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Fall 2023 Newsletter

As we turn to a new calendar year, we take this opportunity to look back on the second half of 2023, which was an exciting and productive time for the Hanson Center. We've added new programming and enhanced ongoing initiatives. We are grateful for the partnerships and connections we have fostered with so many of you as together we work to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in STEM.

Inaugural Hanson Center Visiting Scholar—Dr. Michelle Smith from Cornell University

On November 4 and 5, we were delighted to welcome to campus our inaugural Hanson Center Visiting Scholar, Dr. Michelle Smith, Ann S. Bowers Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education at Cornell University. Dr. Smith gave an engaging presentation on her latest research “Undergraduate Research and Field Experiences: What are Students Engaging in and Learning?” We followed the presentation with dinner and a workshop, during which participants explored how we understand and assess what students are learning during their research experiences, and ways to ensure we are providing access and an inclusive learning environment. On Friday morning, Dr. Smith held a series of productive meetings with faculty in small groups and then had a wide-ranging discussion over lunch with students.

Dr. Smith will be joining us virtually via Zoom on Thursday, February 1 at 4:15 when she will discuss her work “Using Classroom Observations to Provide Instructors with Formative Feedback” as part of a series of presentations on peer-observation of teaching (see below). Please use [this link](#) to register for Dr. Smith’s Feb. 1 Zoom session. Dr. Smith will also visit us again in person during April 4-5. Our visiting scholar program seeks to foster evidence-based approaches that help promote greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in our programs,



New Student Guide Developed on Effective and Inclusive Teaming

A common theme identified from the climate studies we've conducted so far is that group projects can be challenging for students. It is clear from our studies across a number of departments that students would benefit from thoughtful, research-based guidance on how to work more effectively and equitably during peer-to-peer academic collaborations. So, we decided to create just such a guidebook! With the benefit of a great partnership with the Center for the Integration of Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship and the CITLS Student Fellows we've created a guidebook for students to help them engage in meaningful collaborative-learning, the kind that fosters inclusion and positive team experiences. The new booklet—[The Student Guide on Effective Teaming](#)—has been designed as a resource for Lafayette students in any course that involves teamwork and it is available for faculty to pilot in their courses this spring semester! We also wrote an accompanying document that provides [instructions for faculty](#) on how to use the student guide in their courses. Please let us know you are interested in piloting the Student Guide on Effective Teaming in your class by adding your name and course number to [this document](#). CITLS will provide you with physical copies of the Student Guide to give out in your class (FYI: the CITLS Student Fellows recommended that a hardcopy would be most used by students). We are interested in assessing the effectiveness of the student resource and so please let us know if you would be willing to have

Effective Teaming

A Resource Designed for and With Lafayette Students



Hanson Center Inclusive STEM Reading Group



Our reading group spent the fall semester discussing articles written by our visiting scholar, Dr. Michelle Smith. We explored a range of topics such as student expectations in introductory STEM courses, the impact of active learning in STEM, and how best to support students' transition from high school to college. We also read the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) consensus report on Effective and Equitable STEM Teaching (see below). As has become our tradition, we held our final meeting at the College Hill Tavern and discussed the final sections of the NASEM report over our favorite beverages (*yes, we actually did discuss this draft report!*). During the spring semester we will be reading the book ***Weathering: The Extraordinary Stress of Ordinary Life in an Unjust Society*** by Dr. Arline Geronimus. Dr. Geronimus, Professor of Health Behavior and Health Education at the University of Michigan, is an international leader in population health and will be visiting us via Zoom as part of the Hanson Center's semester-long program on **Systemic Inequalities in Health and Healthcare** (see below). **Please let us know of your interest in participating in the reading group this spring by completing [this form](#) by January 25.** Colleagues from *all* departments, programs, and offices are welcome to join the reading group!

National Academies Draft Report on Effective and Equitable Teaching in STEM

Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) consensus study on Effective and Equitable Teaching in STEM. We had this distinctive opportunity because Dr. Tracie Addy, Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning and the Director of the Center for the Integration of Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship, is a member of this national study group. She shared firsthand knowledge and insight about [NASEM's discussion draft](#) that had just been released to the public which proposes seven principles for equitable and effective teaching of undergraduate STEM. Dr. Addy, together with Dr. Wendy Hill, Director of the Hanson Center for Inclusive STEM Education, led a discussion to



gather initial feedback on the draft report. We had an engaging discussion and gathered insightful suggestions from both students and faculty. After the meeting, thanks to the notes captured by Chenoa Gillette (CITLS program coordinator), we sent two pages of suggestions to NASEM to help improve the final report. This session was a wonderful example of the Lafayette community coming together to help shape the national direction of STEM education!

Peer Mentor Programs

This academic year marks the second year for our peer-mentor programs for first-year students. This fall we paired nearly 50 students interested in pursuing an engineering degree with an upper-class student as a mentor and connected 20 students considering majoring in psychology with mentors. Mentors and mentees met throughout the fall semester to get to know one another and explore curricular and other interests. Group activities were also organized, including a competition for which mentor-mentee engineering group could build the best gingerbread house. We are excited to be adding a new STEM major to the peer-mentor program this spring when first-year students interested in biology will have the opportunity to be partnered with upper-class students as mentors. The Hanson Center designed these peer mentor programs based on research-informed practices and robust evidence that peer mentoring helps first-year students transition to college and positively impacts their academic success and sense of belonging. *If your STEM department/program is interested in participating in the peer-mentor program as a way to launch fall 2024, please reach out to us.*

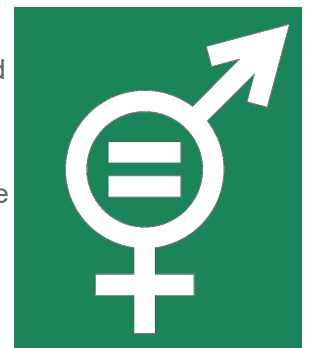
Minerva Discussions

Minerva, a community for female and nonbinary faculty and instructional staff in STEM, held five events during the fall semester. We kicked off AY 23-24 with our traditional welcome lunch in early September. We then held three meetings, each exploring topics based on the interests expressed by Minerva colleagues: 1) psychological safety and group work, 2) faculty retention and how to support minoritized faculty colleagues, a discussion that included the report on the faculty exit interviews conducted in summer 2023, and 3) “invisible service” and what we can do about it both as individuals and as a college. Suggestions and themes from these discussions were shared with the Hanson Center Advisory Committee. We closed the semester with a celebratory gathering during the final exam period over warm beverages and desserts. Programming for spring semester will be announced in the coming weeks. We thank the members of the Minerva Steering Committee for their help and guidance: Kylie Bailin (Skillman Library), Melissa Galloway (Chemistry), Wendy Hill (Hanson Center), Hongxing Liu (Economics), Jenn Rossmann (Mechanical Engineering), and Mary Roth (Civil and Environmental Engineering).



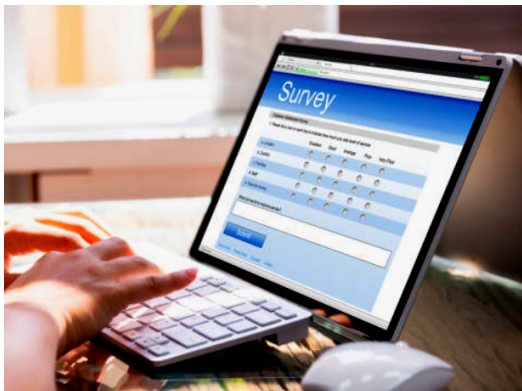
Lafayette Allies for Gender Equity (LAGE)

The Lafayette Allies for Gender Equity (LAGE), a learning community for male and non-binary faculty, welcomed new faculty members to the group this fall. [LAGE](#) seeks to build capacity as allies and advocates for gender equity, and is supported by the Hanson Center. We thank this year's LAGE co-organizers – Professor Mike Butler (Biology) and Professor Chris Ruebeck (Economics) – for co-facilitating discussions. LAGE meets once a month at lunchtime to discuss readings and explore allyship. For more information, please reach out to Dr. Butler or Dr. Ruebeck.



Climate Studies on Student Experiences in STEM

Continuing with our work to “take the temperature” of students about their perceptions and experiences as regards diversity, equity, and inclusion in STEM, the Hanson Center conducted two additional climate studies during the fall semester. One study was designed and conducted for the Engineering Studies Program and the other was administered for the Integrative Engineering Studies Program. These were our first climate studies for



interdisciplinary STEM programs and it was wonderful to partner with both of these programs, designing questions that targeted their distinctive programs. We are in the midst of data analysis and will be sharing the results with the programs and their students during the spring semester. We thank these colleagues for their engagement, commitment, and partnership. *If you would like to have the Hanson Center conduct a climate study of your department or program during the 2024-2025 academic year, please contact us!*

Summer Program to Advance Leadership in STEM (S-PAL)

incoming first-year students hit their stride early in their Lafayette education and foster their leadership skills. We were delighted that Dr. Ernest Nkansah-Dwamena (Environmental Studies) joined the program this year as our faculty director, partnering with our outstanding S-PAL Project Manager, Ms. Millie Smith '10. We introduced a new co-curricular program this year—the leadership seminar dinner series—to help further hone the leadership skills of S-PAL students. Our programming was supported by three terrific student program assistants: Brennen Baiamonte '25, Skye Loures '24, and A.J. Sanford '25. Thanks also to Dr. Chris Phillips, Professor and Head of English, who taught the writing seminar, and Dr. Mark Mancuso, Visiting Assistant professor of Mathematics, who taught Calculus, both of whom were important members of “Team S-PAL.”

We will soon be accepting applications for our three Summer 2024 student program assistant positions, so be on the lookout for the postings via Handshake! One program assistant will serve as a Writing Associate, one will be the Calculus Teaching Assistant, and one will be the Resident Assistant. All three of the program assistants will also help coordinate and participate in the co-curricular programming.



S-PAL Students Visit NYC

We took our first ever field trip during the academic year for students in all S-PAL cohorts when we traveled to Hudson Yards in New York City on the Tuesday during Fall Break. The main stop on our trip for the 25 students was the global headquarters of Pfizer, a multinational pharmaceutical and biotechnology corporation and developer of one of the major COVID vaccines. The visit to Pfizer was organized in partnership with Dr. Tim Hylan '88, Vice President for Internal Medicine in the Field Medical Director Group. The students had a unique opportunity to engage directly with Pfizer leaders to learn about the diversity of STEM-related career journeys across a range of functions and roles in the biopharmaceutical field. After our informative program at Pfizer, we took our adventure to new heights—literally—and enjoyed visiting the High Line, the elevated park and greenway



Many thanks to all the members of the Lafayette community who contribute to the success of S-PAL, a signature program of the Hanson Center!

Spring 2024 Programming—Save the Dates!

Systemic Inequalities in Health and Healthcare

The Hanson Center has organized a range of programming during the spring 2024 semester around the theme **Systemic Inequalities in Health and Healthcare**. The overall goal of this semester-long program is to enhance our understanding of systemic health disparities and to help us identify actions we can take to address these inequities. This programming seeks to advance our Inclusive STEM Studies community, an important aspect of the Center's mission. The program will include presentations from renowned scholars in the field, including faculty from Lafayette, who have conducted significant research identifying population patterns and systemic biases in health and healthcare. The programming will also incorporate panel discussions with community leaders and student researchers working to advance a more equitable and just healthcare system. Through

[website.](#)



2nd Annual RAISE Up Inclusive STEM Retreat: Saturday, Feb. 17

RAISE (Representatives to Advance Inclusive STEM Education) will be holding its **2nd Annual RAISE Up Inclusive STEM Retreat on Saturday, Feb. 17 from 11:45-4:45**. The

goal of this student-organized retreat is to educate, empower, and inspire Lafayette students, faculty, and staff by offering dynamic and interactive programming with workshops, networking opportunities, and alumni panels. We are thrilled that [Joel Bervell](#) will be the keynote speaker at lunch! Joel Bervell is a Ghanaian-American medical student, science communicator, and host of 'The Dose'

Podcast. Known as the 'Medical Mythbuster' online, with 850,000+ followers, he addresses health disparities on TikTok and Instagram. Bervell has spoken at major institutions, participated in the White House Healthcare Leaders Roundtable, and earned accolades for his impactful work, including being named a Scientific American 'Revolutionary.' To learn more about the retreat, visit the [Hanson Center website](#). To register, [click this link](#).



Trio of Talks on Peer Evaluation of Teaching

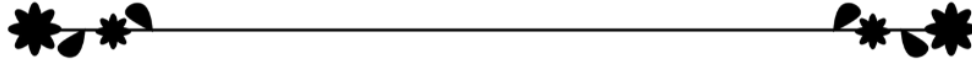
The Hanson Center, in collaboration with the Center for the Integration of Teaching, Learning and Scholarship and the Provost Office, has organized three presentations and workshops on peer-evaluation of teaching (PET)—**Peer Evaluation of Teaching: From Research to Practice**. Through these presentations we seek to develop a more inclusive, effective, and equitable PET process. The [first presentation](#) in this series will be held on **Friday, January 26 at noon in the Wilson Room, Pfenning Alumni Center** and our speaker will be **Dr. Ann Austin**, Interim Vice Provost and Associate Vice President for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs, University Distinguished Professor, Michigan State University. Dr. Austin's presentation is titled "*Robust and Rewarding Approaches to Peer Evaluation of Teaching: Ideas, Challenges, and Strategies*." Dr. Austin will also [lead a workshop](#) from **1:15-2:30** on "*Improving Teaching Evaluation: Lessons from a National Project on Holistic Approaches to Evaluating Teaching*." To register for either of Dr. Austin's presentations, please use this [link](#).

Come Meet the Authors of a Major New Interdisciplinary Book on the Intersectional Economics of Women in STEM

An important new book—[Disparate Measures: The Intersectional Economics of Women in STEM Work](#)—is being released by The MIT Press on March 26th. The Hanson Center is thrilled to host a session on **Thursday, March 28th at 4:15 in the Gendebien Room** to celebrate the book's publication and for us to have the opportunity to interact with the authors—**Lafayette's own Dr. Mary A. Armstrong (Dana Professor of Women's,**

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they imagined, built, and sustained a new interdisciplinary collaboration, including the processes, surprises, challenges, and rewards they experienced along their scholarship journey. Early praise for Professors Armstrong and Averett's book has called it a "game-changer" and a "compelling must-read for anyone interested in understanding and addressing the obstacles faced by women in STEM."



We are grateful for the guidance and support from our wonderful colleagues who serve on the [Hanson Center Advisory Committee](#)—thank you!

Don't forget to follow the Hanson Center on [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

Wishing you all the best in 2024!

Wendy Hill

Director

Our mission: To transform STEM.

As one of only two Inclusive STEM Education Centers in the country—and the only one at a liberal arts college—the Hanson Center for Inclusive STEM Education is working to advance both our understanding and practices around DEIJ in STEM to create the programs, policies, and culture that promote inclusive excellence.

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