much" given the reasonable workload that could be expected of our members. But mostly, we just rode the enthusiasm and generosity of our members, who ended up putting in far more hours to FLC activities than they were reasonably compensated for. Such is the manner in which many important tasks are completed at Pratt.

Attrition was also a challenge. One member of our FLC, Thomas Healy, dropped out towards the end of our first semester together. This loss of a member threw off the balance of disciplines that we had designed into Group Red and Group

FLC

Blue, and left us with fewer members working on our research questions. There wasn't really any way to deal with this challenge, and it is likely that in the future attrition will continue to be a challenge to FLC's.

To a lesser degree, communication was a challenge to our group. Specifically, we struggled to find a channel of communication that we could productively use when face-to-face meetings were not possible. Numerous platforms are used for communication across campus - including group emails, LMS forums, Pratt Commons, and Facebook - which makes arriving on a common communication platform difficult. We quickly discovered that face-to-face meetings were far more productive than remote/non-synchronous communication tools, so we abandoned the LMS as a platform for communication (while retaining it as an information hub and archive) and minimized reliance on email discussions.

To a much lesser degree, finding a common language among our members was a challenge (perhaps exciting and motivating, but a challenge nonetheless). One of the joys of being in an inter-disciplinary FLC is discovering how differently other members teach, think, and speak. We were able to effectively bridge these differences through lots of face-to-face dialogue.

In an ideal world, FLC's would be constituted to address the resource challenges outlined above. An FLC whose members were selected a semester in advance could be administratively scheduled to assure that most (if not all) members were available to meet weekly at a particular time, and greater support for FLC members would allow facilitators to ask for greater effort from each member. The establishment of a more-broadly used platform for non-synchronous communication would also aid future FLC's in dealing with these logistical challenges.

FLC

"We plan to continue to use various forms of diagramming and mapping to communicate our findings, as we feel that such visual depictions are most clear for a general audience and most salient to our peers at Pratt and at other art and design institutions."

Making the FLC Work Public

Our FLC presented at AICAD using a presentation that was focused on visual depiction of our findings. We plan to continue to use various forms of diagramming and mapping to communicate our findings, as we feel that such visual depictions are most clear for a general audience and most salient to our peers at Pratt and at other art and design institutions. We are excited to present our findings to the Pratt community in the Fall and to a larger audience at the 2018 Teaching & Learning Conference planned to take place on campus. We have also discussed opportunities to make our presentation at more disciplinary venues such as the Interior Design Educators Council meeting taking place March 2018. We are currently working on a paper to be published in a journal that focuses on the scholarship of teaching and learning. The audience for this paper would be other educators interested in transfer, particularly those at studio-based schools.

Future Work

At our final meeting, our group decided that it would only continue on if we could retain most of the current members. At present it appears that we have achieved that goal, as only one member is being lost to attrition: Eric Godoy has accepted a tenure-track position at another institution and will be leaving Pratt this summer.

We decided not to seek out additional members for several reasons. Adding additional members would further complicate what has already been a very complicated FLC scheduling process. We also want to capitalize on the "meandering" that we did during our first year of existence; adding new members would require substantial time to bring them "up to speed", so restricting the FLC to current members will allow us to dive right into our next inquiry.

We expect to be substantially more focused - and therefore more productive - in our second

FLC

"The scope of our inquiry might be expanded to include the teaching of Pratt faculty who are not a part of our FLC, engaging students in a discussion of what has transferred across their Pratt educations, and collecting a larger body of student works with which to visualize transfer of learning."

19

year of existence. Although we have not reached consensus on exactly how our explorations will change, we have discussed a variety of ways in which the scope of our inquiry might be expanded. This includes expanding our current analyses to include the teaching of Pratt faculty who are not a part of our FLC, engaging students in a discussion of what has transferred across their Pratt educations, and collecting a larger body of student works with which to visualize transfer of learning.

In many ways, our FLC has been a laboratory in which we have worked to develop our own teaching through the understanding of how other members teach. This function of the FLC has been valuable, but trades off with our efforts to chronicle transfer as a broader phenomenon at Pratt. In the coming academic year, the FLC will have to decide how much effort we want to allocate to these two competing "outcomes".

FLC

"Our FLC has been a laboratory in which we have worked to develop our own teaching through the understanding of how other members teach."

Learning in the First Year

Research Theme

The FLC members came together to explore the following topics related to learning in the first year. First year teaching and learning poses particular challenges. Every first-year student must successfully negotiate three major stages: separation, transition, and incorporation. First year students are also the most heterogeneous cohort on any campus in terms of learning style, habits of mind, work ethic, areas of interest, and previous experience. Students negotiate separation, transition and incorporation in all aspects of their life on campus and this reality must be both considered and managed in the classroom if effective teaching and learning is to occur. Inquiry questions include looking at the range of the dimensions in first year outcomes and asking how to effectively integrate them into the classroom: How can knowledge and skill outcomes contribute

Kim Sloane (Facilitator),
Chair, Foundation

Maura Conley (Facilitator),
Faculty, HMS and IEP

Ann Schoenfeld
Art History (Part-time)

Jennifer Pipitone
Psychology (Part-time)

Linnea Paskow
Foundation (Part-time)

Micki Spiller
Foundation (Part-time)

Rachid Eladlouni
IEP (Part-time)

Nichole van Beek
IEP (Part-time)

James Lipovac
Foundation (Part-time)

to the development of self-efficacy? How can we teach to achieve student metacognition? What classroom strategies promote learning how to learn? What life skills and habits of mind contribute to increased learning, and how do we get the students to make this connection? Students in this age group are developing the capacity of abstract thinking, how can we effectively promote the interaction between skill and concepts?

Summary of Process

Our overall idea was to examine learning in the first year through examining aspects of it that are the basis of the inquiry questions of our group members. Our hope was to find a common big idea that could serve as a tent to encompass our rather large topic.

We began the year by crafting a survey to give to students at the beginning and the end of their first year at Pratt. The survey aimed to measure the students' sense of their own abilities. Our "tent idea" formed the basis of our survey. The idea is that in the first year, an outcome for all disciplines is learning how to learn in college, the students' new environment. Learning in college is different from learning in K-12 and demands that students become self-regulated learners, achieve a degree of self-efficacy, and become fully acculturated in their new environment. In order to fully succeed, they must achieve a metacognitive awareness of their learning process. For Art and Design students, this process is somewhat different from other students in higher ed. We want to investigate specifically what this means.

We learned something about surveys and Pratt, and did not get the response we hoped for–but we have collected some useable data. We are thankful to have had Jennifer Pipitone, from SSCS, in our group. She has been the main architect of the survey and will help us in sorting out the data. She has also worked closely with Linnea Paskow to reformulate her teaching

FLC

> **"Students negotiate separation, transition and incorporation in all aspects of their life on campus and this reality must be both considered and managed in the classroom if effective teaching and learning is to occur."**

techniques. She has helped us all understand research better.

We all read *Thinking About Teaching and Learning: Developing Habits of Learning with First Year College and University Students* by Robert Leamnson, (1999 Stylus Publishing). We also, after many of our meetings, discovered that outside theory or research was relevant to the topics we broached. We revisited Bloom's Taxonomy, Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, and Vygotsky's Theories of Cognitive Development. These were all very helpful to reimagining our own classroom practices.

Early in our year together, each member of the group wrote and presented a short description of their inquiry question and if they had found pertinent literature, it was shared on our LMS page. Further meetings explored how each of our individual areas of interest might be tied together in our big picture tent. This is when we discovered that some members were driven more by research and some were interested in adjusting their classrooms practices. Though these two areas are very closely linked, it was still a divergence our group encountered throughout our meetings together. In one of our last meetings we discussed how we'd link the two areas if we were to have another year together in this FLC.

Work from our FLC has already found its way into some public forums:
- Kim Sloane gave a talk that included ideas explored in out FLC – achieving first year out comes by recognizing that the process of self regulated learning and self efficacy can be mapped directly onto the design process
- Linnea Paskow, James Lipovac, and Kim Sloane all presented at the FATE (Foundation, Art, Theory and Education) conference in Kansas City. These presentations grew out of ideas researched in the classroom and in our FLC
- We presented at the AICAD event at Pratt in June

The more minor challenges we encountered had to do with scheduling. Especially in the spring

FLC

"In order to fully succeed, they must achieve a metacognitive awareness of their learning process. For Art and Design students, this process is somewhat different from other students in higher ed. We want to investigate specifically what this means."

semester when people's schedules changed we sometimes found it hard to have full attendance at our meetings. This is when the LMS came in quite useful. There we posted reading, meeting notes, and thoughts for what we would cover in our next monthly meeting.

The more major challenge was to streamline our main topic. After our meetings, we found our ideas gaining more and more ground. Trying to reign it all in in a succinct and relevant way, that somehow related to our original idea, was something we struggled with all semester. It is a sign of a good topic, but it was definitely a challenge we encountered.

We all very much want to continue next year. We would like to repeat our survey, having learned from our experiences this past year. We are all eager to continue our research and focus on how to integrate what we have learned, and put our finding into a powerful and meaningful form so we can share it with the larger Pratt community. Our time together has been a very important and effective stimulus for deep thinking about teaching and learning. We are grateful for the opportunity.

FLC

"Our time together has been a very important and effective stimulus for deep thinking about teaching and learning. We are grateful for the opportunity."

Kelly Driscoll Facilitator,
Fine Arts

Gaia Hwang Facilitator,
Graduate Communications Design

T. Camille Martin
Facilitator, School of Design

Dianne Bellino
School of Art

Analia Segal
Sculpture and Interdisciplinary (Part-time)

Rhonda Schaller
Director of CPD

Loukia Tsafoulia
Interior Design (Part-time)

Anthony Caradonna
Architecture (Full-time)

Raphael Griswold
Fine Art (Part-time)

John Monti
 Fine Art (Full-time)

Jennifer Leung
 HMS (Part-time)

Eva Perez de Vega
Architecture (Part-time)

Farzam Yazdanseta
Architecture (Part-time)

Crit the Crit

The Crit the Crit Faculty Learning Community explored studio-based critique typologies and methodologies used at Pratt. The FLC explored faculty considerations of quality that inform the crit, the pedagogical approach in different fields, and the various methods used to perform critiques in different fields. The inquiry questions include: Do the fields of art, design, architecture, and creative writing had produced a distinctive approach to critique? How do we discuss a tradition of critique that has been inherited and understood in different disciplines? Which typologies of critiques are more employed for both formative and summative assessment? What types of scaffolding are necessary across students' educational experience of critique to support and sustain learning. What types of skills, attitudes and approaches are desirable in the participants of a critique?

FLC Process First Phase

The initial discussion among members of the FLC revolved around the definition of critique. Our first research finding established that producing a comprehensive definition of critique would be an impossible task that might not be even desirable.

The group members reflected and shared their experiences with critique sessions in the distinct disciplines represented by the members: Sculpture, Printmaking, Interior Design, Architecture, Communications Design, Humanities and Media Studies. The diversity of technique, strategies, typologies, approaches, methods, and procedures emerged as an invaluable asset to our institute. The surprise and excitement of discovering such a variety of approaches and techniques across disciplines, levels and pedagogies manifested the need to create opportunities to share them. Mapping and recording this asset became the primary goal of the group.

We created a critique matrix to illustrate the different elements that characterize and portray a critique session and categorized them into eight main sections:

1. Type of Critique (Desk Crit, Pin Up, Written evaluation, Science fair, Studio visit, others)
2. Critique Format (Silent review, Presentation, Conversational, Dialogical, Commentary, others)
3. Timing and Pace
4. Assessment (Formative, Summative)
5. Goals and expectation
6. Phase of the Project (Initial, Intermediate, Final)
7. Discipline
8. Type of project (Design Solution, prototype (siteless), a building proposal, an urban proposal, an installation, thesis proposal. Individual or team work)
9. Year and semester
10. Environment and Organization (Participants inhabitation of the space, Sitting/Standing, room equipment organized radially, around a focal point, in parallel rows-one directional, other)
11. Dynamism and location (classroom, studio

FLC

"The diversity of technique, strategies, typologies, approaches, methods, and procedures emerged as an invaluable asset to our institute. The surprise and excitement of discovering such a variety of approaches and techniques across disciplines, levels and pedagogies manifested the need to create opportunities to share them."

space, lab, hallway, amphitheater, gallery, open-air, interior, others)
12. Recording and documentation
13. Jury Makeup (Peer-driven, Faculty-driven, Guest driven, Expert driven, others)
14. Gender and diversity makeup of the panel
15. Miscellaneous (Tone, Faculty dominance, student dominance, atmosphere)

We conducted a qualitative observational study in a variety of departments throughout two semesters to collect and refine this matrix. The FLC members were invited as non-participatory observers during critique sessions in other departments. Observations were recorded through written descriptions and collected in a data document.

Second Phase

In the second phase of the FLC, we analyzed the observational data. We recognized the need to generate and design a tool that would facilitate the collection of data during observation. A synthetic visual form would allow the observer to annotate all the relevant data and generate a comparison matrix that could be queried in search of patterns in a following phase. The tool can translate the critique event into a structure that can be replicated by another individual. It visualizes the DNA of a critique typology, fostering comparable classifications. Multiple iterations of the tool were designed as more observations were conducted. New elements and features were added.

The assessment of the critique was never part of this research. Observation and data collection was always limited to format and mechanics and we never discussed content or evaluated success. We recorded set up, composition and dynamics while intentionally disregarding the subject matter or the specific argument of the review. The FLC expertise does not cover assessment evaluation, and the goal of the group was never to create such an outcome. Self reflection has

FLC

"The tool can translate the critique event into a structure that can be replicated by another individual. It visualizes the DNA of a critique typology, fostering comparable classifications."

been a fundamental tool for deepening our understanding of critique. We do not aim to determine best practices, rather to mirror and visualize the expertises we want to present in our institution. We are looking at different models, compiling relevant information, documenting results in order to offer a body of resources for faculty and to inspire their practice.

The Value and Challenges of the Inter-Disciplinary Context

The benefit of the cross-disciplinary dialogue was inestimable; the FLC created a space for exchange that promoted collegiality and learning across disciplines. This exchange of energy and experiences was the most valuable outcome of the research. Through the realization of how much knowledge and expertise different disciplines have invested in generating tools to practice critique, we were able to overcome the uncertainty of such a subject. The definition of critique will always be inadequate unless it emerges from the combination and comparison of multiple approaches from different disciplines. In the context of academia, communities where a genuine exchange of methods and procedures among different disciplines is conducted and practiced, are extremely rare. The FLC Crit the Crit provided not only this opportunity but created the framework to actively reduce disciplinary silos.

FLC

> **"The benefit of the crossdisciplinary dialogue was inestimable; the FLC created a space for exchange that promoted collegiality and learning across disciplines."**

Revisions and Refinement of Research Questions

Our conversations revealed that there are many critique traditions across the Institute that embody the legacy of a particular discipline, school, department or faculty cohort. The culture of a department or school influences the critique. By creating a catalogue we are able to begin to uncover what the inherent traditions are, how they manifest in different disciplines, and how can we come up with a language to

catalogue them. It became apparent that instead of creating a definition for critique, our work would focus on observing and documenting the landscape of critique at Pratt.

Public Communication, Next Steps

In the past year, we have been presenting our findings to a diverse group of faculty. We presented at the 2017 AICAD Student Success Conference in New York City Wednesday, Jun 14, - Friday, Jun 16. The conference focussed on the topic of Student Success and engaged faculty, students, and staff across functional areas to build upon, and strengthen integrated communication and learning.

The content generated within the FLC was also presented to a workshop offered by the School of Design in October 2017. The workshop aimed to engage faculty in self-reflection and analysis on the practice of critique in studio classes.

Public communication about the outcome of this Faculty Learning Community plays a fundamental role in our research outcome. The goal of this group is to generate and design a catalog of critique that can provide precious resources to new and experienced faculty. In the next months, the team will engage in research through design aiming to further our inquiry by responding to design challenges such as: What would be the best way to collect examples of critique across the institute? Which research methodology is more appropriate for this effort (observation, survey, semi-structured interviews or structured interviews, i.e.)? What would be the best format to make the content available to faculty and students? Should the catalog function as a encyclopedia (not exhaustive) of critique methods, as a research report or as a non-fictional analysis of this landscape?

Which channel for distribution could be more suitable? How can this research be informed and inform the work of the Center for Teaching
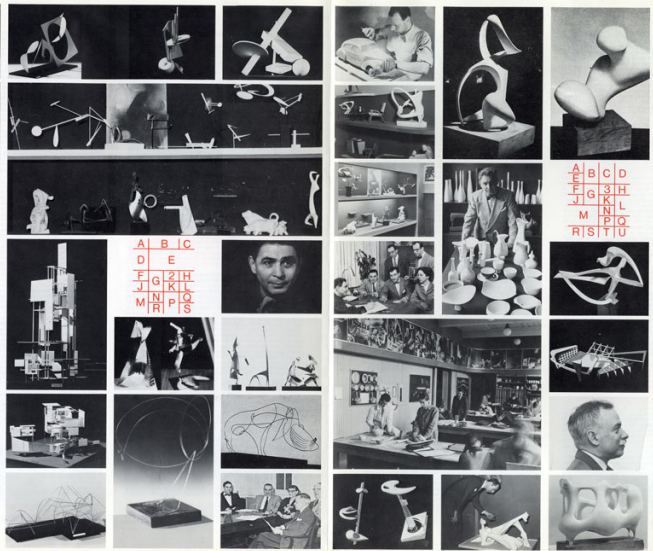
FLC

"It became apparent that instead of creating a definition for critique, our work would focus on observing and documenting the landscape of critique at Pratt"

Learning that is now under development at Pratt? Furthermore, should the catalog live as part of a more extensive system of artifacts (website, book, event, tool, publication, e.g.)? Should it be offered as a resource only within the institute or shared with the broader community of educators? Can this research inform other disciplines not related to higher education?

Additional areas of interest/goals for future inquiry have been identified; the next steps might focus on the individual experience of critique and its perception, especially from the student perspective. In this regards, it would be relevant to discuss what are the goals of critique and how these goals are being set and shared within the class. How do we manage student/faculty expectations before and after a critique? And furthermore, how do we incorporate student feedback and impressions and use this information as a tool for improving student learning? How do we share this information as a resource and way to inspire the community at large?

FLC

"The next steps might focus on the individual experience of critique and its perception, especially from the student perspective. In this regards, it would be relevant to discuss what are the goals of critique and how these goals are being set and shared within the class."

Narrative

Luka Lucic Facilitator,
SSCS (Full-time)

Liz Knauer Facilitator,
SSCS and IEP (Part-time)

Chelsea Limbird
Interior Design (Part-time)

Audrey Schultz
Construction/Facilities Management
(Full-time)

Esther Beke
Industrial Design (Part-time)

Nadya Nenadich
Grad Center for Planning (Part-time)

Victor Vina
UG Communications Design (Part-time)

Adam Elstein
Architecture (Part-time)

Contemporary research on cognitive development continues to offer insights about processes of the mind as it changes over the lifecycle and in relation to socio-cultural circumstances that surround the developing individual. However, current realities inside and outside the purview of academic research programs are converging toward a focus on cognition in daily life explored as narrative – not only as a metaphor, or instrument for examination of experience, but narrative as a tool for directing attention and perception, representing reality, imagining alternative future(s), guiding action and organizing consciousness. According to this view, as we actively employ language in our classroom practices – by asking students to read, write, speak and listen to others, we simultaneously engage their cognitive processes of sense-making, perspective-taking, meaning-making, reality-representation and imagination. Building upon this theoretical premise, the

framing question of this Faculty Learning Community (FLC) is: How do we employ the power of narrative and use it in structuring class activities that enable and promote the cognitive development of our students?

FLC Process

In the "Narrative and Socio-cognitive Development" FLC, we have found that having an open space to share both research on this topic and practices from our classrooms has led to rich multidisciplinary discussions and shared interests for future research. The semi-structured nature of the first year's work allowed us to take time and get to know and understand each other's approaches to narrative. In particular, our discussion throughout the year related the topic of narrative and socio-cognitive development to our respective fields and our students' learning process.

Interdisciplinary Context

Having participants from across the Institute has deepened our understanding of the educational contexts that Pratt students experience. It has also deepened our understanding of the diverse ways that narrative relates to art and design vs. liberal arts fields. Understanding these divergences will help us design a more workable and rich research project in the second year of our work together. Given the diversity of perspectives among our participants, we had to slow down and spend more time having each FLC member share their current understandings and practices related to narrative inquiry, art/design/research, and teaching and learning.

Literature in the Field

We began our discussions with theoretical writing in the fields of psychology, sociology, and anthropology related to narrative, and have now compiled a supplementary literature review of works related to narrative inquiry and pedagogy, especially as those topics relate to teaching art and design. We will begin our second year

FLC

"Having an open space to share both research on this topic and practices from our classrooms has led to a rich multidisciplinary discussions and shared interests for future research."

of work together reading and discussing these secondary texts, in an effort to frame our own research questions in the context of existing literature in teaching and learning.

Early Findings

Given the multidisciplinary composition of our group, our main "findings" from this year reflect our desire to discover how our vocabulary and understanding of narrative and pedagogy converge and diverge. We have begun a blog to gather evidence and examples of our use of narrative in our production and teaching. In addition, we have spent a great deal of time talking about teaching practices that helped students generate work out of narrative inquiry.

Challenges

The main challenge we confronted during the year grew out of the diversity of perspectives regarding the uses of narrative inherent in our disciplinary training and teaching approaches. Early on in our work together, we decided to seize this challenge and see it as an opportunity to grow and expand beyond our individual (and often disciplinary understanding) toward a more collective and shared knowledge about various uses of narrative.

Public Communications

We have communicated our questions and interests, and we have communicated about how we each approach these questions, but we are not ready to formally share "findings". After a second year of work, we may have more solid work to share that will help other faculty members at Pratt and beyond think about how to support students' learning in art, design, and liberal arts fields through the use of pedagogy that employs narrative inquiry.
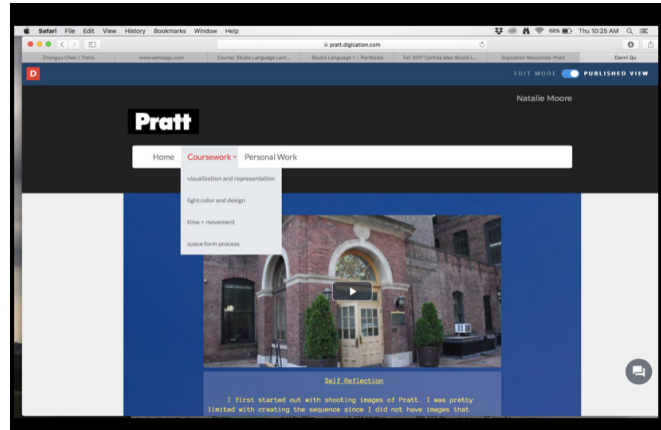
Next Steps

We have laid groundwork for further targeted inquiry and research in our respective classrooms; the next year will move to a more

FLC

"Given the multidisciplinary composition of our group, our main 'findings' from this year reflect our desire to discover how our vocabulary and understanding of narrative and pedagogy converge and diverge."

research centered focus rather than a focus on sharing prior and existing knowledge within our group. To that effect, the co-facilitators of the FLC have started to compile a list of readings that examine pedagogical uses of narrative. These readings will serve as a base for the research centered focus that we aim to pursue during our second year.

FLC

"How to support students' learning in art, design, and liberal arts fields through the use of pedagogy that employs narrative inquiry."

e-Portfolio

For nearly a decade, the Intensive English Program has developed and honed the use of the ePortfolio to support student learning through a holistic, recursive, and reflective approach to assessment. With current curricular shifts across campus, other programs including Foundation, Freshman English and Art History have become interested in integrating this approach into their practice.

On an institutional level, scaling up to a full first-year ePortfolio allows for a more integrative and authentic view of the students' experience, and will support the assessment of student learning across programs and schools. Moreover, it will enhance the ability for departments to get an overview of what students have done and are capable of upon entering their majors. In an effort to support the scaling up of ePortfolio pedagogy throughout the first year, the

Natalie Moore Facilitator,
Assistant Chair of Foundation

Nancy Seidler Facilitator,
Director of Intensive English Program

Sacha Frey
HMS

Svetlana Jovic
SSCS faculty

Jennifer Logun
Foundation and Interior Design

Kimberly Kern
Intensive English Program

Jessica Hochman
School of Information

ePortfolio faculty learning community explored reflective teaching and assessment practices that best support student learning across the curriculum. The inquiry questions include: What does the ePortfolio mean to students? In what ways does it enhance their learning process? In what ways does it reveal connections or gaps? In what ways might first year ePortfolios help support students' capacity to make connections across classes and to build metacognitive awareness of their strengths, weaknesses, interests, etc. in order to become more self-directed, and ultimately better learners?

Among the participants, there was a wide range of experience with ePortfolio platforms and pedagogical practices. Nancy and Natalie had been collaborating on scaling up ePortfolio use throughout the IEP, Foundation, and beyond to capture the first-year experience; Jessica had developed and used ePortfolios as a capstone project in SILS and had researched various aspects of their effectiveness in that context; Svetlana had used a different ePortfolio platform in another institution; Jennifer and Kimberly had used ePortfolios to varying degrees within their programs at Pratt, and Sacha had never used an ePortfolio platform, but was engaged in many of the pedagogical practices that undergird its effectiveness.

As co-facilitators of the FLC, Natalie and Nancy saw this project as an opportunity to further the aim of scaling up ePortfolio use on an institutional level. We hoped that by the end of the year we might have examples of first-year ePortfolios on hand that would make it possible to examine some of the following questions: In what ways might first year ePortfolios help support students' capacity to make connections across classes and to build metacognitive awareness of their strengths, weaknesses, interests, etc. in order to become more self-directed, and ultimately better learners?

With these varying levels and types of experience among our group, our first course of action was

FLC

"What does the ePortfolio mean to students? In what ways does it enhance their learning process? In what ways does it reveal connections or gaps?"

36

Bret, E., Gambino, L.M., and Turok, J. (2014) *What different can an e-Portfolio make? A field report from the Connect to Learning Project*. International Journal of ePortfolio (4)1, 95-114.

FLC

"The power that could have in driving institutional change in support of not only student learning, but faculty development and institutional self-knowledge as well"

to find a common ground, and to define what ePortfolios were. We began with the article, "What Difference Can an ePortfolio Make," which offers three propositions that guided our conversations through the year: "(1) ePortfolio initiatives advance student success; (2) making student learning visible, ePortfolio initiatives support reflection, social pedagogy, and deep learning; and (3) ePortfolio initiatives catalyze learning-centered institutional change."

All members of the FLC were deeply engaged in and eager to learn more about the pedagogical aspects mentioned in the second proposition, namely the ways that ePortfolios might help students understand more about and have agency in their own learning process, and how reflective practices might support that.

Additionally, social pedagogy became an area of interest and investigation. Nancy and Natalie became increasingly convinced that they were on the right path toward making not only student work, but the learning that goes into creating that work visible through a wider adoption of ePortfolio practice across the institute, and the power that could have in driving institutional change in support of not only student learning, but faculty development and institutional self-knowledge as well. What became increasingly clear was that the ePortfolio had the potential to inform the other FLCs about questions they were investigating: How might the reflective practices built in to ePortfolio pedagogy enhance a student's cognitive development through the building of a learning narrative? How might a student better integrate skills and knowledge in the first (or any) year? On a more longitudinal, holistic level? How might this knowledge support the transfer of learning from one discipline, practice, course... to another?

However, we faced by some major obstacles in attaining evidence that would support the research questions we initially had. Some of these challenges were shared by all the FLCs: finding time for regular meetings, creating a

balance of disciplines among our members (we lacked an upper division studio faculty member and lost our member from Art History), sufficiently supporting part- and full-time faculty, and finding a common vocabulary with which to discuss the issues at hand, though to a certain extent this was less daunting a problem for this FLC than some of the others may have had. The one major hurdle that was unique to our FLC was supporting faculty to adopt the ePortfolio into their individual research and teaching practice. On an institutional level, there is very little infrastructure to support individual faculty in this process, especially when the platform the institute has been using is less than user-friendly. Because all but one of the faculty on our FLC are part-time, there was also a sense that they lacked the empowerment necessary to even begin such a project without specific institutional or departmental oversight or guidance.

Several advances have been made that give us great hope in moving ahead, however. First, there is now great support from the Provost's office to move forward with the project of adopting ePortfolios more widely, and toward that end, a new, more intuitive and robust platform will be piloted in the coming year. Additionally, great interest was sparked among peer FLCs, and two of last year's ePortfolio FLC members have joined two other FLCs as "ePortfolio Ambassadors." Svetlana Jovic will co-chair the Narrative and Socio-Cognitive Development FLC with Luka Lucic, and Jennifer Logan has signed on with the Learning in the First Year FLC. We are excited to see how ePortfolios might support these FLCs in their ongoing investigations about the complexities of their areas of focus, including: transfer, learning in the first year, the role that narrative plays in learning, and critique structures and outcomes. We hope these two support systems will help advance the ePortfolio project and help with a wider adoption so that we can see learning in action across wider swathes of the institute.

FLC

"We hope these two support systems will help advance the ePortfolio project and help with a wider adoption so that we can see learning in action across wider swathes of the institute."