



Richard Bland College
of WILLIAM & MARY

REPORT OF THE RBC FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE
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Dr. Daniel P. Franke, Associate Professor of History
W&M Board of Visitors, RBC Faculty Representative

AI Initiatives and Instructional Faculty

RBC faculty continue to explore and adapt to the brave new world of AI technology. History Professor Dr. Adam Zucconi has utilized AI tools to deliver relevant information to specific queries and has created a classroom exercise for students to develop their critical thinking skills. Dr. Daniel Franke has introduced a classroom exercise to help students practice gathering and assessing data at the start of their research projects. Dr. Alice Henton is preparing curriculum on AI for her digital literacies course in the spring semester.

Faculty Development

On October 24 the acting Director of Academics held a Lunch and Learn, led by Ashley Fuller, to train faculty on the new Insights tool for data gathering and interpretation. This is particularly relevant for those disciplines being assessed this year (Art, Business, Communications, Education, Government, and Sociology) but was considered valuable training by all disciplines.

Communications Professor Dr. Jamia Davis attended the Lilly Conference of the ITLC in Traverse City, Michigan, on October 9-11. The conference theme was "Teaching for Active & Engaged Learning," and Dr. Davis brought back valuable resources on AI in Higher Education which she has shared with other RBC Faculty.

Dr. Daniel Franke attended the Fifth Quadrennial Symposium on Crusade Studies, Saint Louis University Madrid Campus, on October 3-5, where he presented a paper using social network analysis to assess patterns crusade participation in medieval Germany. He had the opportunity to talk with the SLU Madrid Director of Academics about transfer and study abroad partnerships, which RBC is now exploring.

Faculty Publications

Dr. Adam Zucconi published a peer-reviewed article in *Ohio Valley History* 24 (Fall 2024) titled "The Shadow without the Substance: Slavery, Emancipation, and West(ern) Virginia, 1860-

1863.” Dr. Zucconi explores the complicated history of West Virginia’s road to abolishing slavery during the Civil War, and the complicated legacy that history left behind.

Dr. Daniel Franke’s volume, *The Routledge Handbook of Medieval Military Strategy*, co-edited with Dr. John Hosler of the US Army CGSC, is due in print on November 29. It comprises thirty-one chapters written by an international roster of experts, covering the globe from Mesoamerica to Europe to Japan. Advanced reviews have called it “a major contribution” and a “groundbreaking resource.”

RBC Faculty Leading Student Enrichment Initiatives

Dr. Kalota Stewart and Dr. Franke brought several RBC students to a prestigious seminar entitled “Slavery, Memory, and African Diasporas” on October 30. Hosted at Howard University since 2012, the seminar is one of the leading history lab spaces for testing new ideas and scholarship in African Studies.

Dr. David Morgan continues to lead the RBC team on the AAC&U’s Institute on AI, Pedagogy, and the Curriculum, having submitted the RBC Action Plan on AI, focusing on developing faculty *fluency* in AI. The December Lunch and Learn, and events in January’s Faculty Development program, will reflect the Action Plan’s agenda.

Dr. Eric Miller continues his popular student enrichment programs in biology. He took nine students kayaking in the Great Dismal Swamp. During their floating ecotour they learned about the Pre-Columbus history of the area as well as uses of the area by European settlers and runaway slaves, and how people now use it for outdoor adventure. Additionally, they encountered parasitic plants, they saw snakes, and they learned about the preservation of the swamp and its surrounding area.

Dr. Miller also took four students and Dr. Stewart on a 12-mile hike that took 3 days to trek in the George Washington National Forest. They hiked downhill the first day, camped at a beautiful stream confluence, and hiked eight miles through the valley and back up the hill for their second night of camping. Then in the morning they hiked the ridge back to the van. They learned about what is really needed for survival and that every pound you carry needs to count. They stopped along the way to learn about trees, geology, and topography. Lastly, they learned about the importance of locating a good drinking source for such a long adventure.

Dr. Rachel Finney is, once again, organizing and hosting her students’ celebration of the Mexican holiday *Día de Muertos*. Open to students, staff, and faculty across the College, the event celebrates Hispanic culture and culinary arts and is one of RBC’s most popular academic events.