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Contemplative Pedagogy: Notes on the (Not So) "Quiet Revolution"
Ann Gleig

Ann Gleig is Assistant Professor of religion and cultural studies in the Department of Philosophy. She won the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award in 2017 and her first monograph, *American Buddhism After Modernity*, will be published by Yale University Press in 2019.

Over the last two decades, there has been a growing movement in higher education—contemplative pedagogy—which advocates for the adoption of the first-person practice of contemplative techniques such as meditation and reflection within the classroom. The wider teaching philosophy behind contemplative pedagogy is the conviction that a complete education should include attention to and transformation of the "whole person"—intellectually, emotionally, ethically, relationally, and socially. Parker Palmer and Arthur Zajonc (2010) have argued persuasively that higher education focuses disproportionally on conveying basic knowledge and skill-sets to students without supporting explorations of meaning, purpose, and value. Alongside models such as engaged pedagogy, holistic educational theory, and feminist pedagogy, contemplative pedagogy is presented as an alternative to the dualistic and limiting epistemologies that have come to dominate higher education—and ignite a renewal of value, transformation, and "heart" in the field.

In a seminal essay on contemplative pedagogy, Zajonc (2013), physicist and emeritus professor at Amherst College, describes it as a "quiet revolution," which offers a "wide range of educational methods that support the development of student attention, emotional balance, emphatic connection, compassion, and altruistic behaviour, while also providing new pedagogical techniques that support creativity and the learning of course content" (p. 83).

Contemplative Practices

Central to contemplative pedagogy is the conviction that learning necessitates both subjective and objective experience and the integration of first-person and third-person approaches. Hence, the experiential practice of contemplative methods for both teachers and students is at the heart of the pedagogy. The term "contemplation" derives from the Latin *contemplare*, meaning to observe, to consider, or gaze attentively, which points to the shared feature underlining a wide array of contemplative methods: the systematic development of attention or awareness. Perhaps the most well known of contemporary contemplative methods is mindfulness meditation, a practice that originated in classical Buddhism but was modernized in the late twentieth century and is now employed in a variety of secular settings such as education, medicine, and business. Scientist Jon Kabat-Zinn, often referred to as the "father" of the modern mindfulness movement, defines mindfulness as the non-judgmental moment-to-moment awareness of the present, seeing it as both a mind-state and a skill that can be developed and applied to a range of everyday activities. Mindfulness, however, is just one of a myriad of practices within contemplative pedagogy. Other examples include deep listening practices, radical questioning, reflective writing, contemplative reading, movement practices, active imagination, guided imagery, and compassion meditations (Haynes, 2004, p. 8). Maia Duerr's diagram "The Tree of Contemplative Life" indicates the range and variety of contemplative practices that can be adopted in and out of the classroom. The roots of the tree are based in two principles—communication/contact and awareness—and it has seven major branches: creative practices, stillness practices, activist practices, relational practices, ritual practices, movement practices, and generative practices.

Many, although certainly not all, contemplative practices are derived from the world's religious traditions, which might understandably lead to some unease around their employment in secular institutions such as public state universities. Indeed, conversations around issues such as the religious/secular distinction and cultural appropriation have been a valuable and necessary component of contemplative pedagogy. Without disregarding the religious roots of some of these practices, contemplative proponents see their function in terms of the development of basic human capacities such as attention, inquiry, and compassion, and legitimize their classroom adoption through reference to scientific and psychological research. They point, for instance, to William James' observation that "the faculty of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention over and over again is the very root of judgment, character and will…. An education which should improve this faculty would be education *par excellence*" (William James, 1890, quoted in Haynes, 2004, p. 9). Others reference the growing body of scientific research that shows the importance of developing attentional stability for reflexivity, self-development, and emotional stability. This includes a growing body of research on mindfulness in education as well as cognitive and social-psychological studies on learning (Hammerle, 201, p. 6).

History and Growth

The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society (CMind), established in 1987, has been a driving force behind the growth of contemplative pedagogy. One of its stated goals is the transformation of higher education through "supporting and encouraging the use of contemplative/introspective practices and perspectives to create active learning and research environments that look deeply into experience and meaning for all in service of a more just and compassionate society." In 2008, it founded "The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE)," the first professional association for contemplation in higher education. In conjunction with the American Society of Learned Societies, it has awarded a number of "Contemplative Practice Fellowships" to professors from a wide range of academic disciplines to develop courses that include contemplative practices. Examples of these courses indicate the interdisciplinary nature and wide academic applicability of contemplative pedagogy: "Practicing for Life: Nature, Spiritual Practice, and Social Change," "Modern Art and Mystical Experience," and "Will I Be Happy? Will I Be Rich? Contemplating the Connections between Happiness and Economics." ACMHE has run annual contemplative conferences since 2009 in order to foster a contemplative academic community and share research on contemplative methods in higher education.

In addition to the increasing development of individual courses that feature contemplative pedagogy, contemplative studies programs and initiatives have been adopted across a wide range of institutional settings including private and public, large and small, secular and religiously affiliated colleges. For example, Brown University has pioneered an undergraduate program in Contemplative Studies, which is taught by faculty members from a wide range of departments "who are united around a common interest in the study and application of contemplative states of mind." Emory University has fostered a collaboration between its medical school, religious studies department, and Drepung Loseling Monastery that "combines scientific and humanistic research to measure and assess contemplative practices in relation to preventive healthcare."[1] Contemplative initiatives have also been adopted by large state schools such as Colorado State University (CSU) and North Kentucky University. CSU, for instance, has developed a "Mindfulness Leaders Faculty Training," in which twenty CSU faculty will participate in a project designed to develop skills in contemplative education including classroom instruction and community-based research.

Current Trends

From its origins, contemplative pedagogy has been closely tied to ethical and social transformation. More recently, there has been increasing dialogue between contemplative practices, diversity and inclusion, and social justice perspectives. The theme of the 2017 Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE) conference was "Radicalizing Contemplative Education: Compassion, Intersectionality, and Justice in Challenging Times." One of the panels, titled "The Future of Contemplative Education: Transforming Spiritual Bypassing Culture?" noted that "CMind has grown to understand the harm of social injustices and oppressions such as racism, classism, homophobia, ableism and the mission of the CMind has increasingly addressed social justice issues in higher education."[2]

An example of how social justice work and contemplative pedagogy would come together is offered by Beth Berila (2014), a professor at St. Cloud State University. She advocates for the use of mindfulness meditation as a potent aid to feminist and critical pedagogies geared at transformative learning. Berilla argues that contemplative practices such as meditation are important additions to university courses that focus on uncovering oppression and promoting diversity and inclusion. According to Berila, "If students are to really reflect on their roles in these systems, they need to cultivate the

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1   "Contemplative Studies," Emory University <http://www.emory.edu/religions&humanspirit/Religion%20pages/Contemplative%20Studies.htm>

2   "Radicalizing Contemplative Education," ACMHE Conference at Multiversity, Scotts Valley, CA. October 27-29 2017.

tools for recognizing and understanding their internal and external reactions to that realization" (2014, p. 56). Such a recognition is often accompanied by difficult and uncomfortable emotions, which contemplative practices can help navigate by bringing more awareness and compassion to challenging conversations around racism and privilege. Berila cautions, however, that trauma and the wounds of oppression are likely to come up when marginalized students adopt these practices, and she offers helpful ways for safely integrating meditation into the classroom for vulnerable populations.

Contemplative Pedagogy at UCF

Interest in contemplative pedagogy at UCF can be traced back to a FCTL reading group of Parker Palmer and Arthur Zajonc's *The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal,* a text which engages the concerns motiving the contemplative turn such as the need for a more holistic education that honors the whole human being and the importance of integrative learning. In Fall 2017, the Faculty Center ran a contemplative reading group in which a small number of faculty from a range of departments met over the course of the semester to read some seminal pieces on contemplative pedagogy and learn about the emergence, growth, and potential of the growing field. This contemplative exploration was continued in a funded course innovation project in Spring 2018. Faculty from the Departments of Writing and Rhetoric, Theatre Studies, Art History, UCF Global, Psychology, Management, and Philosophy shared contemplative practices that we had successfully used in previous courses as well as practices we hope to develop for future classes. Each session, two of us respectively provided relevant readings and led the group in contemplative practices ranging from loving-kindness meditation to writing haiku, mindful yoga movement, and deep listening. While very much in its infancy at UCF, we believe that contemplative pedagogy has much potential to develop many of UCF's key values: high-impact learning, integrative learning, diversity and inclusion, as well as more generally to help students explore their inner lives and develop ways to experience greater well-being. Cultivating such internal experience also contributes to the formation of engaged citizens and participatory modes of democracy. As Mirabi Bush, former director of CMind, notes:

> By encouraging contemplative ways of knowing in higher education in diverse disciplines, we can encourage a new form of inquiry and imaginative thinking to complement critical thinking, and we will educate active citizens who will support a more just and compassionate direction for society (Bush quoted in Palmer and Zajonc, 2010, p. 165).

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Medicine of the Moment: Integrating Mindfulness Practice into Higher Education
Sybil St. Claire

Sybil St. Claire is Associate Lecturer of Theatre. Her research interests are rooted in Theatre for Social Change, peacebuilding, and finding the medicine in our stories. She is a UCF Women Making History Honoree and an American Association of University Women Fellow who has been recognized by the U.S. House of Representatives as a "driving force in theatre."

Mindfulness is often described as an active, open, non-judgmental awareness of the present. Mindfulness practice entreats us to acknowledge and accept what's happening in the moment both within and without while not being distracted by it (nor by the past or the future). Sometimes called the "medicine of the moment" for its ability to quickly cultivate calm and empathy in an anxious, stressful world, mindfulness practice is making its way into the classroom.

Mindfulness can be developed through a wide variety of activities that range from practicing deep listening, breath work, and yoga, to dance, storytelling, journaling, and meditation. As a Theatre for Social Change practitioner, I initially did not

realize I was integrating mindfulness into my classrooms as the two flow naturally together and have basically the same goal—to create positive social and interpersonal change. The motto of Theatre for Social Change is "have the courage to be happy," and the class explores conflict resolution, external and internal oppression, and the concepts that peacebuilding begins from within and that loving-kindness is a powerful tool for change. In the process, we apply, among others, the principles of Theatre of Witness and Playback Theatre, both of which focus on honoring others, practicing deep listening, and allowing ourselves to truly see and be seen. The stories we share and re-enact are considered "gifts" and the results are often cathartic, raise consciousness, and build community while honing a craft—a near-perfect educational paradigm in my opinion.

In the process of sharing this work in more intentionally mindful ways, I began to take incredible journeys with my students, and their evaluations and self-reflection papers recorded those journeys: "Through our work I feel I have allowed myself to become more vulnerable and to find strength, rather than weakness, in that vulnerability." "This work has boosted my confidence, inspired me to accept myself and to use that acceptance to better the lives of others as well." "I was gifted breathtaking reminders of how beautiful people are. I connected to others and was encouraged to share my words but also to hear the words of others." It was then I began to integrate the techniques I was using in my Theatre for Social Change class (many of which touch upon and embody mindfulness practice), into all of my classes, be it Theatre Survey, Creative Processes: Theory and Practice, Acting, or Storytelling. When those students too began to blossom, I knew there was no turning back.

Admittedly, the arts lend themselves to mindfulness practice and exploration, but what to do if you teach in other disciplines? Below are two activities that should work beautifully in any classroom, but there are many more activities applicable across disciplines and available to you in publications such as *Contemplative Practices in Higher Education: Powerful Methods to Transform Teaching and Learning*, and there are organizations you can join for support as well, such as the Center for Contemplative Thought in Higher Education.

Namaste.

Practicing Deep Listening
In pairs.

The Speaker speaks for three uninterrupted minutes to the Listener. The Speaker shares what is most present for them that day and only shares that which they desire to share. If the Speaker runs out of things to say, they may sit in silence and may begin talking again at any point if moved to do so.

The Listener listens with kindness, gives the Speaker their full attention, listens for tone, subtext, emotion. If they feel themselves drifting or feel the need to interject, they should simply notice the desire and return their full attention to the Speaker. After three minutes the Listener repeats what they heard back to the Speaker until he or she feels heard and understood. No need to memorize; paraphrasing works.

The Speaker then thanks the Listener for listening.

They then trade places, so that the Speaker becomes the Listener and the Listener becomes the Speaker, and repeat the entire process.

At the conclusion, they reflect on how it felt to be listened to so closely and to listen so deeply to another.

Then open the exercise up to group discussion.

Mindful Use of Technology (courtesy of Nicole Damico)
Students will need something to write with and on. Here are the instructions:
a. Sit comfortably. Turn your phone/device off and put it where you cannot see it. After each activity reflect on your feelings by writing them down.
b. Think about your phone/device. What do you experience in the mind and in the body when you think about it? Write it down.
c. Take your phone back out and hold it in your hand but do not turn it on. Write about what you are experiencing in the mind and in the body.
d. Turn your phone on but don't look at the screen. Write about what you are experiencing in the mind and in the body.
e. Turn your phone on. Open an email or text message to see what's inside. Scan headlines but don't open or read the entire message. Write about what you are experiencing in the mind and in the body.
f. Open an email or message and read it. Write about what you are experiencing in the mind and in the body.
g. If you can, quickly respond to the email or message you read. Write about what you are experiencing in the mind and in the body.
h. Put the phone away where you can't see it. Write about what you are experiencing in the mind and in the body.

Reflection
Respond to the following writing prompts:
a. Was there a progression of feelings, sensations, emotions? What were they?

b. What does this tell you?
c. Does it suggest any changes?

Discuss with the group.

Consider following this activity with a technology/phone fast of some kind (suggestion: 1 to 48 hours).

As I contemplate the future, I am inspired to devote time to issues of balance, self-care, and mental health through mindfulness activities both in and out of the classroom. Students often exhaust themselves (as do faculty), but we cannot serve from an empty vessel. If we can help our students (and ourselves) to become "more present to what is" perhaps we can begin to rest when we're tired, eat (healthfully) when we're hungry, regularly unplug from bombardments, and truly show up for each other and for ourselves. From my own experience, living a slower, more mindful life generally leads to a happier and ironically more qualitatively productive life. In *The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy*, Berg and Seeber put forth that "…if there is one sector of society that should be cultivating deep thought, it is academic teachers…. Corporatization has compromised academic life and sped up the clock…. By taking the time for reflection and dialogue, the Slow Professor takes back the intellectual life of the university."

Resources

Berg, M., & Seeber, B. (2016). *The slow professor: Challenging the culture of speed in the academy*. University of Toronto Press.

<http://www.contemplativemind.org/about>

<https://www.mindful.org/the-medicine-of-the-moment/>

<http://www.playbackcentre.org/>

<http://ptoweb.org/>

Contemplative Pedagogy and Peer Review: Making Peer Review a Mindful Practice
Brandy Dieterle

Brandy Dieterle completed her Ph.D. from the Texts & Technology program at the University of Central Florida and is currently Instructor in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric. Her research interests are in multimodal composition, digital literacies, new media, and gender and identity studies. Her scholarship has appeared in *Kairos: Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*; *Computers and Composition*; *Composition Forum*; and the *Journal of Global Literacies, Technologies, and Emerging Pedagogies*.

Contemplative pedagogy is still a fairly new concept for me as a scholar and teacher, but after my first day participating in a special interest group during the Fall 2017 semester, I knew I had discovered what would become an important part of my pedagogy. When I first looked at the tree of contemplative practices, I realized how much I incorporate contemplative practices into my teaching, such as through journaling, reflections, storytelling, and silence. My goal then became to incorporate these activities more intentionally to strengthen the tie to contemplative pedagogy. At the same time I was participating in this special interest group, I realized the peer review activities in my classes were not gaining the attention I had hoped. That's when I decided I wanted to consider how contemplative practices could be integrated into peer review activities, which will be my focus here.

Existing research on contemplative pedagogy in writing classrooms tends to focus on meditative practices and yoga. Wenger (2015) argued yoga practices bring awareness to the mind, body, and environment, and by integrating these into writing classrooms, yoga helps students approach writing with intentionality. Chaterdon (2016–2017) argued that, given existing research on contemplative neuroscience, "implementing contemplative practice in the writing classroom may help to ameliorate some of the cognitive and affective stress caused by the writing process" (p. 63). Similarly, Garretson (2010) explored how contemplative practices could help address the challenges and contradictions English Language Learners face with their struggles and tensions with the writing process. Kroll (2008), on the other hand, argued for using meditative practices to bring a renewed focus to personal essay writing to give students a greater sense of the impact of their words. However, through my research thus far, I haven't encountered any discussion of how mindfulness can facilitate peer review practices, which I argue is a crucial part of the writing process as writing is a communal, rather than a singular, practice because the people and ideas we engage with shape our own writing.

The mindfulness peer review activity I incorporated consisted of two practices: a focused attention meditation and deep listening. The intent of doing these two activities together was to get students into a present moment awareness to help them provide better feedback for their classmates. My goal here was to use mindfulness as a tool for closely focusing on the peer review draft students prepared and, in doing so, put students more in tune with the work they've produced. I asked students to sit in silence for one minute, and I invited them to close their eyes if they were comfortable doing so. During the minute of sitting in silence, I invited students to open themselves up to the emotions and feelings they have about their writing, positive or negative. After the one minute was up, I asked students to take a few moments to write down two questions they had for their classmates now that they've spent some time focusing solely on their writing.

Once students finished with writing their two questions, I guided the class through a deep listening activity. My goal here was to give every student a platform for sharing whatever they wanted about their peer review draft with their assigned partners. I asked that they spend three minutes doing this while their two partners listened without interruption, and then they would switch until each person had had their three minutes. What I found to be most important for this guided deep listening activity was telling the "listeners" not to interrupt or ask questions. I want to encourage and promote dialogue amongst my students, but when they are constantly verbally responding to their classmates they are not giving the space to practice deep listening. Allowing them three whole minutes to speak without interruption or comment enables this space to listen and reflect, and any questions that arise could come at the end of the activity.

To begin to assess student reactions to this activity, I sent my students a short anonymous survey. The first question was open-answer, and I asked students, "How would you describe your experiences with these Mindfulness Peer Review activities?" The second was a yes-or-no question that asked, "Do you find that the Mindfulness Peer Review activities were beneficial when compared to the previous peer review activities?" The final question was also open-answer and was aimed at providing a space to leave any additional comments. "Do you have any other thoughts or comments you would like to share about our peer review activities?"

First, 24 of the 27 students who completed the survey said "yes," they believed this activity was beneficial when compared to their previous experiences with peer review. As a part of our regular class discussion, I asked for volunteers in the class to share their prior experiences. While this was not a formal attempt to gather data on students' prior experiences with

peer review, none of the students shared that they had done a similar activity prior. In fact, most students said they did not find peer review to be helpful in the past because their peers would leave vague comments that left them unsure of how to move forward with their essays. I followed this mindfulness peer review activity with a list of specific questions as well as a rubric that students should use to provide comments to their classmates that encourage detailed feedback.

The question that asked students to describe their experiences evoked 10 responses where students spoke specifically about how they enjoyed pausing to reflect on their work prior to looking at their peers' papers. One said it helped them clear their head and another said it helped them to gather their thoughts. Five responses also commented they liked writing down two questions and sharing those questions with their partners to get more targeted feedback.

A few students noted they really enjoyed that I provided a list of questions and a rubric for them to use when providing feedback to their peers to make it more structured. Additionally, a few students noted they liked doing peer review and talking with their classmates because it helped ease their own anxieties about their writing, and by seeing what was working or what wasn't working in their classmates' essays, they could gain a sense of what they should do or what they should avoid in their own.

From my observations in the classroom and from the survey responses, I believe incorporating mindfulness into peer review activities merits continued discussion and research. Class can sometimes be too fast-paced, and certain activities in class can become so routine that they begin to lose their effectiveness. This is where meditative practices and mindfulness can be especially useful as they encourage being present and aware in the moment. Furthermore, by introducing students to these kinds of practices in first-year writing classes, they are beginning to learn valuable strategies for managing the stresses of being a college student.

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Guiding Graduate Students through the "Rising Strong" Contemplative Practice
Elizabeth Brendel Horn

Elizabeth Brendel Horn is Assistant Professor of Theatre for Young Audiences. She is Theatre for Youth division chair of Florida Theatre Conference and serves on the board of TYA/USA. She is published in *Theatre Topics*, *Youth Theatre Journal*, *HowlRound*, *TYA Today*, and *Incite/Insight*.

I have taught "Storytelling as Theatre Art" on the graduate level twice, in Spring 2016 and Spring 2018. The purpose of this course as defined in the syllabus is to examine "theoretical frameworks for collaborative storytelling in theatre." This is achieved primarily through "Writes of Spring," a project produced at the Orlando Repertory Theatre, a professional Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) company in partnership with UCF. The UCF TYA graduate students work in leadership capacities for Writes of Spring including coordinator, playwright, and director. This yearlong project culminates in the performance of an original play based on the winning entries of hundreds of K-12 writing submissions, complete with pre-show festivities and a post-show celebration. For my graduate students, upon whom this hefty responsibility is thrust during their first semester at UCF, the stakes are high. This is their first time collaborating as cohorts on a polished final product, one that is tied to grant funding and performs for a packed house, and one in which the partnership between Orlando REP and UCF is highly visible. Needless to say, this level of collaboration and sense of responsibility can give way to conflict, and tensions are often high during this process for this small group of five graduate students.

In 2016, the first time I facilitated the course, I failed to cultivate a space for the students to work through these constraints. Because I was aware of the magnitude of this project, I became too focused on the practical needs; our class time served as little more than time for us to recap the progress that the students had made and to discuss next steps. Because of this, class time felt productive and peaceful; however, class journals reflected that unaddressed conflicts were brewing. The 2016 student journals lacked rigor; some students used the journal space to vent about the actions of their peers, the limitations of the project and the course, and the undue bur-

dens they felt forced to carry. I was frustrated that the students did not see Writes of Spring as an opportunity for personal self-reflection and growth. In hindsight, I did not provide the students with clear guidance on how to use the journaling process for this purpose, and I avoided difficult face-to-face conversations that could have served as the impetus for these reflections.

When preparing to teach this course again in Spring 2018, I set out to create a classroom environment that would help students confront conflict in a more honest and productive way. I turned to *Rising Strong: How the Ability to Reset Transforms the Way we Live, Love, Parent, and Lead* by Brené Brown, research professor at the University of Houston who studies shame and vulnerability. Brown's three-step Rising Strong process encourages users to "rise from our falls, overcome our mistakes, and face hurt in a way that brings more wisdom and wholeheartedness into our lives" (2015). As a member of the FCTL Contemplative Practices cohort that same semester, I identified that Brown's process falls under the "The Tree of Contemplative Practices" (Duerr) under the categories of Creative (Journaling) and Relational (Storytelling).

In *Rising Strong*, Brown outlines a three-step process for rising from falls: The Reckoning, The Rumbling, and The Revolution:

1. The Reckoning: During this first stage, a person recognizes a strong emotion and gets curious about what they are feeling and how those feelings might relate to their own thoughts and behaviors.

2. The Rumble: This stage is the meat of the Rising Strong process, during which a person must come to terms with the stories that they make up related to this feeling to "revisit, challenge, and reality-check these narratives" (Brown 2015). In an example Brown provides, she felt disconnected from her husband when they went on a swim together and created the narrative that he was no longer attracted to her in a bathing suit. Brown argues that we as humans are inherent storytellers, and if we do not know all of the information, we fill in the details with stories from our imagination. Often times, as in this example, we manifest stories that tap into our greatest insecurities and fears.

3. The Revolution: In this final stage, a person uses the insights gathered during the rumble to "write a new, more courageous ending" to their story to change how they engage with the world (2015).

Incorporating *Rising Strong* in my course changed both my students' experience and my own facilitation. The process challenged the perfectionist in me and many of my students.

Brown speaks of the initial story in The Rumble as a "Shitty (or Stormy) First Draft," or SFD, a term that acknowledges that the stories we tell ourselves grow out of messy, emotional places. In having this terminology in place as a class, we agreed that I would not read my students' journals, allowing them to serve as SFDs where their thoughts could be raw, selfish, and one-sided. Their final written reflection, then, allowed them to comb back through their journals in search of The Revolution, guiding students toward a higher-level reflection. Following Brown's process, too, allowed us to acknowledge that personal growth does not fit neatly into a semester—especially when an individual is working to address deeply rooted thoughts and behaviors. My students, knowing that we were working within Brown's model to live more wholeheartedly, were welcome to state that they were "still rumbling" with something—even in their final written reflection.

The impact of this contemplative practice was also evident in our classroom discussions. Acquiring a common language about vulnerability, shame, and courage allowed us to communicate more openly and honestly with one another. This meant the course was fueled with more intense and emotional conversations, but they yielded greater rewards. Two students, both in leadership positions, were at odds with one another—one was withdrawing from the project while the other was pushing for control. While they seemed to come at the project with two different perspectives, these hard conversations allowed them to realize they were both struggling with feeling overwhelmed and unqualified for their respective tasks. Not having all of the information caused them to create stories to rationalize their counterpart's behavior; getting real with their stories led each to greater understanding and empathy.

Brown says, "It is not the critic who counts… The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly… who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly" (2015). By incorporating the Rising Strong process in Storytelling As Theatre Art, I found the students more willing to be in the arena with one another than critiquing from the outside, which will encourage them to dare greatly as they move forward in their academic and professional pursuits.

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Student Development through Contemplative Pedagogy: Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction
Amanda M. Wolcott

Amanda Wolcott is an Instructional Specialist at the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning and an Adjunct Lecturer in the Department of Management. She earned her Ph.D. in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from the University of Central Florida, and her research areas include diversity and mistreatment in the workplace, leadership, organizational climate, and team dynamics.

Today's college students are facing unparalleled levels of stress compared to previous generations. From 2003 to 2008, there was a 20% increase in experienced stress, with eight in ten college students reporting moderate to frequent stress over the previous three months (The American Institute of Stress). Between 2009 and 2015, there was a 30% rise in student appointments at university counseling centers, despite only a 5% increase in enrollment during that time. Of these appointments, 61% addressed anxiety, 45% were for stress, and 28% were related to academic performance (Winerman, 2017).

One reason that has been offered for this trend is the uncertain nature of the economy and high unemployment rates, which make it a scary time to be in college, potentially accruing rising debt levels for every day spent in school. Another reason may be due to the decline in empathy seen in college students: a 40% reduction since 2000 (Konrath, O'Brien, & Hsing, 2011). Caring relationships are known to be critical to mental and physical health, and thus this drop in empathy may be contributing to a deterioration of coping skills and an increase in stress. College is also a time of one's life when judgement by others is at an all-time high, and the increasingly test-centered climate of academia will only intensify this phenomenon. Increasingly for students, every move is measured against a rubric or standard, and every bit of knowledge will be experienced as connected to a grade. Test anxiety is experienced by an estimated 20–30% of the student population in the United States (Navi-Benjamin, Lavi, McKeachie, & Lin, 1997) and is linked to increased stress, feelings of shame and incompetence, and diminished self-efficacy and self-esteem (Rothman, 2004).

No one would be surprised to learn that stress is a negative experience that people should strive to avoid, but it may be surprising to learn that stress impacts learning itself. Hormones and neurotransmitters released as a result of stress hinder the revision of old memories in light of new information. Recent research has shown that stress shifts learning from a flexible,

cognitive process to a more rigid, behavioral habit (Vogel & Schwabe, 2016). Exacerbating the physiological effects of stress on learning, stress from outside of school can disrupt students' ability to focus during class or study time and can reduce the priority of course work to the point of causing students to drop classes or even drop out of school. Given the excessive amounts of stress experienced by students and the harmful effects thereof, faculty play a crucial role in developing the student as a whole person, and Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction is an effective tool to add to instructors' pedagogical tool kits.

The term "mindfulness" was first used over 2,500 years ago by Siddhartha Gautama in *Satipatthana Sutta*, with this usage translating into an awareness of the present. The modern theory of mindfulness has been developed by researchers to involve two components: the self-regulation needed to focus one's attention on a present experience, and an orientation of curiosity, openness, and acceptance. In 1979, a molecular biologist at the University of Massachusetts Medical School by the name of Jon Kabat-Zinn developed Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) after a study abroad session in which he learned Eastern contemplative practices from Buddhist monks. The MBSR program generally lasts eight weeks and involves practices such as mindful breathing, body scans, yoga, sitting meditations, mindful eating, compassion meditations, psychoeducational stress information, and stress management skills.

Despite the original intention of MBSR to be used in clinical populations, the program has demonstrated significant success in the treatment of non-clinical populations as well, and one such population is college students. Robust research findings have shown that students who engage in MBSR demonstrate significant reductions in anxiety, psychological distress, negative moods and depression, and increased levels of empathy and positive moods. The effects of MBSR on empathy have revealed interesting and promising results. MBSR has been shown to increase perspective taking and decrease personal distress (Birnie, Speca, & Carlson, 2009). Additionally, reductions in stress and anxiety mediate a relationship between MBSR and increased empathic concern (Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bonner, 1998). Stress from the apprehension caused by chronic evaluation in a college setting may also be reduced by participation in MBSR (Dundas, Thorsheim, Hjeltnes, & Binder, 2016). Prior research has shown that MBSR increases levels of self-compassion, which has been linked to a reduction in ego-threat anxiety (Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2007). Self-compassion has also been shown to mediate a relationship between MBSR and reduced social anxiety (Stefan, Caoraru, & Szilagyi, 2018).

In my own classes, I incorporate contemplative pedagogy in many ways. For management majors, being able to engage in reflection and internalization of the content is a critical skill that aids in students' development as future leaders. My students learn about their own personalities and interpersonal styles and write weekly journals in which they reflect on their own experiences engaging in the current topic. In addition to content-focused contemplative practices, I have created a semester-long assignment similar to MBSR in order to assist students in understanding their own reactions to stress and developing strategies to overcome its deleterious effects. At the beginning of the semester, they learn about the causes and outcomes of stress, and they are provided with information on meditation, yoga, mindful eating, the importance of rest, and time management. They are then challenged to keep a journal where each week they record the practice they tried and what they noticed. At the end of the semester, the project culminates in a paper reflecting on the experiences of these practices, what worked best for them, and what changes they noticed. Not only do these papers include predictable responses describing their experiences, but there have been several memorable reflections that I would like to share in order to describe the impact I have seen with this practice. One student reported that she was able to free herself of high blood pressure medication (under the guidance of her doctor) as a result of these practices. Another student incorporated it into his life philosophy, stating that the assignment opened his eyes to the life he was letting pass him by, and he would, from that point, be creating what he termed a "Wellnes(t)" for himself. Finally, another student reported that, through engaging with these activities, she found that over the course of the semester, she stopped binge-watching Netflix and began earning A's in courses she had been failing. Contemplative pedagogy is a powerful tool for all instructors, and one only needs to try it in order to see the benefits that it reaps.

If you are interested in incorporating contemplative pedagogy into your courses, or perhaps beginning some practices for yourself, I recommend exploring The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society at <http://www.contemplativemind. org/>, where you can find descriptions of mindfulness practices that can be incorporated into the classroom and learn more about the science behind mindfulness.

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Visual Meditation
Keri Watson

Keri Watson is Assistant Professor of Art History in the School of Visual Arts & Design. The recipient of three National Endowment for the Arts Big Read grants, an Institute of Museum and Library Services grant, and a Fulbright-Terra Foundation Award in the History of American Art, she teaches courses in modern art and the history of photography and specializes in twentieth-century American art.

Daily we are bombarded with visual stimuli and information. Images are not transparent, unbiased conveyers of meaning, nor are they purely reflective of the world in which they were created. Instead, they are ideologically-weighted mechanisms that both contribute to and frustrate our understanding of the world. Incorporating a visual meditation exercise into a course offers one way to teach students visual literacy and mindfulness—two skills necessary to navigate our increasingly complex world.

I developed this visual meditation exercise by blending guided meditation with Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), a pedagogy developed by museum educator Philip Yenawine and sociologist Abigail Housen. Although meditation is often thought of as a time to close one's eyes and shut out the world, I have found that visual stimuli, such as paintings and sculptures, can provide fruitful inspiration for mindfulness exercises.

Part 1: Quiet contemplation (three minutes)
Project an image of a painting, sculpture, photograph, or work in any other visual media on the screen. Ask students to rest their hands lightly in their laps or on their knees. Have them take a deep breath in and then exhale. Next, ask them to look at the projected image. As the students look at the image, remind them to focus on just observing the image, its colors, lines, and shapes, for instance. Ask them to slow down their thinking and encourage them to engage in deep looking. Finally, ask them to think about how the image makes them feel.

Part 2: Free-write (three minutes)
After the three minutes of quiet contemplation are complete, ask the students to take out a piece of paper and write a reflection on the picture and/or the experience of deep looking. Tell them that their reflection can take any form they like (essay, word cloud, poem, drawing, etc.). Encourage them to refrain from judging their free-form expression.

Part 3: Open-ended discussion (time variable)
Finally, you will lead the class in a discussion by asking the following questions one at a time: What's going on in this picture? What do you see that makes you say that? What more

can we find? As students answer each of the questions, facilitate the discussion by paraphrasing comments neutrally, pointing at the area being discussed, and linking and framing the students' comments.

Conclusion

Dealing with the stresses of college-life is challenging, but mindfulness exercises and meditation are proven strategies for dealing with anxiety. Similarly, coping with unanswered questions and multiple interpretations is a valuable skill, and VTS promotes cooperation, respect, and tolerance for the views of others. More than 75% of all mental health conditions begin before the age of 24, making college a critical time in the lives of young people, but by incorporating visual meditation, we can help students practice mindfulness and hone their visual literacy skills.

Imagining a Walking Labyrinth at UCF
Jeanine E. Viau

Jeanine Viau is Lecturer in the Philosophy Department at UCF where she teaches courses in religion, humanities, and cultural studies. Her research areas include contemporary Catholicism, gender and sexual ethics, feminist theology, and queer studies in religion.

In Spring 2017, Jeannie Kiriwas, Associate Director of Events for the UCF Student Union, organized a group from across units and departments to advise her in developing written materials for a new Reflection Room in the Student Union. Our collaboration led to conversations about another shared vision for creating a contemplative space on campus, specifically, the aspiration to build an outdoor walking labyrinth. Director of Wellness & Health Promotion Services Maureen Hawkins and Humanist Chaplain Tee Rogers initiated meetings in Spring and Summer 2017 aimed at helping campus partners understand the uses and benefits of a labyrinth. Now in Spring 2018, we are developing funding applications, including a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Program Innovation Award application, which proposes the design, construction, and experiential pedagogical uses of the labyrinth as integrative learning experiences for students—experiences designed to educate the whole person.

Across public and private universities in the U.S., such as the University of Virginia and Brown University, researchers and teachers in disciplines as varied as religion, neuroscience, environmental studies, art, education, and the health sciences,

among others, are exploring the efficacy of contemplative practices for cognition, empathy, and general well-being. Our project reflects growing interest among students, faculty, and staff at UCF in opportunities to learn and practice contemplative techniques, interests evident in the FCTL cohorts dedicated to contemplative pedagogy, mindfulness programming offered by Wellness and Health Promotion Services, and the Student Union's Reflection Room project.

Responding to these interests, we imagine the walking labyrinth as a tool for engineering integrative learning experiences, as well as improving metacognition and self-advocacy, what contemplative teaching experts Deborah Haynes and M.C. Richards call education of the whole person. If our application is successful, following the QEP timeline, in the first year faculty and staff collaborators will organize a student design competition for the labyrinth and secure institutional approval for construction plans. Through trainings and class visits, team members will educate colleagues and students about the pedagogical, therapeutic, and aesthetic uses of labyrinths. In the second year, project partners will build the labyrinth, and associated faculty will implement new course work utilizing the space. Students will be involved in ongoing maintenance and peer-to-peer contemplative training.

Three central objectives for the project correspond to our vision of holistic undergraduate education. First is the goal of meaningful transdisciplinary engagement. Faculty and staff from diverse locations on campus will mentor student collaborators during the design and construction process. Submissions to the competition must include a complete design plan, a rationale linking their creative decisions to the goals of the project, and a budget. This framework requires integrative thinking relating aesthetics with practical applications, and we hope it will inspire students to form collaborations with peers from other disciplines.

Currently seven faculty members from across disciplines at UCF, including Art History, Theater, UCF Global, Religion and Cultural Studies, and Environmental Studies, are committed to using the labyrinth in one or more of their courses. Our team intends to double the number of faculty and staff prepared to use the labyrinth in their classes and programming through education and training in the first year of the project. We also intend to maintain a list of campus organizations, faculty, and staff who are using contemplative methods, and compile a database of syllabi, assignments, exercises, and training guides that are developed through our workshops or other relevant programs, such as the FCTL cohort on Contemplative Pedagogies and previous trainings offered by Wellness and Health Promotion Services.

A second key objective is community wellness and advocacy. Contemplative strategies are now used across workplace and educational settings as leaders recognize their effectiveness for stress reduction, productivity, and empathic sensitivity. According to the National College Health Assessment, UCF students report stress and anxiety as the top two academic impediments. Our team includes campus health professionals who plan to use the labyrinth to help students understand the therapeutic benefits of mindfulness. Also, student flourishing requires support for those tasked with their care and guidance. Through pedagogical and therapeutic training, this project focuses on improving the well-being of staff and faculty. Contemplative practices traditionally aim to reveal the interconnectedness of life, hence our goal of building a web of benefits as students, staff, and faculty improve their communities using these techniques.

Finally, the meta-objective of this project is to expand knowledge and awareness of self, of struggle, and of the world. Similar to health professionals and educators, many social justice activists are turning to contemplative practices for revival and healing, as well as efficacious public demonstration tactics. Take for example the narrative and serial testimony strategies implemented by one of our team members Rachel Luce-Hitt, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion's Coordinator for Educational and Training Programs. She asks participants in the SEED training to reflect on their personal experiences with imbalances of power and privilege due to race, gender, class, and ability, and through these reflections and interpersonal engagement, repair wounds and grow awareness of others' suffering. The labyrinth, in its two traditional forms, represents this relationship between struggle and repair. On the one hand, the unicursal or one-path labyrinth represents human desires for clarity and stability, while the maze or multicursal labyrinth represents the struggle to solve complex problems.

The labyrinth is also an apt symbol for marking intellectual and cultural pluralism, important commitments of public higher education in the U.S. Labyrinths appear as a form of ancient cultural expression in locations across the globe. They are often themed according to the biospheres in which they were constructed, reflecting human beings' drive to cultivate and relate to their environments. The significance of these forms spans sacred and secular concerns, scientific and spiritual (but not religious) objectives. Our hope is that the UCF labyrinth will be a permanent visible sign of the university's commitments to health and wellbeing, innovation, environmental sensitivity, and community engagement. It will also be an invitation for students, faculty, staff, and visitors to reflect on their aspirations, and through contemplative practice, prepare for deeper learning and renewed creativity.

Reacting to Facemash
F. E. Guerra-Pujol

F. E. Guerra-Pujol is Instructor in the College of Business Administration, where he teaches various courses in law, including Law & Ethics and Constitutional Law. He is also the faculty editor of the UCF *Undergraduate Research Journal*.

This semester (Spring '18) marks the first time in almost 20 years of teaching that I will completely cede control of the classroom to my students. In place of traditional law lectures, I have decided to try something new called "Reacting to the Past" in which students are assigned historical roles and re-enact contentious debates that occurred during pivotal moments in the past. This method of instruction is called a "Reacting Game" because students must not only re-create real-world historical events; they must also react to them and to each other.

In general, Reacting Games consist of three elements:
  (a) a game book describing the rules of the games;
  (b) a number of core texts containing the main ideas to be debated during the course of the game; and
  (c) role sheets describing the background and objectives of each player or group.

I teach business law, so I had to create a Reacting Game for my course from scratch, including writing up a game book and role sheets. (Most existing Reacting Games, such as "The Trial of Anne Hutchinson," are used in history courses. Creating a new game from scratch is a time-consuming process, so I recommend that instructors be given a sabbatical or a course release if they are creating a new game.)

Since I want my students to learn about the main sources of law as well as the main theories of business ethics, I created a new reacting game based on a fascinating hacking incident that occurred at Harvard during 2003–04 academic year. A few months before launching the beta version of Facebook, Harvard sophomore Mark Zuckerberg created a clandestine and possibly illegal website called Facemash. The site went viral at Harvard in the fall of 2003, before "going viral" was a thing. (Websites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube did not exist back then!) In brief, Facemash allowed users to rank the "hotness" of students; the problem, however, was that Zuckerberg did not obtain anyone's permission to post their pictures on his website. Instead, he obtained the student photos by hacking into Harvard's computer network, an incident that is memorably depicted in the 2010 movie *The Social Network*.

I titled my Facemash Game "Hacking Harvard," and it is designed to take up five class sessions. The first session is the Set Up Class. In this class, students are randomly assigned into groups, and each group is assigned a specific role to play during one of the remaining class sessions.

By way of example, I created several pro-Facemash and anti-Facemash factions based on actual student groups at Harvard that existed in 2003, such as HackHarvardCollege (a hacker group) and the Radcliffe Union of Students (a feminist group), and I also threw some wild card groups into the mix, such as the John Adams Society (a moral philosophy debate club), the LowKeys (an *a capella* group), and Christians on Campus (an evangelical ministry group).

In addition, I assigned each of these student groups a "faculty advisor"—a role based on a real-life Harvard faculty member, such as Alan Dershowitz, Lani Grunier, and Elizabeth Warren, all of whom were professors at Harvard during the 2003–04 academic year. Lastly, one group of students is assigned the role of the Harvard Undergraduate Council (Harvard UC). This group will serve as the presiding officers of the class. They must decide whether to sanction Zuckerberg (for creating Facemash) or condemn Harvard (for not sufficiently protecting student data). These groups and roles will then debate the law and ethics of Facemash from their different perspectives during the game sessions.

There are three game sessions in all. During Game Day 1, the Harvard UC is charged with calling an emergency meeting to order in which the student groups debate the law and ethics of Facemash—in particular, what position the UC should take regarding Facemash. Did Facemash violate Harvard's Standards of Conduct? Could Harvard have done more to prevent the hack? My role will be that of a "Gamemaster." Instead of lecturing, I will take a seat in the back of the room and try not to interfere during the proceedings, unless absolutely necessary.

In the next class session (Game Day 2), students will reenact a faculty tea of the Harvard Law School. (Recall that each student group was assigned a "faculty advisor" based on real-life professors who taught at Harvard during the Facemash incident.) The faculty will debate many contentious questions at the faculty tea. Among other things, do the procedures used by the UC Undergraduate Council in the facemash case comply with Title IX requirements, and did the Undergrad Council handle the Facemash affair in a fair way? And what policy should the university adopt in cases involving allegations of hostile environment or sexual harassment?

The Board of the Harvard Corporation will meet in the following class session (Game Day 3). Larry Summers, the President of the University, will preside over the meeting, and the Board will debate several legal and ethical issues. Specifically, what concrete steps could the university take to reduce its risk of vicarious liability, especially to the students whose photos and data were hacked during the Facemash incident or to the undergraduate creators of ConnectU, who allege that a fellow student stole their ideas? More broadly, what ethical and legal duties does a university owe to its students?

I will then conduct a *post mortem* of the game in the fifth and final reacting class session. In this class, my students will relinquish their roles, and the entire class will freely discuss the game and the various legal and ethical issues posed by Facemash from their own contemporary perspective. We will also celebrate the end of the game with a Red Carpet Awards Ceremony.

This is the first time I am teaching using this method, so I will report back in these pages in a future volume of *Faculty Focus*.

Note from the Faculty Center: If you would like to learn more about this pedagogy, you may visit <http://reacting.barnard.edu/> or read Mark Carnes' *Minds on Fire How Role-Immersion Games Transform College*, about which the Faculty Center will host a book club in Fall 2018.

The Prestigious and the Predatory: Helping Online Students Navigate Open Education Resources in a World of "Fake News"

Kathy Hohenleitner
with James Campbell and John Raible

Kathy Hohenleitner is Associate Lecturer in the Department of English. Her online class Theories and Techniques of Literature Study has been recognized within the State University System of Florida as a Quality online course.

James Campbell is Associate Professor of English. He is Coordinator of the Graduate Program and has taught Theories and Techniques of Literature many times throughout his 22-year tenure at UCF. He is the author of *Oscar Wilde, Wilfred Owen, and Male Desire: Begotten, Not Made* (2015).

John Raible is Associate Instructional Designer at the Center for Distributed Learning and a doctoral student at the University of Wyoming. At UCF, he works with faculty to transition courses to the blended or online environments. He has presented at local, state, national, and international conferences and is published in multiple peer-reviewed journals. He has taught online and blended courses at the community college and university levels.

Last summer at the Faculty Institute, two colleagues and I worked on a project exploring the trouble that Open Educational Resources pose for online instructors and students. I teach a gateway course for English majors that introduces students to interpretation, as well as to scholarly research and writing about literature. I've found students ill-prepared to do research and myself not entirely prepared to help them navigate OER versus discipline-specific databases such as the MLA Database. So I worked on a module with a fellow instructor, an instructional designer, and initially with a librarian to create an online module about OER resources, some of which are quite credible.

One of the biggest hurdles instructors face teaching digital natives is convincing them of the value of using library databases as opposed to simply googling. This challenge is not made easier by Open Education Resources, which are typically easier for students to access than the MLA Database, the standard scholarly database for research in Literature. OER have positive effects on the distribution of information in that they democratize the process of retrieving peer-reviewed sources from the web. But they also permit "predatory" journals to thrive. These journals, which literally profit from faculty members' need to publish by charging for articles to be reviewed, often offer a "peer-reviewed" process that is defined somewhat differently from that of a more credible journal, and publish articles too quickly for them to have been carefully vetted.[1]

My peers and I developed a module through which students can navigate OER, benefiting from its accessibility while also developing critical analytic skills to use in reading any article retrieved electronically. In a world where "fake news" is a legitimate concern, I find this critical skill to be most important, particularly for online students.

The first battle I had to wage was with JSTOR. Students love it because every article it offers is delivered as full text, but its scope is too wide to be useful to begin preliminary research on Literary Criticism. For example, a student intending to write about marriage in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* came up with the following articles:

D. Manning and J. A. Cohen, "Teenage Cohabitation, Marriage, and Childbearing," *Population Research and Policy Review,* vol. 34, *(2),* pp. 161-177, 2015.

Grello, Catherine M., et al. "No Strings Attached: The Nature of Casual Sex in College Students." *The Journal of Sex Research*, vol. 43, no. 3, 2006, pp. 255–267.

I'm still at a loss to understand how a search of "Jane Austen" and "Marriage" brought these articles up, but it should not be necessary to explain even to beginning English majors that neither of these articles are literary criticism and neither will be helpful in an essay on *Pride and Prejudice*.

I required them to use the MLA Database as part of the assignment's rubric in order to direct them to literary critical sources exclusively. JSTOR can nonetheless be useful in tracking down full texts of sources that they've identified in the MLA Database, but students are more ensured of finding literary criticism if they start with MLA.

I also created a topic assignment, which a lot of people who teach this course also use. Students need to submit a topic (not a thesis!), a list of five sources, and a paragraph on where they think their essay is headed. Despite my requiring students to

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1   For a maintained list of predatory journals, see <https://beallslist.weebly.com/>

use the MLA Database, they still constantly submitted googled articles that were retrieved from the web. I understand the students' frustration, because many of the articles have been illegally posted on the web and do also appear in the MLA database. Why shouldn't they simply google, if googling is so much easier than logging in to the database? But my goal is bigger than retrieval. I want them to learn to evaluate.

With this goal in mind, we created a rubric by which sources could be evaluated. This rubric is now available in the Creative Commons. In addition to considering the usefulness of the article to the existing literary conversation, students must consider the source: the journal. We were shocked when we looked further into some Open Education Sources. Some had phone numbers, which, when we called, were out of service. Some used gmail addresses, which diminished their credibility because if they were indeed formally associated with the university they claimed to be associated with, they would have had "edu" suffixed on their email addresses.

One particularly generic title claimed to have noted theorist Gayatri Spivak on its Advisory Board; one wonders whether Professor Spivak has any idea that her name was being used in this way. Another rather ghoulish example included a lesser well known but respectable critic who had been dead for about 5 years. Either they failed to take his name off the masthead, or worse, added it after his death. Either way, their credibility diminished with that discovery.

It's very difficult to teach students to vet such sources online. They may not know who Spivak is. The internet might not have updated websites that reveal if certain critics are alive or still publishing. I tried to warn students to be wary of "generic" sounding names of journals, such as *Women's Writing*, but then I had someone doubt the credibility of *English Literary History*, which is equally generic, but surely credible. Then I appeared to be contradicting myself.

Our rubric attempts to bring their focus to the submission practices of the journals. I created a video to help walk them through the process of vetting sources, and I give them specially chosen sources to help them see the differences. First I ask them to search the journal in the Directory of Open Access Journals. I do not find this database intuitive to use myself, but if a journal is credible, it's usually listed in this Database. This Database will assign an ISSN to every article, so that number itself lends credibility to a citation.

If a journal's submission process is extremely quick, and requires a fee, it becomes suspect. On the video I show them an example of a journal called *Women's Writing* that charges $3,000 to review an article. I imagine that if a critic is paying that price, not many articles get refused from this journal.

Finally, I ask them to consider the credibility of the argument. Does the subject matter contribute significantly to the existing conversation on this text? Does the actual document look as if it were hastily produced? Are there typos? The video includes an example of typos with a misspelled character name.

For the assignment that will encourage students to practice this evaluation, I ask them to read Sandra Gilbert's famous essay on *Jane Eyre*, "A Dialogue of Self and Soul: Plain Jane's Progress." This challenging but important essay from 1979 serves as their standard example of peer-reviewed scholarship. They participate in a discussion of Gilbert's feminist reading of Jane Eyre. The following week, they read "Corpus of the Madwoman: Toward a Feminist Disability Studies Theory of Embodiment and Mental Illness" by Elizabeth Donaldson. This Open Education Resource from 2002 challenges Gilbert's use of the term "madwoman" from the perspective of the newly emerging field of Disability Studies. I ask them to evaluate Donaldson's argument, and to consider whether her challenge to Gilbert's use of the term "madwoman" renders Gilbert's argument less credible. My goal is for them to see the academic conversation at work, and to realize how one critic can build on what another has done without negating the earlier critic's contributions to the field.

Most of them find Donaldson's essay credible, according to the Open Access Rubric.

Their final essay, which is read in conjunction with Donaldson's, is "Baked Nectar and Frosted Ambrosia: The Unifying Power of Cake in *Great Expectations* and *Jane Eyre*" by Alexander Barron. Also an Open Education Source from a journal called *The Victorian*, this article is generally easier for the students to read critically. Some get very excited about the idea of cake because it's accessible, but Barron's argument is a bit circuitous and doesn't really prove anything profound about the reading of either text. They are quick to identify his gmail address; some even question the validity of Breadloaf College of English (which actually is a legitimate organization associated with Middlebury College). One student even went so far as to critique his "gratuitous quoting of plot summary" which really made me proud. Unfortunately, she was the exception.

I want to be clear that I don't intend to dismiss the work of a critic like Barron categorically. I merely want my students to realize the difference between his random discussion of one image in two novels versus Donaldson's engagement in the ongoing literary conversation throughout the past 30 years in feminist literary criticism.

This process would be much easier in a face-to-face class. I could assign the three articles, and critique them in class. I could dispel misconceptions immediately and tactfully dur-

ing a live discussion. Online, sometimes someone has already posted a full endorsement of the intellectual profundity of the cake article before I or other students have the chance to rebut it, and then I never know for sure if that student will ever revisit the board to read the continued conversation. Teaching research online is critical for English majors, and it's not fair to dismiss Open Education Sources because many are worthwhile and accessible to undergraduates. Even in the MLA Database, sub par articles are catalogued. Students must develop the ability to read critically and evaluate an argument's credibility. Ultimately it comes down to asking the "so what?" question: Why is this argument important?

Sober Lessons about Active Teaching and Learning of Atlantic World History
Yovanna Pineda

Yovanna Pineda is Associate Professor of History. She is author of the book *Industrial Development in a Frontier Economy: The Industrialization of Argentina, 1890–1930* (Stanford, 2009). She is working on her second book project, *Innovating Technologies: Farm Machinery Invention, Rituals, and Memory in Argentina* and on a companion documentary, *The Harvester*. She teaches courses on the history of South America, the Transatlantic World, the global drug trade, and the history of science.

In spring 2016, I participated in the Active Learning Course Innovation Program offered through the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning. The program offered new pedagogical and creative methods for classroom teaching, and I, who had been teaching undergraduates for nearly twenty years, felt it was time to update my teaching style. Ostensibly, there was nothing wrong with what I was doing—my evaluations have always been fine—but I sought to do more. Since the start of my teaching career, I have always engaged students with visual materials, PowerPoints, and group discussions, but lately, each semester I competed for attention against not only the students' heavy work schedules but also the gadgets they brought into the classroom that distracted them. But it is unfair to blame only my students; my brain had gotten wired to go into an "automatic mode," whereby lecturing with limited student-teaching interaction had become acceptable, as easy, and as passive, as checking Facebook.

In short, my style needed a change and I took advantage of having a particularly small class of nine students in my upper-level Atlantic World History course to begin learning, apply-

ing, and assessing active learning. I wanted to explore new pathways to the three indispensable goals I strive to achieve in every class: challenge stereotypes about historical characters, promote students' critical analysis skills, and provide them the knowledge to creatively analyze the past with empathy. My work began before the semester started as I rewrote my syllabus to include short weekly lectures, short readings that could be begun and discussed in class in a week, in and out-of-class writing assignments, and active learning strategies.

When the class began meeting, I made the first six weeks as interactive as possible, bringing in no fewer than five different activities/methods in the classroom, such as group discussions, the World Café method, flipping the classroom, and historical analysis of online teaching apps. I even invented an activity all my own, "Ask the Historian Anything You Want, Yes, Really!" During those six weeks, I learned three lessons that I eagerly share with anyone interested in active learning. First, don't try *everything* in one semester. I was determined to enact a real change in the class, but devising activities and incorporating them into a structured curriculum, on top of preparing lectures and grading papers, proved extraordinarily time-consuming. In the wee hours of the night, I often cursed my ambition. Instead, in the future, I will slowly add new components to this course. Second, do a new activity every two or three weeks rather than every week. Breaking free from my comfort zone was personally and intellectually healthy, but perhaps because I was re-wiring my brain, I felt disoriented. Lastly, tell the students that an experiment is in progress; share the fact with them and make them partners in it. If I had heard a complaint, which I didn't, I would have reminded them that we were experimenting and learning new things. For the most part, however, complaints were nonexistent, and the students seemed as genuinely curious about these interactive course methods as me.

Of the five strategies, the week of "ask the historian anything you want" was more challenging than I had expected. I had been prepared to field questions about the Atlantic World. Instead, I was pleasantly surprised that my students wanted to discuss history more broadly—a fact that is not only often hidden in a standard course, but implicitly discouraged. This was so unexpected that I was delighted to answer though I did not have all the answers. We discussed the teaching of history at the K-12 levels, how certain topics were considered less important than others, and how people of color were either erased from history or viewed as victims. And then one student asked, "Have you seen *Drunk History* on Comedy Central about bananas and the exploitation of Honduras?"[1] I had not even heard of *Drunk History*, hence, at the students' suggestion, the class took a moment to watch the "Scarface of

1   <http://www.cc.com/shows/drunk-history>

Bananas" about Sam "the Banana Man" Zemurray. Despite its comedic nature and failure to address Zemurray's worst abuses such as financing the overthrow of the Honduran government, what was presented was generally, and astonishingly, accurate. Watching and evaluating this particular episode in class, and having students watch others on their own, led to new, expansive class discussions about how both the media presents and how the general public consumes history. Though they agreed that comedy series such as *Drunk History* or the *American History Guys* podcasts should not replace the work of real historians doing archival and ethnographic research, the students found both to be good sources for helping the general public connect with history and historical characters in a serious and funny way.

By the end of the semester, I had not only achieved ten different strategies, I learned new things about my students. In addition to evaluating what they now knew, I learned how they perceived and thought about their new knowledge, and in turn, I appreciated them teaching me about popular cultural sources. I realized my efforts in enacting a change in the classroom were bearing fruit when my students began taking charge of their own education—when they were becoming active learners. They came to class prepared with questions and sent me links to materials they found relevant and interesting to our class discussions. At the end of the semester, as I closed the Canvas gradebook, I realized I had not only reached my three teaching goals, I had also succeeded in what all history professors strive for: to have students be engaged participants and to think about how history relates to the world around them.

Practical Advice for Jump-Starting Your Writing Process
Ann Neville Miller

Ann Neville Miller is Associate Professor in the Nicholson School of Communication. Her research and teaching focuses on health communication and intercultural communication.

Although we as faculty members leave our graduate programs full of subject area expertise, most of us have to figure out on our own how to communicate it to others. That's true of disseminating our knowledge in the classroom, of course, but it's also true for many of us when it comes to writing and publishing. The practical "how to's" of writing just aren't talked about. In fact, Boice (1990) commented that most academics are more willing to talk about deep personal problems, including sexual dysfunction, than they are about their writing issues!

Maybe that's why many of us suffer from "writing dysfunction." Indications are that a quarter of faculty never publish a single journal article and around ⅔ never publish a book (Belcher, 2009). In my own field, a recent study found that 75% of authors who published in the 24 most common journals in communication had published just one study in the past five years (Griffin, Bolkan, & Dahlback, 2018).

The good news is that there are great resources here at UCF for helping faculty through this problem. The Faculty Center offers annual workshops on "Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks" using Wendy Laura Belcher's marvelously practical guide. The following is a list of game-changing suggestions for jump starting your writing processes that a number of us who have participated in the workshops have tested out and found helpful.

1. Commit to writing at least 15 minutes per day, 5 days a week, and calendar it.
One workshop attendee says this practice completely revolutionized her writing. The thing is, a lot of us wait until we have big blocks of time to accomplish our writing, and those blocks of time just never come. However, we *can* find small segments of time that we're used to thinking aren't long enough to get into writing. Do you have an hour before your next class? That's long enough to make some progress. The reason this works is because if you're writing every day, you don't have to waste time getting reacquainted with your piece. It remains at the top of your mind and you can just pick right up where you left off the day before.

As one unidentified academic remarked, "One usually gets better at whatever one does on a regular basis. If one does not write on a regular basis, one will get better at *not* writing. In fact, one will develop an astonishing array of skills designed to improve and extend one's *not* writing."

2. Plan for the optimal writing situation.
Where do you write best? In your office at your desk? Sitting in a coffee shop with a grandé cappuccino? In the library away from the distractions of your department? Propped up on pillows in your bed at home? What times are you most productive? Figure out your circadian rhythm and your favorite spaces and make use of them rather than fighting against the flow.

3. Minimize distractions.

Email and social media are the enemies of writing productivity. *Don't* touch any of those things during your writing time. If you need to, turn off the notifications on your computer and silence your phone. Painful as it is for us to admit to ourselves, the world will survive for 15 or 30 minutes—dare we say it, even an hour—without us. Beyond that, if you're in your department, shut the door to your office and don't open it unless there's a fire alarm. You can get more than you'd think done in 15 or 30 minutes a day, but not if you can't focus on the task at hand.

4. Make writing social.

In some fields, of course, writing and publication is a group effort. However, in the humanities especially, and sometimes in the social sciences, we tend to go it alone. Making writing social can help motivate and also improve our writing. This can be anything from joining a writing group at FCTL, to partnering with a buddy to hold one another accountable, to having a departmental colleague read your draft and give you feedback, to simply developing more group research projects. Humans are social animals; it makes sense to incorporate that into our writing habits.

5. Persist despite rejection.

There's no way around it, rejection is part of the publication process. There may be prolific writers who don't have any rejection stories, but I haven't met them. Sure, your ego takes a bit of a beating, but you can learn an enormous amount from a thoughtful reviewer's rejection. Unless the reviewers have identified a fatal flaw, you can incorporate their feedback into a better draft, and submit elsewhere—sometimes getting published in a better journal than the one you started with.

Research productivity is just one way of measuring faculty success, but promotion, pay, and prestige are associated for many faculty members with scholarly publication productivity (Bentley & Kyvik, 2013). The suggestions above can set us on a strong trajectory. For more support as you move on that journey, check out the FCTL "Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks" workshop in 2018-19.

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A Message About Campus Safety
Richard Beary

Richard Beary is the Chief of Police at UCF. He will retire June 30 after 11 years with UCFPD and 41 years in law enforcement. He is the first campus chief ever to lead the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the largest professional organization of law enforcement leaders with more than 30,000 members worldwide.

Whether you've been at UCF for seven months or seven years, you've likely recognized that UCF feels like a small city. If UCF were a city, we'd be the second-largest in Central Florida, just behind Orlando. We see the same faces and visit the same spaces day after day, so it can be easy to lose sight of the fact that UCF is a community of more than 66,000 students, nearly 13,000 staff members, and hundreds of thousands of campus visitors each year. The vast majority of these people come to UCF with the noblest intentions—to receive an education, to teach our world's future leaders, to support our university's mission and goals.

And then there are the ones who don't.

Just like any community of our size, UCF is not immune to crime. Overall, crime on our campus has dropped as enrollment has increased. I credit this to informed, proactive policing and the dedicated work of the officers who protect and serve UCF. While I am proud of this decrease, I am also keenly aware of the anxiety and concern related to the threat of armed attacks, which are statistically less likely to occur than a routine burglary or theft but are far more alarming. The FBI reported that 220 active shooter incidents took place in the U.S. from 2000–2016, and we know that number has risen.

I am often asked what UCFPD does to prevent attacks such as those, and the answer is everything we can. We routinely review incidents that take place across the globe for lessons learned, and our officers are trained in everything from stopping the threat to treating bleeding victims. A robust overhaul of our camera and access systems is helping us be where we can't, and we anticipate additional modifications to our classroom buildings to allow those inside to lock up and lockdown.

But I also remind you that safety starts with you always. Be vigilant. Have you ever been out to eat or in a meeting with a cop? There's a reason our backs are never to the door, and it's so we can see everything. Situational awareness is the single most important safety tip no matter where you are. Not everyone is trained to be hyper-aware, but if you stop to think about a few critical things—where your nearest exits are, the location of the closest AED, what your plan would be in the event of an emergency—you're setting yourself up to be able to think and act quickly in the event of an actual incident. No one knows better than you that knowledge is empowering. So think about safety. Study your plan. And remember that when it comes to protecting the city that is our campus, the UCF Police Department always has your back.

Submissions

The *Faculty Focus* is a publication for all instructors at the University of Central Florida. This includes full-time and part-time faculty and teaching assistants at all UCF campuses. Its purpose is to provide an exchange of ideas on teaching and learning for the university's community of teachers and scholars. It is envisioned that this publication will inspire more dialogue among faculty whether in hallway discussions, departmental meetings, or in written articles. This represents an opportunity for faculty members to reach their peers throughout the growing UCF community. The *Faculty Focus* invites you to contribute your ideas on teaching and learning in a short essay. See the guidelines for submission online at <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/Publications/FacultyFocus/submission.php>. Please send your submissions to fctl@ucf.edu.

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Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning

Division of Teaching and Learning

UCF

Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning
P.O. Box 160066 CB1-207
Orlando, FL 32816-0066
407-823-3544

Check us out online!
www.fctl.ucf.edu