



December 15, 2014

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

Dear Colleagues:

December marks the midpoint of our academic year. As an exercise and as a small gift to myself, I take some time to reflect on the successes of the fall semester. I'm biased on this subject, of course, but that doesn't mean I've lost my objectivity. For example, overall registration for the spring semester is keeping up with last year's numbers and seems to be holding strong. I believe this year's graduating class is trending just a little higher than last year's in terms of the percentage of our students on track to graduate. And our new student success initiative, led by Patty Bice and Paul Nicholson, is off to a great start. So, these are some of the "success gifts" I'll enjoy.

For the greatest "success gift," though, I look to our students. In them, like a sixth sense, I see success everywhere.

My attention lands first on the opening event with [Junot Díaz](#). Without a doubt he was great, but our students were also great: engaged, inquisitive, and lively. Another standout was the [Masha Gessen](#) lecture. Once again, I think our students' questions were insightful. From that event, I'm quickly reminded of all the wonderful exhibitions and performances that keep me in tune with the high quality work of our students. Performances like [Machinal](#), [Hansel and Gretel](#), and the run of [Marat Sade](#), to name a few, are all real evidence of faculty and student success.

The new and original programming, however, that has taken place in just this semester stands out for me in special ways. This vein is so rich with examples that to list them all is impossible, so here are just a few. The [New Works](#) series by the Purchase Dance Company was wildly engaging. Our launch of [Casa Purchase](#) with Leandro Benmergui at the helm is expanding our teaching and learning opportunities in the Westchester County community. In the Neuberger Museum, [Becoming Disfarmer](#), curated by our own Chelsea Spengemann, brings to life a new perspective on a region through the lens of this interesting photographer, and [This Leads to Fire](#), curated by Sarah Warren, has garnered a very positive [review](#) in the *New York Times*. The relaunch of the [Purchase Writer's Center](#), under the leadership of Louise Yelin, is already providing wonderful opportunities to experience a renewed focus on engagement through writing. And the recent edition of [The Purchase Beat](#) is well worth the read.

In all, though, I think the "[walk out](#)" on December 1 by our students in reaction to the events in Ferguson, Missouri, was an especially poignant indicator of our success as a campus supportive of open dialogue. Two things impressed me as I listened to the students' discussion on the mall: their passion and their desire to sustain a conversation about race.

Congratulations on these successes and all the creative moments throughout the semester, so many of which go unseen. None of these happen without your hard work. May your holidays be rich and filled with the satisfaction of a job "well done."

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## 2015–16 Junior Faculty Development Leave Awards

I am pleased to announce five recipients of the [Junior Faculty Development Leave Awards](#) for 2015–16. 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!

**Stephen Flusberg**, Psychology: Spring 2016 leave

**Elizabeth Middleton**, Chemistry: Spring 2016 leave

**Gaura Narayan**, Literature: Spring 2016 leave

**Lorraine Plourde**, Media, Society, and the Arts: Spring 2016 leave

**Nelly van Bommel**, Dance: Spring 2016 leave

## Save the Date! Teaching and Learning Day: January 20

The Library and the Teaching, Learning, and Technology Center (TLTC) will once again be hosting a **Teaching and Learning Day** next month to kick off the spring semester. Please join your colleagues on **January 20** for conversations about teaching and learning, demonstrations and hands-on work with tech tools for teaching, and refreshments. This is a great way to reconnect with friends after the winter break, to spend some time talking with colleagues about teaching, and to pick up some new ideas about tools and techniques that you might add to your classes.

Both morning and afternoon workshop sessions, along with refreshment breaks, are currently being planned. Several faculty members have already expressed interest in facilitating sessions (clickers, flipped classroom approaches, writing across the curriculum, etc.). Sessions will also be offered by the TLTC staff and by librarians. The TLTC director, Keith Landa, is considering offering two sessions, one on 3-D printing for classes and one on teaching from a tablet.

Please let Keith know what topics on pedagogy or instructional technology you would like to have arranged for this January 2015 workshop day; he can be reached at [keith.landa@purchase.edu](mailto:keith.landa@purchase.edu) or [TLTC@purchase.edu](mailto:TLTC@purchase.edu). And if you'd be interested in sharing some instructional approach or teaching tool that has made a difference in your classes, the TLTC and Library would love to arrange more faculty-led sessions (either individual or panels).

## Upcoming Events: December

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:

**Please note:** *The museum will be closed to the public Dec. 23–Jan. 5.*

- [Key Frames: Contemporary Artists' Animation](#) (through Jan. 11)
- [This Leads to Fire: Russian Art from Nonconformism to Global Capitalism, Selections from the Kolodzei Art Foundation Collection](#) (through Jan. 11)
- [When Modern was Contemporary: The Roy R. Neuberger Collection](#) (extended through Mar. 15)
- [Becoming Disfarmer](#) (through Mar. 22)

### Richard and Dolly Maass Gallery:

- [Suspension Point: 2014 MFA Group Exhibition](#) (through Dec. 19)

[Final Exam Week](#)

**Mon.–Fri., Dec. 15–19**

[Talk Cinema](#)

**Tues., Dec. 16, 7 p.m.**

Performing Arts Center

[Tameka Norris: Visiting Artist Lecture Series](#)

**Wed., Dec. 17, 4:30 p.m.**

Visual Arts Building, Room 1016

[Storytelling with Images: Screening](#)

*Storytelling with Images student screening*

**Wed., Dec. 17, 7 p.m.**

Music Building, Choral Hall

**Last Day of Fall 2014 Classes**

**Fri., Dec. 19**

[The Rob Mathes Holiday Concert](#)

**Fri.–Sat., Dec. 19–20, 8 p.m.**

Performing Arts Center

[Musica Sacra: Handel's Messiah](#)

**Sat., Dec. 20, 2 p.m.**

Performing Arts Center

**Last Day to Submit Fall 2014 Grades**

**Tues., Dec. 23**

*Deadline for resolution of Incomplete grades: Jan. 16, 2015*