

Pedagogies of Engagement: Deepening Learning In and Across the Disciplines

**Network for Academic Renewal Conference
April 14-16, 2005
Greater Washington, DC**

Interdisciplinary Living-Learning Communities: Pedagogies to Actively Engage Students
[College Park Scholars](http://www.scholars.umd.edu) (<http://www.scholars.umd.edu>) is a federation of 12, interdisciplinary living-learning communities. Each program delivers a curriculum that complements students majors and general education. Through civic engagement, team projects and other activities, students examine and develop their personal character. This session will address pedagogical approaches that actively engage students, such as peer instruction, self-directed research, mock Senate hearings, and in-depth internship analysis.

Greig M. Stewart, Executive Director, College Park Scholars, Peter Beicken, Professor, School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures; and Director of the College Park Scholars Arts Program, James Duncan, Professor, A. James Clark School of Engineering; and Director of the College Park Scholars, Science, Technology and Society Program, Ruth Fassinger, Professor of Education, and co-Director of the College Park Scholars Advocates for Children Program, and Bruce James, Professor of Agriculture and Natural Resources and Director of the College Park Scholars Environmental Studies Program, University of Maryland College Park

TRANSCRIPT FROM PRESENTATION

PowerPoint presentations may be available directly from presenters upon request.

OVERVIEW B Greig Stewart, College Park Scholars Executive Director
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Good morning, My name is Greig Stewart, I'm the Executive Director of a program called College Park Scholars at the University of Maryland, at College Park. I am privileged to be joined by four of the program's faculty. Each of them direct one of the 12 programs within College Park Scholars. They will be sharing with you the unique pedagogies they use to deliver their curriculum. We will then open the forum up for questions.

To begin I will set the context with a brief overview of the goals of College Park Scholars; the theory supporting the presence of the program; some of its inherent values, and conclude with some of the challenges our faculty face, given the structure of the program.

What is College Park Scholars? Scholars is a community of 12 interdisciplinary learning programs in which academically and creatively talented freshmen and sophomores explore their future professional and personal roles. The program prepares students academically for competitive research opportunities and challenging internships. Through public service, civic engagement and team projects, Scholars examine and develop their personal character.

Most often when the faculty describe Scholars, they use the terminology of a Federation of 12 programs. Appropriately so, the faculty assume a lot of autonomy and responsibility for the design and delivery of their curricula and co-curricula. Much of the institutional responsibility for the programs is centralized in the office of the Executive Director. It is a collaboration that requires a lot of trust and communication.

College Park Scholars is more than just an academic program. There are institutional goals for the program as well. Scholars was created a decade ago to increase the quality of the undergraduate student body. In addition to an increase of the mean SAT and GPA scores of incoming freshmen, Scholars has also had an impact on first-year retention and time-to-degree rates. These are the data that speak to the provost and the president, but the experiences in the classroom are the benchmarks of success that resonate with the faculty and staff.

Theoretical Grounding -- Many of the living-learning programs developed in the '90s were informed by the *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education* (Chickering and Gamson, 1987). Of those seven principles, five are key to College Park Scholars:

- Student-Faculty Contact -- Many of us are familiar with Astin's work in California that identifies student-faculty contact as key to students' success. One of the fundamental characters of Scholars is that each program is directed by university faculty. Witness today, we have four full professors who are Distinguished Scholar Teachers, directing four of the 12 programs. The other eight programs are directed by faculty from a variety of ranks, from lecturers to faculty emeriti.
- Cooperation among students -- Pay particular attention to Professor Beicken's presentation as he addresses the ensemble approach to learning in the Arts program.
- Active Learning -- is one of the distinguishing features between College Park Scholars and the University's Honors Program. Faculty devote a significant amount of time and attention to their programs' co-curriculum, to ensure that students not only engage in meaningful activities, but address the meaning of those experiences through guided reflection. Professor Fassinger will address the praxis model used in the Advocates for Children program.
- High Expectations -- Particularly for 18- and 19-year olds, Scholars expects great things from its students. In addition to completing all course requirements for their Scholars citation, students also have to have successfully completed a capstone sophomore project: either a research or service-learning project, or an internship. Most of the programs require students not only to complete their projects, but develop a poster session that is presented at the annual Academic Showcase, open to all campus faculty and staff. Directors of departmental honors, undergraduate research and internship programs comprise the targeted

audience of the Showcase. For many colleges and universities, these kinds of experiences do not occur until students' junior or senior years. Scholars provides students the opportunity to develop and practice the skills necessary to be successful in similar activities during their remaining years at the University.

Another expectation Scholars has of its students is that they make meaning of their learning. Again, for 18- to 19-year olds, this is a high expectation. Often it is not evidenced until students' exit surveys are reviewed upon their graduation from the university, or in conversations and communication with alumni.

Both of these high expectations are clearly evident in Professor James's Environmental Studies program.

- Respect for Diverse Talent and Ways of Learning -- This value is particularly important for programs -- such as those in Scholars -- that underscore an interdisciplinary curriculum and approach to the curriculum. Additionally, when identifying participants for the program, significant attention is given to selecting as diverse a cohort as possible, with respect to individual backgrounds and experiences. Such diversity enriches the discussion of the curriculum and reflection on the co-curriculum.

Values -- Similar to many institutions, this past year the University of Maryland engaged in a *post-Michigan* review of its admissions procedures, including not only admission to the University, but to its signature learning communities. For College Park Scholars, this exercise, though formidable, proved to be most informative. The results of the faculty's examination was the identification of three valued criteria:

- Academic Excellence. Scholars selects students not only with strong traditional scholastic measures such as SAT and GPA, and with high school transcripts reflecting the selection of courses that intellectually challenge the individual candidate.
- Contributing to One's Community -- Given that Scholars is a Living-learning program, in which students live and learn together, we seek candidates who evidence a value and commitment to their communities, whether it be through community service, participation in school governance or student organizations, engagement in team athletics, or involvement in their community civic, religious or scouting organizations. High school students who engage in part-time work to support their future education or family income is also valued.
- Valuing the Contribution of Diversity to One's Learning -- When Scholars speaks of diversity, it refers to the diversity of ideas in addition to people, their backgrounds and their experiences. This value is not unique to Scholars at the University of Maryland. The University of Maryland is south of the Mason-Dixon line. It began as a small, elitist, provincial, segregated college. It endured the traumas of desegregation to become a major research university that today, celebrates its multi-faceted diversity, in particular, in graduating the largest number of African-American Ph.D.s. (Levy, 2005) The University continuously self-examines its efforts in the arena of diversity, striving to uphold its value of a diverse and inclusive institution of higher learning.

With respect to the diversity of ideas, Scholars seeks students who provide evidence in their applications that they are curious about the world in which they live. Though Nabokov spoke of curiosity as Ainsubordination in its purest form,@ (p. 45) curiosity is at the core of each of the 12 programs' curricula and co-curricula.

Challenges -- Any learning community, program or initiative has challenges. The following speak specifically to those of College Park Scholars

- Interdisciplinarity B As a Research-I institution, the University of Maryland attracts faculty who engage in disciplinary research. Each of the following faculty have prestigious research agendas in their respective disciplines. Yet several days a week, they are asked to approach learning and teaching from an interdisciplinary perspective.
- The College Park Citation recognizes 16-20 credits of course-work completed in supporting courses and semesterly colloquia. Program faculty deliver their curriculum in one-credit colloquia. One-credit courses can prove challenging in the limits placed on content. Students also approach a one-credit course differently from their three-credit courses, both in preparation and participation. Consequently, faculty are challenged with the one-credit course structure.
- Classroom environment issues:
 - Familiarity within the student community. Cohorts live together in the residence halls, resulting in a very strong sense of community, communication patterns and group norms. These behaviors are brought into the classroom. The challenge for the faculty is using these behaviors productively within the colloquia.
 - Physical proximity of the residence halls to the program classrooms. Most of the colloquia are scheduled toward the end of the day. Students have returned to the residence halls after a day full of classes across the campus, and proceed, en masse, from their floors to the classroom. This can result in students' perceiving the colloquia as an extension of the residence halls, rather than a unique learning environment with its own unique communication patterns and behavioral expectations.

ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN -- Professor Ruth Fassinger, Co-Director
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Let me begin talking about my own experience with College Park Scholars. I ended up with the job, like most of my colleagues, as an accidental, serendipitous, Ruth, would you please do this? kind of way. I have moments why I ever agreed to do this. But for the most part, I really love and appreciate the work that we all do in this program. What I love most about it are my colleagues. This is one of the few places I have found where I have colleagues that I can talk to who actually wake up in morning as excited about teaching students as I do, and going into the classroom, particularly at a Research-I university where most of the talk is about grants and publications, it is really hard to find people who value the teaching mission at the University. I love that I have a community of Scholars for myself, that I can actually interact with. And I learn something all the time from them.

I am in the third year of directing the Advocates for Children program, which I refer to as a work in progress. I was running around bragging earlier in the year that the program was running like a well-oiled machine. Just a few weeks ago, a few broken wheels became evident so I have to go back and do some new things.

The focus of Advocates for Children is that it involves students in advocacy efforts that target a broad range of societal problems that affect children, their families and their communities. A broad perspective is undertaken to take into account the diversity of students' interests and academic majors. We are unabashedly about the business of translating knowledge into action. We want our students to learn something and then we want them to go out and do something, to change the world and make it a better place. We are very up front about that, which attracts a certain kind of student. We do all kinds of activities including: political lobbying; grass-roots organizing; community mobilization; and various kinds of service activities for children, schools and communities in the local area.

Our student body reflects a can-do' go-out-and-do-something' mentality. They come in excited about wanting to do something positive and useful in the world. They tend to chafe a bit when we keep them from doing that in the first few weeks. Most have had previous community service experience. They know something about that and they want to do more of that. It is our job to provide them the foundation to do that in an intelligently formed way. The student body is predominantly female. It is a predominantly white student body, however Advocates does have a broad representation of diversity: race, ethnicity, nationality and so on. Our students are in a lot of majors and plan for a wide variety of careers. There is a significant number of them who plan careers in education, either as teachers or policy makers. We have students from the social and behavioral sciences; many of them want to enter into mental health professions. We have arts and humanities students; many of them are interested in designing kid-friendly spaces, studying the history of child labor law. In the physical and life sciences, we have students who are interested in medical careers and environmental issues that affect students. We have students from computer science; one or two who want to design educational computer programs for children. We also have students majoring in engineering, business, journalism, women's studies. They represent a wide variety of majors but all are characterized by wanting -- in some way, shape or form -- to use their careers to help children. Sometimes that variety of majors is a challenge in the classroom because you are constantly trying to make the curriculum and experiences relevant to the diversity of academic majors.

Our curriculum, in addition to our one-credit colloquia, includes a couple of three-credit classes. In the first year, the one-credit colloquia introduce students to issues around advocating for children, focusing on child development, family and community advocacy, and trying to teach them something about themselves in the process. They also take a three-credit class in human development and diversity. In the second year, the colloquium teaches advocacy through political action. At the very end of the second year, their capstone class is a joint experience including a three-credit class in organizing community mobilization, community-based research or community leadership, depending on students' interests.

I wish to address two aspects of pedagogies of engagement. We are interested in helping our students translate knowledge into action. We attempt to help them translate theory into practice. Two specific strategies are used to make that happen.

The first is service-learning. There are two ways in which Advocates students can engage in service-learning. Monthly group activities are scheduled for students to participate in, particularly around certain holidays. Examples include toy drives, charity fundraising, March-of-Dimes and AIDS walkathons, running holiday parties for children and families in homeless shelters. The other types of activities include individual activities that students seek out on their own. Examples include ongoing tutoring or mentoring over time with one child or a group of children.

The second is political action. There are many ways to be an advocate. Students are asked to identify very clear goals to effect change with organizations and policy makers. Through a lobbying course, students engage in lobbying state legislators in Annapolis. For example, in that class, students in small groups identify bills they want to become experts on, some that have been languishing for a long time or some that actually died and want to resurrect them. They will work on those bills. There is a day identified in which all students go to Annapolis where they speak to legislators and share the materials they have prepared on a particular issue. Another source of political action is community mobilization. In one of our capstone courses, the emphasis is on grass-roots organization at the community level. Again, students in groups, pick issues they want to work on. They develop action plans. Those plans are shared with the entire group and one issue and its action plan is selected for implementation. This year the class is working on autism awareness. Last year the issue was child abuse awareness. The last political action opportunity is community-based research. Students identify community agencies that have identified issues for which they need data collected and analyzed. [There's an idea B you have to know something in order to do something.] Students work with those communities to collect the necessary data and assist in making recommendations for action based on those data.

Just a few comments from students about what they say they learn:

- I have learned that we may not be able to change the world, but we can make a difference in a child's life.
- My favorite aspect of doing service is that I have the opportunity to take on leadership roles and develop my leadership skills.
- These [political action] projects help me to better understand how I, myself, felt about certain issues and where my stance was. This aspect of the program aided me in raising my level of professionalism in a world outside the university.
- I love the experience of having my voice heard, regarding to lobbying at the State House, of actually trying to make a difference instead of sitting and complaining about something in our political system.

In terms of the overall program . . .

- I've learned about the different roles one can have in their career and still have an impact on children.
- In this program, we've been asked to search within us, and analyze how we will affect

children's lives in the future.

My last comments will address some of the issues and challenges for the program. In terms of service learning, figuring out how to do service learning well is a challenge. We have a lot of debate whether we should require service learning in our program, expected, or encouraged, and what those different mindsets mean about the attitude students bring to those experiences. We've put a lot of thought into figuring out how students engage in meaningful reflection. We take the two parts of service-learning seriously. Service is just one piece of it. The learning component addresses not just learning about the people just served, or learning about developmentally delayed children, or something about poverty, but also learning something about yourself in that process. We really care about that piece a lot. We struggle with what are the appropriate venues for meaningful reflection. We tried journals, brief reflection papers, and so on, and all of those have both strengths and limitations. The second issue is helping students connect knowledge to their advocacy activity. One of the problems we run into is because we have students who come in ready to run out and change the world. They don't really want to stop and learn something about the world before they run out there to change it. So trying to slow them down and get them to recognize that there are different kinds of knowledge out there, that there are multiple sources of information and not all of them are credible, and some of them are more credible than others, and that, just running around trying to change things based on one's opinion, is really different than running around and changing things based on one's informed opinion, and how you can arm yourself with knowledge and data that allow you to actually make a difference out there.

We adopt a number of strategies in which we try to do that. Obviously, much of our work is organized around making students do something with their knowledge. We also try to do that in the way we structure our learning experiences. For example, in or colloquium, we will have a three-class sequence where we will have a speaker one day, the next is devoted to discussing what that person said in groups, reflecting on it, talking and thinking about it. In the third session, students address what they might do personally about this issue and what they might do collectively about the issue.

The final challenge we address is how do we empower students for change. Our students come in feeling ready to go out there. Once they start becoming aware of how many really bad problems are out there, disillusionment sets in and some become immobilized. When we ask them to think systematically about political action or grass-roots organizing, some of that can feel pretty overwhelming to students. Finally, because we do so much in small groups and teams, teamwork and groupwork are challenges. There is always resistance to that. We don't do a good enough job in teaching students about working in teams, understanding group dynamics, how to deal with conflict. We are starting to institute a lot more direct teaching in that area so they can be more effective in team work. The very last piece, which has been very hard for me, relates to what students wish to advocate for. Students are going to change the world in the ways they think are important. Those ways might not always go along with one's personal politics as an instructor. We have run into barriers where we have tried to organize group activities and once students have researched particular organizations, they've decided they don't want to participate in that activity, because they found out, for example, that the director of that organization has some affiliation with another organization that they don't agree with or has a stand on a political issue that they don't believe in. Not only do they want out of that activity, in their broader residential communities, conversations may result in bringing others down with them. One student can really derail a learning experience. We work a lot with our own limitations in terms of what happens to us when we try to empower our students, and what that really means with respect to what we are really about.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY -- Professor James Duncan, Director
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Let me tell you about the students in our program. Approximately 80 percent of the students are in engineering and technical majors. Another 10 percent are undecided majors, who have yet to decide what technical major they wish to explore. The last 10 percent is a smattering of everything else. The program has about 15 percent women which mirrors the sciences and engineering majors in the University of Maryland. There are 3-5 percent minorities enrolled, which also mirrors the minority representation in the classes that I teach in mechanical engineering where I am a professor.

Our goals include:

- to help students make the transition from high school to college. Many of them just returned from their senior prom. College is a different world and we try to help them out.
- The academic content of our program explores how the changes in society are brought about by science and technology.
- We look at public policy issues involving science and technology.
- We teach about some current topics in science and technology that may be beyond individual students' areas of interest.
- We also try to help them experience ways in which science and technology can make a difference in people's lives.

The curriculum includes one-credit colloquia during the freshman year. In the sophomore year, there is a one-credit practicum and a capstone three-credit course addressing science and technology, out of the department of history. Another 15 credits of requirements overlap with the University's general education requirements.

Our freshman colloquium has a little component on the transition to college and some activities that help them to get to know one another. We invite experts into the classroom to talk about time management, how to take tests, things like that. We talk about four major topics that vary from year to year, such as: Generation of electric power by nuclear power plants; genetically engineered crops; human space flight; alternative fuels.

We structure the exploration of each topic by first having someone come in and explain the technical aspects. For example, with genetically engineered crops, we had a professor come in from the University to talk about how unnatural agriculture actually is, that in nature one would never find five acres of one plant growing and nothing else. He talked about what people have to do to keep ahead of the weeds and plants and bugs, and how it takes 10 or so years by traditional methods to come up with a new strain of corn, and that you have to be continually doing that so each couple of years there's a new strain of corn. Otherwise, you wouldn't be able to produce the amount of corn needed. I like to tell people about these kinds of things as they are not in my area of expertise. I learn a lot from these class presentations. He also talked about how genetic engineering increases the

modification process. We then had a speaker come in from a lobbying group downtown. Maryland has the advantage of being close to Washington, D.C., where there are lots of expert speakers on a number of topics. We are able to get a number of people who present before Congress. So when we have someone come in and speak to how great genetically engineered foods are and how we should all be eating genetically modified foods, when that person leaves, students generally agree. But then, the next class we usually have a speaker come in from a watch-dog group. When that person leaves, the students usually agree with him or her. We then expose students to a hearing format, having them view a C-Span presentation of a Congressional hearing. Students then take on specific roles as senators or lobbyists from companies such as Monsanto. We force them to find out who these people are, what their slant is on a particular issue, and represent that person in a hearing format. Each student makes a statement from his or her particular role and then proceeds with questions and answers, similar to an actual hearing. At the end, a free discussion ensues.

Students initially respond to this method as hokey, though they grow to respond to it. Initial statements free them up to engage in the question and answer session and final open discussion. There are a lot of shy students in engineering and the sciences. This helps bring them out. This method also demonstrates to the technologically focused students areas in which they might eventually work and how they might effect change. In our genetically modified crop case, we had a hearing on the question: Should the United States regulate the sale of genetically modified seeds to underdeveloped countries. It's a difficult issue, thinking about selling things to people who are starving, talking about the investment that companies put into the development of these seeds, and don't want to give them away. We try to get them to talk about that. Some of the biology students in the class might actually be going out to make genetically modified products after they graduate. We try to get them to think about the world in which science and technology exists and how it might change the world. A lot of us don't think of scientists and engineers as advocates for social change, but when you think about what they do and they invent, they change the world dramatically. Most of them never give it a thought.

Our sophomore practicum has four options in it. One is a web-ship option where students make Website with html coding. The students as a group develop a Website for a not-for-profit organization. There is an internship program where students intern for a technological area, culminating in an essay where the students explore how that particular technology fits into society and what it does. We also have a discovery research project option. Our service-learning option, though initially a struggle for us as faculty, we seem to have perfected over the past few years. Students work with the Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI) lab. 12 students work with a professor to learn how to use the MIDI equipment that consists of a computer and an advanced digital processing keyboard. It's quite an expensive piece of equipment. After about four weeks of instruction, our students are at least proficient to make a song or two. [Musical talent is not required for this course though a number of technologically oriented students do have this talent.] After the four weeks, 12 middle-school students are brought in. These 13 and 14-year-old students have a background of struggling in school, perhaps having been kicked out of school. Their particular program has a teacher who is interested in having these students connect in different learning environments. They sit in the MIDI lab. During their instruction, STS students sit behind them. Technological skills meet musical skills. They help the middle-school students learn the equipment quickly so that they can then create their own music. By the time it's finished, each student has produced a couple of songs and they make a CD at the end. [Demonstration] We think that middle-school students are getting something out of the program. They have gotten to a place where they are learning in an area that they like and at the end of it, they have a product that creates a sense of

accomplishment. Our students get to see how a technological device, and how they B with their technological knowledge B can help others.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES, Professor Bruce James, Director
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I am glad to be here today to talk about the Environmental Studies program. This is actually something that was quite special to me, because, as an undergraduate in the early 1970s, I was at a small liberal arts college where I majored in chemistry and environmental studies. At that time, environmental studies was kind of a fringe, maybe a little bit whacky, and strange people did it. Well it's changed. I'm very pleased to, over the years, come back to environmental studies with College Park Scholars. I'm actually a soil chemist now and Director of the Environmental Science and Policy program which is a major. So, really my life revolves around undergraduate education with respect to the environment.

I want to give you a little bit of a background. One of the major questions that hovered around us in the 1970s and is still with us today is whether environmental studies is academic. There are still colleges and universities that fight about this. At the University of Maryland, we have made a commitment to this, both in College Park Scholars and in other programs over the years. There are a number of attributes of our program in College Park Scholars that, I really think do make it academic and bring it into the lives of students. First of all is its interdisciplinary character, which is really, in my mind, the key for environmental studies. There are so many disciplines that come into it. Secondly, our students come from all different majors, could be art, French, women's studies, environmental science and policy, animal science. We welcome them all and try to show them that whatever their particular academic or personal interest, there is a link to the environment. Also, through ways of learning. The environment is a very good vehicle to learn about the relationships of humans with natural systems, the built environment, social environments and so forth. So, there are lots of things to learn about teaching, about pedagogy, using the environment as a model.

As I mentioned we try to link the program to disciplinary majors. Our program has a particular goal of trying to show how the environment is involved in their lives, as they move forward as citizens and I'll show you a few examples later on. Students develop a sense of this, a kind of consciousness about the environment. And by environment, we don't just mean natural environments such as the woods, oceans and mountains. We mean built environments. We come into Washington, go to museums and teach about those environments. We look at social environments, work environments, to give them a sense of what we really mean. This is often an eye opener. Students think that when they come into this program, it's all about tree hugging, activism. Parents worry about this. A lot of the College Park Scholars make their program choices in part with parent influence. As they sit home at the kitchen table, I can hear the parents saying, You don't want to do that environment program, that's whacko. Go into something you can make money in and a job some day. We accept that as they come in and try to disabuse them of that. By the end of the first semester, the helicopter parents drop back and we see less of their influence as students take more charge of their learning. So, we are not necessarily about activism. We don't proselytize about the way they should think. In fact, sometimes the students get frustrated at me in particular, as I try to be even. I don't give away my personal preferences. They ask, Dr. James, what do you think about the wilderness? I have very strong feelings about the wilderness, but when we are talking about Aldo Leopold or other writers I say, Well, what are the pluses and minuses here? What can we learn from that? This is the way we approach the academic component.

As I mentioned very diverse environments, these pictures depict our service day where we go out to the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center where we harvest crops. Last fall we dug potatoes. Most students had no idea where potatoes come from. They had never really had their hands in the soil. We dug about 6,000 pounds of potatoes in four hours. They took the potatoes to a homeless shelter in Virginia. The people who run the shelter couldn't believe that we had dug so many potatoes in such a short time. So it was a real lesson in a different kind of environment demonstrating the relationship of humans with the soil and plant production.

The Native American Museum in Washington, D.C.; the National Arboretum and other planned landscape gardens in Washington. We do a trip with high school kids where Scholars are paired with a high school student and they do a paddle on the Anacostia River which is badly polluted. There's a lot of emphasis on its restoration, so the students get a sense of younger students as well as a sense about our local environment and its diversity.

About our pedagogy and curriculum, there are three stages that I would like to mention to you. During the first year, we have colloquia similar to the ones mentioned by my colleagues. We emphasize exploration and socialization. We know when students come in, they have a black and white sense of what's right and what's wrong. They have a very strong sense of their relationship with others. As I see it, as George Will said in one of his columns year's ago, with high schools and early college students, it's like a sea of hormones in denim. They are so focused on each other, they hardly know there's a teacher at the front of the room. So we try to capture that and work with it. We have small and large colloquium classes. We look at the concept of the environment: What is it; what is environmental studies; related science history and policy. It's student centered. We have them doing group projects. And we do a lot of these field trips. Each student is required to go on at least one field trip a semester. They have to write a reflection paper. We don't just go out and paddle on the Anacostia or hike Old Rag in the Shenandoahs. We ask them to come back and write a two-to-three page paper based on the questions that we give them, that try to link the human dimensions with the natural place. From the beginning we start to emphasize a component within the program, that is writing.

That's the first year. Then there's the summer between the first and second year. Though not regulated formally, students go off and do whatever they are going to do during their summer. We ask them to develop a proposal with us about a job or activity that they have planned to do. Many do something related to their professional career. We ask them to write about how that is related to the environment. For many who are pre-veterinarian or pre-engineering, that's a real challenge. A representative response is, I don't see how being a lifeguard on the New Jersey shore has anything to do with the environment. We say, you do it, and we'll show you through this exercise of writing how it can work. So, the combination is that they do an internship in that summer, then they come back in the fall and enroll in an intensive writing course. My assistant, Wendy Whittemore, is an excellent writer and editor. She teaches writing extremely well. She engages students in this exercise. They look at a paper topic that has some relationship to their internship. Examples follow.

- One is a student who worked at a very small organic, community supported agriculture farm. Kevin wrote his paper on, The American Farm and the Organic Movement.
- Another student interned at the Woodfield Veterinary Clinic. Her paper was on Wolves and

Dogs: The Same Species, or Two?

- Happy Harry's Pharmacy B a real place in Pennsylvania. She wrote a paper on Pharmaceutical Water Pollution: Causes and Consequences.
- Johns Hopkins University Hospital -- Hospital Environments and Patient Recovery.
- Montgomery County Historical Society -- Native American and European Thought: An Analysis of the Relationship to Nature, which won the 2004 College Park Scholars Ira Berlin Writing Award.
- MBTA Boston Transit Police Department -- Urban Mass Transit and the Environment.
- Internship with a physician -- Injuries and Athletes: Not All Fun and Games.
- Westhampton Country Club -- From Golf Courses to Farms: The Effect of Fertilizers on Mauritius Bay, New York.

During the sophomore year, they complete the writing course which we categorize as the personal, reflective dimension of the program. The exercise of writing the paper is often new to them. They relay that often in high school, they stayed up until 2:00 or 3:00 a.m., submitted the first draft, handed it in and earned a grade of A. They come to college assuming they are good writers. Wendy gets a hold of them and requires them to submit drafts subject to peer review and editing. Their response is often, What are you doing to me? When they finish, and when the pain is over, they say, I am really happy with what you did to me; I'm a better writer. They go on into upper-level classes in their major and they are definitely better writers. Almost to a student, they improve greatly. We are really proud of this professional growth in our students.

Let me conclude by addressing results of the program in two categories: eye-opening; and delayed.

Students often respond about what they learned about the environment, perceptions, they didn't think that built or social environments had anything to do it. The writing is work. It's challenging. Cool field trips.

Delayed responses include feedback from graduates, now alumni from the University. A recent email from a graduate said that she probably got her job with the Navy Weapons Testing organization because of College Park Scholars. They were really interested in her interdisciplinary work she had done and the focus on the environment. Another student who is really interested in green investing developed a real consciousness in green investing. This program opens graduate school opportunities. We have a student finishing her masters at Maryland who is heading to UC Riverside to work on pheromones and insects. With respect to veterinary medicine, we have had several who have gone on into wildlife and zoo medicine. Some in law school who are interested in toxicology and law. So there is a bridging of disciplines as the students leave us, which is something we are happy about and something we couldn't necessarily predict when we began the program.

THE ARTS -- Professor Peter Beicken -- co-Director

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I got into this program because I applied to it and I got the job. And I've been changed ever since. I would describe myself as an intellectual scholar in Germanic studies, and I am a lo-key director of the Arts.

Team is a challenge. We cannot live otherwise. But I call it ensemble because it is somewhat different. The emphasis in The Arts is on the hands on. We have one-credit colloquia over the four semesters, that we break into workshops. These workshops are taught by peer teachers. The topic I want to reflect upon is peer teaching and experiential reflection.

Why are these students coming to the arts? Because we offer them creative interaction and leadership opportunities. Also, internships, service-learning. But the arts program is mainly joined by first-choice students. At our last open house yesterday, somebody came with her mother. The mother was very concerned that her daughter find some kind of balance, given the challenge for a freshman to adjust to academic life. Students who have had previous experiences in the arts, whether they are dancers, creative writers or musicians, they have a desire to stay connected to their creative drive. Somehow our program provides this opportunity. In many ways, we are an antitode to the regular academic exercise. We are also not interested in achieving something specific. As an example, if we have a trumpet player, I'm not interested in teaching the trumpet player how to be a better trumpeter. Rather, we give them opportunities to share their talent with the other students. By our very nature we are diverse and interdisciplinary. We have about 25 percent of our students who are majoring in some form of the arts; theater, dance music, creative writing. But 75 percent of our students are from way out there, different places. They want a place that's cool, and they want opportunities to have fun.

As for our structure, we depend on students' activity and involvement. I feel I am actually, not superfluous, but a very interested by-stander, directing by observing. We offer four colloquia and supporting courses that we authorize, and then, they also have these workshops. They also have a sophomore media project. They have four field trips per semester. They have to take one, more often two, in area vicinities in the Washington and Baltimore area. For many, they have a specific interest in one form of art. So, you have musicians who have never been to a dance performance. And they don't really want to go. They have no relationship to these flying bodies on the stage. And then they go and they experience the Alvin Ailey Company at the Kennedy Center, or the Bengara Australian Dance Company last semester, with aboriginal influenced performance, that is just unbelievable.

What is peer teaching. You all know what peer pressure is. Peer pressure is about inertia, about conforming. Peer teaching is about stepping out of the pack. It's about self empowerment. It's about becoming a member of the ensemble. It's about bonding and creating community. It's not so much about an intellectual community, but community of people who share their talents. Peer teaching comes two-tiered in our program. We have about six-to-eight Tas who serve as workshop leaders. Those Tas are usually students who completed the program, and cannot let go. They wish to remain connected to the program. They offer workshops. Sometimes they are very interesting and unique. As an example we have a student who is proficient in walking on stilts. He also juggles. And he does these two things simultaneously. He wants to offer his talent as a workshop during his sophomore year, next year, teaching others, and experiencing with others, the art of juggling and stilt walking.

We are not so much about academic performance, with respect to grading, but we are about attendance and exploration.

About the workshops, I do film, professionally, as a professor. When we do a film workshop, we do not do American movies, we do the art of cinema, that is French, German Italian, English, Swedish or whatever. These are films they don't normally pick out. They very often come from suburban places where these films do not enter. Our assistant director, a double major in history and music performance B double base. As an historian, he was very interested in the history of the Third Reich. He wanted to offer a workshop on the art of Fascism. In that workshop, what did I suggest the very first day? I brought in a book with a painting by Henri Matisse from 1913 and asked the students, Why is this colorful picture something that the Nazis did not want? So they had to explore what did fascism mean and why is this colorful picture something that this particular culture, this particular regime, this particular ideology, did not want. Why did it not want the German Expressionists to delve into the primitive art associated with Africa,? Because they were against diversity. Because they wanted inertia of the people and their minds and they needed bonding of obedience. So students emerged from these explorations -- not of me being a loudspeaker telling them what to do.

I stepped out earlier to take a call and the person asked me how I was going to get today's audience involved. So I have some pictures to distribute for you to see. Please take a few and pass them around. These pictures are primarily from our annual fair. One of the things we have is the arts fair. Here is a picture I want you to see of an African American dancer as a flapper. I also have a flapper dress here that was done by the costume workshop, and I need a volunteer, male or female, to try on this dress [demonstration].

Thank you so much for being attentive and for having the opportunity to share with you about our programs.