



Richard Bland College
of WILLIAM & MARY

REPORT OF THE RBC FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE
September 2023

Dr. Daniel P. Franke

W&M Board of Visitors, RBC Faculty Representative

Faculty Development Week (August 21-25)

Dr. Tiffany Birdsong welcomed new faculty and led the department chairs' workgroup on Monday, August 21, and then she welcomed all faculty on Tuesday the 22nd. The next several days were filled with training and preparation for the coming semester. RBC faculty provided valuable seminars at the popular "Lunch and Learn" events. Professor Ashley Fuller led a discussion on faculty travel and current research opportunities, focused particularly on RBC's recent grant from the IDEAS Program, which under Vice President Boyd's leadership is transforming student opportunities through study abroad. Professor Franke presented the work of RBC sophomore Sarah Heath, who used the ArcGIS StoryMaps platform to create an original, multi-modal research project in his summer course, and discussed its potential to meet learning outcomes while enhancing transferable skill sets and critical thinking. Dr. Ann Ifekwunigwe and Mr. Ben Thoreson presented updates on the Transfer Scholars Network and on RBC's participation in First Scholars Network. The highlight of development week was a reception hosted by Professor Linda Pitman at her property, the historic Strawberry Hill Inn, which she is restoring, along with two other adjacent properties, as part of a larger effort to preserve and revitalize historic Petersburg.

CDI (Constructive Dialogue Institute)

Dr. Franke represented RBC at the August 18 workshop of the Constructive Dialogue Institute at Reynolds Community College. The work of the CDI is sponsored by SCHEV and focuses on strategies and resources for fostering dialogue across "complex and divisive topics," particularly among students, in the classroom and the campus at large. Currently Dr. Birdsong, Dr. Zucconi,

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and Dr. Franke are liaising with CDI in bringing this initiative to campus, and we look forward to updating you on our progress at the November meeting.

RBC Study Abroad

Dr. Katie Heffernan has news to report on RBC's inaugural study abroad program. The Office of Research and Innovation (Dr. Kim Boyd) was awarded the IDEAS grant in June. It allows RBC to build international opportunities for our RBC students in phases. We are in phase one, which is to have administration and faculty establish potential sites. Using contacts from Dr. Heffernan's Ph.D. research, 8 staff will be going to see sites in Madagascar and focus on an academic framework for students in phase 2. The goal for phase one is to go in late spring/early summer of 2024 (to avoid the rainy season) and then to bring students the following year (2025).

As of right now, the focus of the trip is biodiversity, conservation, and community. Dr. Heffernan's advisors formed SADABE, an NGO that brings these concepts together very well. They have established a research station in the Tsinjoarivo rainforest to study the habitat (mainly lemurs) but have incorporated the local community to be involved in the process. This helps the community to preserve the area as they are invested in its rarity too. Dr. Heffernan states, "I feel too often that students see biology research as just sitting in a lab and processing samples that were taken from somewhere else. Showing students the Sadabe model gives perspective on how the scientific process can be beneficial to everyone and make the world a better place."

Happenings in Art

In the spring and now the fall, Professor Michelle Delano worked with Professor Eric Miller's grant for learning with/through nature. Last semester the grant covered experimental printmaking with monoprints and a new line of pigments. The specimen prints were developed into works of art and applied to fashion and home accessory design. The project was so successful that it was integrated into the arts curriculum as a STEAM (STEM + Arts) project this semester. Later this semester, a grant to work with cellulose fibers and papermaking that will allow students to understand the fabrication of organic paper products is planned. Results of both projects will be presented to the Grantors later this semester.

Professor Delano also worked with Indigenous artists in the 8 Northern Pueblos (including Taos, Ohkay Owingeh & Santa Clara) in New Mexico this summer. In addition to contemporary art collaborations, the experience provided first hand narratives of indigenous culture to integrate into Art Appreciation.

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History Developments

Dr. Franke attended the International Medieval Congress in Leeds, UK, where he presented a paper on social network analysis and crusades studies, and participated in two round tables on German crusades and on studying battlefields. After the conference, he traveled to Germany, Italy, and Turkey, gathering materials and conducting on-location research for his current book project. The highlight of this research was identifying precisely where a major battle of the Third Crusade took place, which will be the focus of a future publication. He returned with a lead on a future study abroad program, partnering with Professor Delano, in Assisi, Italy, and is preparing an application to the IDEAS Program.

With Dr. McCarthy and Dr. Zucconi, he also has been working on laying the foundations for a certificate program in history and political science, focusing on developing pipelines to careers in government, law, public history, archaeology, conservation, and education. A key step in that direction is developing courses that a) have high transferability and b) offer students the chance to develop important pre-professional skills. History 248, Modern Germany 1750 to Present, will be joining the curriculum by next autumn. This semester it is being tested as a 299 Independent Study course. And the proposal to add History 297 Research Fellowship to the curriculum was just approved by the Instructional Programs and Curriculum Committee (IPCC) and is heading to Faculty Assembly for a vote. History 297 creates a framework to allow students to conduct research with professors. Our student representative to the Board of Visitors, Kylie McCoy, will address this in more detail in her report, but we see expanding this idea to the whole campus as our cornerstone project as BOV representatives this year.

Looking Ahead

Professor Delano & SGA president Thomas Larus will be traveling to Baltimore for the city-wide arts festival, Artscape, Sep 22-24. The purpose is to network with exhibiting artists, creating functional goods (fashion, jewelry, home goods) to encourage students to explore the gig economy & online makers' spaces where students can market their designs on backpacks, skateboards, leggings, etc.

Professor Eric Miller will be taking students to the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, as well as on a camping trip, and he will also be working on a pollinator garden on campus.

Dr. Franke will be taking students to the Maryland Renaissance Festival in October, and to the Haskins Society medieval studies conference at the University of Richmond in November.