



Purchase College | Notes from the Provost

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

January 24, 2018

To: The Faculty and Staff

From: Barry Pearson, Provost

Dear Colleagues:

At the outset of any conversation about a place like Haiti, and our reasons for sending students to study there, we hazard unwittingly venturing down a slippery slope. We hear “Haiti” and we say, “Yes, there’s a place Purchase College can do some good.” And there it is: the stance that casts us as the “do-gooder,” and, as a result, positioned to offer new and bold solutions to persistent problems.

By starting with this perspective, my interest is to kick off a conversation about our developmental strategy for site specific partnerships in places like Haiti, Africa, and even locally, in off campus locations like Yonkers and Port Chester. This conversation will be a central one in the next year. It’s also important to discuss our core values as we begin searching for new leadership of international studies. As you know, the director’s position for international will be reconfigured as the Dean for Global Strategy and International Programs.

As background on Haiti, Purchase is considering two projects there. The first piece is involvement in a SUNY-wide sustainable village project funded by the Kellogg Foundation in Arachaie. The second project, separate from Kellogg and SUNY, is a possible exchange program with a film school in Jacmel.

The devastation in Haiti is well known. The earthquake in 2010 affected 3 million people and caused 230,000 deaths. To this day, there are “tent cities” providing shelter for those still homeless. One cannot remain unmoved by the sights and stories of the devastation. Like our own “9/11”, everyone in Haiti remembers where he or she was on Tuesday, January 12, 2010, at 4:53 PM.

The untold story is that the earthquake, while an unimaginable tragedy, was made all the more devastating by what Paul Farmer, in his book *Haiti: After the Earthquake*, refers to as an “acute-on-chronic” situation. “Chronic” because in 2010 there already existed a debilitating lack of basic human services: health, education, safety, and sanitation. Overlay the 2010 earthquake and, in less than 40 seconds, chronic hardship was turned “acute.” Devastating. Deadly.

So why go? What can we learn from Haiti that can shape our broader global engagement? And let me say, I raise this question admitting that my visit to Haiti as part of a team from Purchase in December was a moving and powerfully important one.

I think off-campus learning programs should offer the possibility of reorienting students’ responsibilities to the world. At the same time, these experiences should engender greater humility. My own experience in

Haiti reoriented (humbled) my thinking drastically. Chiefly, I saw how global reactions—like those of the United States—to “under-developed” countries often exacerbate the very problems they seek to remedy. Taking this lesson to heart, then, I think there are very important things to be mindful of as we consider our global engagement.

For one, I think our global strategy should extend what’s best about Purchase to places in which we can build lasting relationships. In setting down roots, we can plan curricula and co-curricula that are sustainable and offer educational benefits to everyone: to the local community, our students, and to students from our partner institutions.

As an adjunct to this piece, we should not expect students to simply “know” that study abroad is an option; as 21st century global citizens, it was necessary for them as any other requirement. To date, study abroad has been episodic and opportunistic. With stable site locations, we can encourage ongoing projects that are inherited by successive generations of students.

Finally, I think our engagement abroad will teach us how to care—how to care deeply about the world, for the people we meet and collaborate with, and for the inequities that are at the root of chronically uneven development.

Campus Community Forum Session

Save the Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2018

Location: Buffer Room **Time:** 3:30-5:30pm

Faculty Awards Updates

[Junior Faculty Development Leave Awards for 2018-19.](#)

I am pleased to announce that we have eleven recipients of this year’s JFD Leave award. The Awardees are offered a semester’s leave at full salary, during which they are released from all teaching and service obligations to the college. These awards are, in effect, internal fellowships that provide an opportunity for junior, untenured faculty to concentrate exclusively on advancing or completing an important professional or scholarly project. Please join me in congratulating them!

Leandro Benmergui, HUM: AY 2018-2019 (plus a Title F)

Jessica Carnevale, NSS: Spring 2019

Jakub Ciupinski, MUSIC: Fall 2018

J. Elliott Lewis, HUM: Spring 2019

Joshua Lutz, A+D: Spring 2019

Rachel Owens, A+D: Spring 2019

Edwin Martinez, FMS: AY 2018-2019 (plus a Title F)

Liya Palagashvili, NSS: AY 2018-2019 (plus a Title F)

Mariel Rodney, HUM: Fall 2018

Robert Swainston, A+D: Spring 2019

Knarik Tunyan, NSS: Fall 2018

[Faculty Support Awards](#) are used to fund research, academic travel and conference presentations, artistic endeavors, or other comparable professional activity. Please join me in congratulating the **fall 2017 recipients**:

Leandro Benmergui, Humanities
Laura Chmielewski, Humanities
Rachel Dickstein, Theatre Arts
Anthony Domestico, Humanities
Stella Ebner, Art+Design
Darcy Gervasio, Library
Cobina Gillitt, Theatre Arts
Ager Gondra, Humanities
Paula Halperin, Humanities
Matthew Immergut, NSS
Mark Jonas, NSS
Paul Kaplan, Humanities
Mary Kosut, NSS
Julian Kreimer, Humanities/Art+Design
Elise Lemire, Humanities
Cynthia Lin, Art+Design
Beth Livensperger, Art + Design
Joshua Lutz, Art + Design

Kathleen McCormick, Humanities
Maryann McEnroe, NSS
Shaka McGlotten, FMS
Deborah Mesa-Pelly, Art+Design
Kartik Nair, FMS
Gaura Narayan, Humanities
Liya Palagashvili, NSS
Krystal Perkins, NSS
Lenka Pichlikova, Theatre Arts
Ted Piltzecker, Music
Janine Polak, Art+Design
Christopher Robbins, Art+Design
Paul Siegel, NSS
Liza Steele, NSS
Michelle Stewart, FMS
Aviva Taubenfeld, Humanities
Hakan Topal, FMS
Gary Waller, Humanities

Reminder: Application Deadlines for Upcoming Faculty Awards

Application/nomination deadlines are approaching for the following Purchase College faculty awards, please note all applications must be forwarded to your Chair/Director prior to the dates listed below. The dates below are when they are due in the Provost office and/or unless otherwise noted:

[2018-2020 Kempner and 2018-2019 Leff Senior Faculty Research Award](#): **February 12**
[Topol Summer Stipend](#): **February 12**

[Emily and Eugene Grant Faculty Award](#): **February 12**

[Spring 2018 Faculty Support Awards](#): **March 1**

[Spring 2018 Part-Time Faculty Teaching Support Awards](#): **March 15**

[2018-2020 Fishbein Junior Faculty Research Award in the Liberal Arts](#): **March 30**

[Jewish Studies Faculty Research/Professional Development Award](#): **March 30**

For more information, please visit the [Faculty Awards](#) section on the Office of the Provost website. Additional information on awards and leaves offered through the New York State/United University Professions Joint Labor-Management Committees (JLMC) is available at nysuup.lmc.ny.gov.

Neuberger Museum

LOVE THE NEU ON VALENTINE'S DAY!

Wednesday, February 14, 4:30pm—7:30pm

Please join us for an opening reception celebrating three illuminating new exhibitions
Open to members, friends and the Purchase College community.
NO RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

NEON

Stephen Antonakos: Proscenium
Bending Light: Neon Art 1965 to Now
January 28 - June 24, 2018

From Motherwell to Hofmann:
The Samuel Kootz Gallery, 1945–1966
February 11 - May 20, 2018
www.neuberger.org

All other [Events](#) at the Neuberger Museum.

Natural and Social Sciences Lecture Series

Third Annual Darwin Day Lecture

[Massimo Pigliucci](#), K.D.

Irani Professor of Philosophy

The Graduate Center, CUNY to Speak on February 6:
Tuesday, February 6, 7 p.m. | Natural Sciences Lecture Hall (1001)

Do We Need a New Theory of Evolution? And What would it Look Like?

One often hears talk of “paradigm shifts” in science in general and in evolutionary biology in particular. In recent years, there has been a lot of discussion about the differences between the Modern Synthesis (MS), the standard theory of evolution since the 1940s and ‘50s, and various proposals for a new theory called the Extended Evolutionary Synthesis (EES), to accommodate novel empirical discoveries and conceptual advances made over the past several decades. But is the EES necessary, and if so, is it an example of paradigm shift in biology? What is a paradigm shift, anyway? In this talk I present two major examples of theoretical transitions in biology - the move from natural theology to Darwinism and the move from the MS to the EES - and defend the view that the first but not the second one represented a genuine paradigm shift, arguably the only time in the history of biology in which any such shift has occurred.

Upcoming Events

Check the redesigned [campus calendar](#) for all other upcoming events. You can search it using a range of filters, save and share the events, and add them to your Outlook, Google, Yahoo, or iCal calendars.

For events at the Performing Arts Center, you can also check the [PAC calendar](#) and then order your tickets online. (Online ticket sales close 24 hours before each event. To check on the availability of day-of-show tickets, call the box office at 914 251-6200.)