



October 26, 2015

To: The Faculty and Staff  
From: Barry Pearson, Provost

Dear Colleagues:

PART II of IV:

Consider for a moment how the act of framing a student learning outcome is like knocking yourself unconscious with the very door you are trying to open.

I ended Part I with the suggestion that one hazard of our mindfulness about accountability is that we tend to educate, as Kenneth Robinson suggests, “from the neck up, and to the right.” In striving to measure learning, we often anesthetize the very outcomes we desire: creative thought, critical inquiry, and original ideas. But let’s face it: Who stands up and says, “I build in uncertainty”? Imagine reading the following outcome: “The students will engage in an ill-defined process to originate an unidentified idea of value.” Such an SLO would never sit well.

However, consider the following question: Why is greater creativity in our students even important? (And in “creativity” I include two types of processes: critical and artistic.) My argument is that there is less and less in life that justifies an education built on certainty. Even in the most vocational of enterprises, there are few guarantees, given that most jobs for which our students will compete don’t yet exist.

In response to this question, I’d also quote our own Jennie Uleman, who, in a [recent article](#) published in the *Journal News* (lohud.com), wrote, “You can study things that make you a better slave and you can study things that make you a better human being.” I think we all agree that the world needs more human beings who freely create.

My last answer is that I think creativity shifts the mindset of the learner. In short, for our students, when learning becomes the means to create knowledge, their sense of being able to affect change in the world is mightily increased—a proposition that I think gets lost for them. Imagine, too, that we might stop knocking ourselves silly with that door we are trying to open if active creation could be at the heart of what we do.

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### **Durst Distinguished Lecture Series: An Evening with Tracy K. Smith on November 4**

On **Wednesday, November 4**, the School of Humanities will welcome the award-winning poet and memoirist [Tracy K. Smith](#) to campus. She will give a talk and a reading in the **Neuberger Museum Study** from **4:30 to 6 p.m.**, followed by a book signing. This event is free and open to the public.

Tracy K. Smith is the author of [Ordinary Light](#) (2015), a critically acclaimed memoir about family, faith, race, science, and poetry, which has been longlisted for a National Book Award. A 2014 recipient of the Academy of American Poets Fellowship, Smith has published three books of poetry: *Life on Mars*, which received the 2012 Pulitzer Prize; *Duende*, recipient of the 2006 James Laughlin Award; and *The Body’s Question*, which won the 2002 Cave Canem Poetry Prize. She is currently director and professor of creative writing at Princeton University.

The Durst Distinguished Lecture Series is made possible by the Roy and Shirley Durst Distinguished Chair in Literature Endowment.

### Natural and Social Sciences Lecture Series: Carl Safina on November 16

**“Beyond Words: What Animals Think and Feel”**

**Monday, November 16, 7 p.m.**

[Carl Safina](#) ('77 Environmental Science), PhD

*Carl Safina Endowed Research Chair for Nature and Humanity*

*School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences, Stony Brook University, SUNY*

**Student Services Building, Red Room**

“In a world where we usually measure animals by human standards, prize-winning author and MacArthur Fellow Carl Safina takes us inside their lives and minds, witnessing their profound capacity for perception, thought, and emotion, showing why the word ‘it’ is often inappropriate as we discover ‘who’ they really are.”

— from the introduction to his [new book](#) *Beyond Words: What Animals Think and Feel*

### Reminder! Upcoming Award and Leave Application Deadlines

- [Faculty Support Awards](#): **November 1**
- **New!** [Part-Time Teaching Support Awards](#): **November 15**
- [Chancellor’s Awards for Excellence](#): The respective peer-review committees on campus issue the calls for nominations. **December 1** is the deadline for peer review of nominations for all categories except [Adjunct Teaching](#). (Nominations for the Adjunct Teaching award must be peer-reviewed earlier because these are **due to SUNY** on November 9, an earlier deadline than the other categories.)

For more information, please visit the [Faculty Awards](#) section on the Office of the Provost website.

### Upcoming Events: October–November

For the most current information on upcoming public events, please refer to the [campus calendar](#), [Neuberger Museum calendar](#), or [Performing Arts Center calendar](#). (Events and details may be added, changed, or deleted after an issue of *Notes* is prepared.)

*Exhibitions on view:*

#### Neuberger Museum of Art:

– [After 1965: Art in a Time of Social Unrest](#) (through March 13, 2016)

– [Liza Lou: Color Field and Solid Grey](#) (November 8, 2015–February 21, 2016)

#### Passage Gallery:

– [Life After Life in Prison: A Photo Essay by Sara Bennett](#) (through November 2)

#### Richard and Dolly Maass Gallery:

– [Interwoven: Prints and Process](#) (October 5–November 13)

#### [Burq Off!](#)

**Wed., Oct. 28, 7 p.m.**

Dance Theatre Lab

#### [Visiting Artist Lecture Series: Josephine Halvorson](#)

**Wed., Oct. 28, 4:30 p.m.**

Visual Arts Building, Room 1016

[John Stossel: Freedom and Its Enemies](#)

**Fri., Oct. 30**, 2:30 p.m.

Humanities Theatre

[Saraswathu Rajagopalan: Veena Workshop and Performance](#)

**Fri., Oct. 30**, workshop 2:30 p.m., concert 7 p.m.

Music Building, Recital Hall

[Purchase Repertory Theatre: Blues for Mr. Charlie](#)

*Written by James Baldwin / Directed by A. Dean Irby*

**Fri., Oct. 30**, 7:30 p.m.

**Sat., Oct. 31**, 1:30 & 7:30 p.m.

**Wed.–Fri., Nov. 4–6**, 7:30 p.m.

**Sat., Nov. 7**, 1:30 & 7:30 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Richard S. Salomon Jr: Financial Literacy Workshop, Part 3](#)

**Wed., Nov. 4**, 12:30 p.m.

Neuberger Museum Study

[An Evening with Tracy K. Smith](#)

*Durst Distinguished Lecture Series*

**Wed., Nov. 4**, 4:30 p.m.

Neuberger Museum Study

[Visiting Artist Lecture Series: Allyson Vieira](#)

**Wed., Nov. 4**, 4:30 p.m.

Visual Arts Building, Room 1016

[New Media Lecture Series: Douglas Rushkoff](#)

**Wed., Nov. 4**, 6:30 p.m.

Neuberger Museum Study

[Munich Symphony Orchestra](#)

**Fri., Nov. 6**, 8 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Admissions event: Visual Media Visit Day](#)

**Sat., Nov. 7**, 10 a.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Benefête 2015](#)

**Sat., Nov. 7**, 7 p.m. cocktails, 8 p.m. dinner & program

Neuberger Museum

[Arturo Sandoval](#)

**Sat., Nov. 7**, 8 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Opera at the Cinema: Aida](#)

**Sun., Nov. 8**, 2 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

## **Advising Week**

**Mon.–Fri., Nov. 9–13**

Spring 2016 registration for matriculated students begins Nov. 16.

### [Visiting Artist Lecture Series: Chitra Ganesh](#)

**Wed., Nov. 11**, 4:30 p.m.

Visual Arts Building, Room 1016

### [National Theatre Live: Hamlet](#)

**Thurs., Nov. 12**, 7 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

### [Purchase Percussion Ensemble](#)

*Dominic Donato, Conductor*

**Thurs., Nov. 12**, 8 p.m.

Music Building, Recital Hall

### [Black Violin](#)

**Sun., Nov. 15**, 3 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

### [Carl Safina—Beyond Words: What Animals Think and Feel](#)

*Natural and Social Sciences Lecture Series*

**Mon., Nov. 16**, 7 p.m.

Student Services Building, Red Room

### [Admissions event: Transfer Student Workshop](#)

**Wed., Nov. 18**, 4 p.m.

Admissions Building, Buffer

### [Visiting Artist Lecture Series: K-HOLE](#)

**Wed., Nov. 18**, 4:30 p.m.

Visual Arts Building, Room 1016

### [James Jasper—Art and Protest: 1960s and Today](#)

**Wed., Nov. 18**, 6:30 p.m.

Neuberger Museum Study

### [Purchase College Soul Voices: “I’ll Take You There”](#)

*Pete Malinverni, Artistic Director*

**Wed., Nov. 18**, 7 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

### [Purchase Contemporary Ensemble](#)

*Dominic Donato, Conductor*

**Thurs., Nov. 19**, 8 p.m.

Music Building, Recital Hall

### [Purchase Symphony Orchestra](#)

*Roger Nierenberg, Guest Conductor*

*Ransom Wilson, Artistic Director*

**Fri., Nov. 20**, 7:30 p.m.  
Performing Arts Center

[The Art of Time Ensemble: Sgt. Pepper](#)

**Fri., Nov. 20**, 8 p.m.  
Performing Arts Center

[BFA Senior Dance Project Concert](#)

**Fri.–Sat., Nov. 20–21**, 8 p.m.  
Dance Theatre Lab (0029)

[Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center: Nights in Vienna](#)

**Sat., Nov. 21**, 5 p.m.  
Preconcert conversation with CMS artists, 4:15 p.m.  
Performing Arts Center

[Jessica Lang Dance](#)

**Sun., Nov. 22**, 3 p.m.  
Performing Arts Center

**Thanksgiving Recess**

**Wed.–Sun., Nov. 25–29**

Residence Halls close at 9 a.m. on Nov. 25 and reopen at 2 p.m. on Nov. 29.

