



The Careful Beginning of a Good Idea

Hewlett Project

Final Report to the Hewlett Foundation

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September 2003

The Careful Beginning of a Big Idea The George Washington University

Overall goals of the project:

With the aim of enhancing the undergraduate experience, the GW Hewlett Project was a two-year process to create and implement courses that:

- Made central use of GW's Washington location and resources, and
- Employed an active-learning pedagogy that allowed undergraduates to share in the excitement of inquiry and research usually experienced only at the graduate level.

The two years of Hewlett activity reinforced the soundness and feasibility of the project goals: incorporating Washington-based, active-learning courses into the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences undergraduate curriculum. The George Washington University was very pleased by the results of the GW Hewlett project. Nine courses initiated by the GW Hewlett project have continued for the 2003-04 academic year with full university funding and support. In addition, one new course offered in fall 2003, developed by a member of the Hewlett Steering Committee, is modeled after the Hewlett courses.

During the two-year period of the GW Hewlett project, the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences experienced personnel changes at its highest level. Dr. Lester Lefton left The George Washington University to accept the position of Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost at Tulane University. With Dr. Lefton's departure, Dr. Edward Alan Caress, Executive Associate Dean of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences assumed the leadership role of the GW Hewlett project. In 2002, Dr. William Frawley was appointed Dean of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences. Although new to the GW Hewlett project, these leaders shared the commitment to and the excitement of those who had originally conceived the project design of "The Careful Beginning of a Big Idea." The effort has remained a high priority for the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences and the whole of The George Washington University throughout its two-year funding period.

In our original proposal, GW suggested certain faculty, student and institutional outcomes as a result of the GW Hewlett project. We include these originally proposed outcomes here, as well as a description of our experiences in reaching them during the two-year project period.

Faculty Outcomes:

The project accomplished the following proposed faculty outcomes:

- A faculty community crossing disciplines that offers peer support and collaboration, and is experienced in the design, implementation, and assessment of instructional strategies that encourage active student learning
- Faculty knowledge about how the unique resources in the nation's capital may be used to promote active learning environments in general education courses

This project provided senior faculty at GW with the opportunity to design and teach engaging and challenging general education courses that incorporated the resources of Washington, D.C. Faculty became familiar and experimented with inquiry-based or problem-based learning pedagogy; investigated local resources and took their classes on field trips; and developed meaningful ways to assess student learning.

Seven instructors from the GW Hewlett Steering Committee attended an international conference on problem-based learning the summer before they were scheduled to teach the course. In addition to learning about problem-based learning, the group members shared what they learned at different sessions, exchanged ideas and resources, and built a foundation of trust and support. The monthly meetings of the Hewlett Steering Committee where various aspects of teaching, problem-based learning, District of Columbia resources, and assessment were discussed invigorated all participants. (See Appendix A for the agenda of the monthly meetings). As one faculty member wrote: *“The level of enthusiasm and joy in teaching of the participants was infectious and renewed my excitement in teaching and trying new approaches and methodologies.”*

Bernard Wood, the Henry R. Luce Professor in Human Origins and Professor of Human Evolution and one of the Hewlett fellows, was an experienced problem-based learning facilitator. His talk, “Learning Not to Teach,” where he showed the actual progression of students’ work as they became more sophisticated in and knowledgeable about the problem they were researching, greatly stimulated others. One of the aspects that made the experience great for one sociology professor was: *“having people who actually taught problem-based learning and inquiry-based courses come in and talk about their experiences. Especially Bernard—after that talk I was completely blown away. Never before had I heard of such a teaching approach.”* A geology professor wrote:

The experience provided a sense of professional regeneration for me. This year marked my 30th year of university teaching. The Hewlett experience convinced me that indeed an ‘old dog can learn new tricks’ and that senior faculty members can continue to grow and evolve in their teaching methodologies.

One Hewlett fellow in Media and Public Affairs summarized the experience as follows:

This is the kind of course that makes teaching exciting – because you really get to teach individuals instead of “classes.” I can’t wait until I have another opportunity like this one. It gives the students a chance to see professors working through research problems themselves, and it sends the message that we really aren’t a bunch of crabby people who lecture to 100 nameless students and then disappear into an office. In a small seminar course the students’ rise to the occasion – they like being treated like scholars instead of kids.

Student Outcomes:

The project accomplished the following proposed student outcomes:

- Intellectual excitement and academic engagement in required general education courses
- Meaningful academic engagement with the resources of the nation’s capital
- Experience that contributes to the attainment of a high level of cultural literacy, intellectual competence, and appreciation for the breadth and diversity of liberal learning, working effectively in teams and participating in discovery

Three-quarters of the students taking Hewlett courses rated the level of challenge in the Hewlett courses as high or very high (see Table 1), regardless of whether the class was large (more than 50 students) or small (fewer than 22 students).

Table 1. Level of challenge by class size

	All Hewlett Courses	Large Hewlett Courses	Small Hewlett Courses
Level of intellectual challenge			
Very high	25%	30%	20%
Somewhat high	49%	45%	53%
Neither high nor low	20%	18%	22%
Somewhat low	4%	4%	3%
Very low	2%	4%	1%

Independent of whether the class was large or small, students worked equally hard in their Hewlett courses. As Table 2 indicates, almost half of the students enrolled in Hewlett courses indicated they worked harder in the Hewlett course than in other classes; 40% found they worked about the same amount as in their other classes.

Table 2. Time and effort devoted to course

	All Hewlett Courses	Large Hewlett Courses	Small Hewlett Courses
Worked harder than in other classes	41%	46%	37%
Worked about the same as in other	44%	39%	49%
Worked less than in other classes	15%	15%	15%

While effort and perception of challenge do not differ in large and small classes, class size seems to impact students' level of engagement in their courses. Slightly more than half (54%) of the students in all Hewlett courses indicated they were intellectually engaged. However, statistically significant differences in students' level of engagement were found between students in small or large classes. As Table 3 indicates, 72% of the students enrolled in small classes indicated high levels of intellectual engagement compared to 45% of those enrolled in large classes.

Table 3. Level of engagement by class size

	All Hewlett Courses	Large Hewlett Courses	Small Hewlett Courses
Level of engagement			
Very high	22%	22%	22%
Somewhat high	42%	31%	52%
Neither high nor low	27%	33%	22%
Somewhat low	6%	9%	3%
Very low	3%	5%	1%

Compared to those in large classes, students in small Hewlett courses were much more likely to contribute to class discussions, ask questions in class, write a research paper, and explore and use the resources of Washington, D.C. as shown in Appendix B, Table 4.

Enhancement of Student Skills and Abilities

While the content in each of the Hewlett courses was unique, there were commonalities in the skills students were expected to learn: teamwork, self-directed learning, and exploration of Washington. For the most part these skills were achieved, although only teamwork was enhanced equally in both large and small classes. As Appendix C, Table 5 indicates, 81% of the students enrolled in Hewlett courses thought that their ability to function effectively as a member of a team was enhanced. The group projects served to motivate many students. Two student comments from different courses, summarize some of the benefits of group work: *“Because it was a group assignment, it was important that we all carried our own weight”*; *“I enjoyed working with the group, which encouraged me to put in time and effort into class work.”*

Although the magnitude of the enhancement was greater in small classes, two-thirds of the students indicated that their ability to plan and execute complex projects (76%), acquire new skills and knowledge on their own (75%), think analytically and logically (75%), and formulate original or creative ideas and solutions (73%) were enhanced. One student noted that *“The format was the best part of the class—not the usual sit in class, take notes, then get tested. You need to do your own work to learn and you do it with others which makes it enjoyable.”* Another wrote: *“It makes you think outside the box, about where to get information, and find resources.”* Another student noted: *“If all of my courses were as successful at transmitting information as this one, I would never get lower than an A in any of my classes. I have retained much more information by learning it than ever.”*

For some students, the problem-based learning format took some getting used to. Comments reflect the long learning curve: *“Problem-based learning is difficult, but you actually remember what you learn”*; *“[the class] was daunting at first—encourage students to stick it out”*; and *“Now that I have experience in it, I really enjoyed the problem-based learning.”* A few found the lack of structure frustrating: *“I was very frustrated throughout the course. I never understood what was going on and I needed more direction and actual teaching.”* One student in a different course stated, *“the class was vague as to what was expected and required a lot of outside group work.”*

Increased familiarity with and use of resources in the nation’s capital was three times more successful in small Hewlett classes (68%) compared to large classes (23%). One student wrote: *“It is a wonderful way to explore the political side of the Arts and [the course] gave students an opportunity to make use of the resources D.C. has to offer...I learned how to work around the Library of Congress!”*

Students and Faculty Learn From Team Projects

The collaborative group projects, a component of problem-based learning, proved successful on many levels. As stated above, students learned to work in teams, an important skill to master. For many instructors, this was the first time they had assigned group projects so they also learned from the experience. An English professor commented:

For me, the collaborative group projects were one of the highlights of the course. Students were asked to form teams of 3-5 members and put together first a presentation on the life and politics of one of the writers assigned for the course and then compose a written version, due one week after the presentation... Fortunately, the first group did an

outstanding job; so they provided an excellent example for the others and set a high standard.

A fine arts professor found the teamwork to be “an interesting experience.”

Studio art tends to be a mostly individualistic type of discipline. The concept of collaboration seemed somewhat alien. However, structuring the course toward the goal of accomplishing all the necessary tasks required to arrive at a finished exhibition, facilitated team based activities in conjunction with the preparation of individual art works. Managing the progress proved to be one of the most difficult parts the course....With great difficulty; I tried to hold back from overly influencing team deliberations. The students were eager to form teams, yet had great difficulty staying on agenda....Having said all this, the teams managed to find their way, with gentle prodding... worked very well as a group to assemble and mount the final exhibition.

Institutional Outcomes:

The project accomplished the following proposed institutional outcomes:

- Fifteen Washington-specific, inquiry-based lower division courses that fulfill general curriculum requirements (see Appendix D for list of all Hewlett courses)
- A University-wide forum to present the results of the project and enlist a new group of faculty participants
- A body of data on faculty and curriculum development, assessment practices, student intellectual engagement, and use of Washington resources
- Faculty and student recommendations to modify, continue, or expand the Washington-based inquiry model to a minor or concentration cluster of general education courses

Generally, small liberal arts colleges have been more effective in academically challenging their students. They have higher levels of student engagement, defined by George Kuh, Chancellor’s Professor of Higher Education and Director of the National Survey of Student Engagement at The Center for Postsecondary Research and Planning at Indiana University Bloomington, as “the time and energy students devote to educationally sound activities inside and outside of the classroom....” The critical question for GW, a medium-sized research institution, is whether innovative pedagogy and bringing Washington, D.C. into the classroom as both a topic of study and a resource, independent of class size, would increase students’ intellectual engagement in their educational experience.

During the first year of this grant, GW was already beginning to address this issue by developing its Strategic Plan for Academic Excellence. At the beginning of the second year of the project, the new dean of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences was eager to enrich the undergraduate experience. Thus the “new idea” which gave birth to 15 Hewlett courses emerged as one of the strategies in the Strategic Plan to continue to offer inquiry-based courses that expose students to the history, culture, and resources of the District of Columbia and that unite them in a common educational experience.

This grant provided for the creation of 15 introductory courses, four of which had enrollments of at least 50 students. (One of the courses, the Mathematics of Social Choice, was taught both semesters. See Appendix D for a description of the Hewlett courses and the number of students

enrolled in each.) The courses fulfilled general curriculum competencies in quantitative reasoning, natural science, humanities, social science, and creative arts for Columbian College of Arts and Sciences. Usually taught by senior faculty, the courses made use of GW's Washington D.C. location, and employed, to varying degrees, problem or inquiry based pedagogy designed to actively engage students in the learning process. All courses required that students work in teams on a group project. Group projects were displayed and students were available to discuss them during Poster Sessions held at the end of each semesters and open to the university community.

Assessment of the program provided the opportunity to learn more about student engagement and intellectual challenge. To ensure that faculty understood the importance of and included assessment measures in their evaluation of the Hewlett courses, the Director of Academic Planning and Assessment and an Instructional Designer from GW's Center for Instructional Design and Development (CIDD) met with each Hewlett Fellow in the early summer to discuss goals and objectives, brainstorm ideas about course design, and think about appropriate ways to measure learning outcomes. Correspondence via email continued during the summer as faculty developed their respective syllabi.

In addition to the assessment measures designed for each course, all the students taking Hewlett courses were asked to complete a generic course evaluation. The evaluation included questions about what skills and abilities were enhanced in the course (e.g., working in teams, writing effectively, expanding knowledge of Washington, DC), students' level of engagement (e.g., the frequency with which they contributed to class discussions, asked questions in class, completed assignments), and open-ended questions about the factors that contributed to their effort (or lack of effort) in the course, interest in the subject, and overall experience.

The end of semester Poster Session, where group projects were displayed and students were on hand to discuss their work, provided an exciting forum for both the students and the members of the GW community who attended. In addition, the Poster Sessions served to increase students' interest in subsequent Hewlett courses. Many of those taking fall semester Hewlett courses wound up signing up for a second course in the spring semester. A professor wrote:

The poster session was way beyond valuable! It really was a perfect way for the students to end their semester. I had them do in-class presentations prior to the poster session, and that gave them a lot of confidence. The fact that professors and deans would take an interest in their projects went a long, long way towards giving them a real sense of pride in their work.

Faculty were receptive to including assessment measures in their courses. For many, the experience of actually defining course goals and objectives, and thinking about what measures will indicate student mastery or achievement of these objectives, was novel. To quote a sociology professor:

In the first time in my teaching career I thought long and hard about WHAT GOALS I wanted my students to achieve. Rather than thinking about what content I wanted to cover, I stepped back and asked: what are the main skills I want my students to learn.

The use of resources in the nation's capital to increase student engagement worked more successfully in the small classes. (Logistically, it is easier to arrange field trips with fewer students.) For example, students in the English class appreciated the opportunity of visiting Frederick Douglass' home in Anacostia in connection with readings of his autobiography. Students in a religion course met with and interviewed lobbyists representing various religious communities, while the geology class took field trips to significant geological sites where they were encouraged to rediscover many of the important first principles of geology by investigating

these areas. Finally, students in the astronomy classes visited one of eight different astronomical research institutions in the greater Washington area to obtain answers to three questions: 1) What is scientific method; 2) How does science/astronomy work; and 3) What do scientists/astronomers do?

A sociology professor commented that “*one of the best aspects of the whole experience was the incorporation of Washington, DC into the course; both my students and I learned more about this city (at least the criminal courts) that we could have ever learned from a textbook.*”

Overall Lessons Learned From the GW Hewlett Project

****Faculty are receptive to experimenting with innovating pedagogies, to developing course goals and objectives, to assessing them, and to reflect on effective teaching especially when they feel an external obligation.*** The summer stipend the faculty received helped many make the monthly Friday morning Hewlett meetings a priority. They learned about and developed goals and objectives for their courses, as well as designed effective assessment measures in these meetings. Knowing that, in the end, they were being held accountable by an outside funding source helped reinforce their commitment to experimenting and then assessing the outcomes.

****Even experienced faculty can continue to grow and evolve as effective teachers.*** While most of the faculty would say they include problem-based or inquiry based pedagogy in their teaching, they benefited from having to think more deeply about such an approach and making a more conscious effort to introduce this pedagogy into the classroom. For one it meant a switch to a more “student-centered” approach, letting the student do the discovering and figuring out what they needed to know; another noted that she stepped back and thought about what goals she wanted her student to achieve rather than think about what content she wanted to cover.

****A team comprised of both senior and junior faculty has much to offer one another.*** The initial plan to limit Hewlett courses to only senior faculty as a means of emphasizing the importance placed on innovative teaching failed to take into account how much junior faculty can learn from the discovery process. The junior faculty’s very practical questions about how to accomplish our goals helped us to focus our discussions in very useful ways.

****Seeing is believing.*** Fortunately for all of us involved in the project, we had one very experienced facilitator of problem-based learning. His presentation on an actual course, showing the evolution of student work as the semester progressed, coupled with his candid discussion of the initial difficulty in experimenting with a new pedagogy, did more to engage faculty imagination and interest in experimenting with problem-based learning than any of the other discussions and workshops.

****GW needs to reinstitute its teaching center.*** The excitement and energy generated in the monthly meetings of the Hewlett Fellows made it very clear that the university needed to provide a forum to discuss and experiment with both pedagogical and technological innovations.

****Having everyone experiment with the same pedagogy makes it easier to bond and share experiences.*** We were all learning about and experimenting with problem-based learning, giving us a common language and methodology to discuss.

The Legacy of the Hewlett Courses

In addition to the inclusion of Hewlett-type courses as one of the strategies in GW's Strategic Plan, there are a number of other recent events that can be attributed to the success of the Hewlett program.

***Expansion of the Columbian College Dean's Seminars for Freshmen.** Starting in 1999, there have been up to ten Dean's Seminars offered to incoming freshmen. Building on the success of the Hewlett courses in introducing students to inquiry-based education, developing general competencies in the liberal arts, and offering small seminars designed to engage students at the start of their college careers, Columbian College has provided support for 51 Dean's Seminars for freshmen. Nine of the Hewlett courses continue to be offered as Dean's Seminars for the academic year.

***Curriculum Development Grants.** University funds have been set aside to provide summer funding to design or redesign courses that incorporate a pedagogical tool or innovation that is featured each academic year. The goals of the grants are to: encourage faculty to explore and experiment with pedagogical tools that increase student engagement, improve teaching, and enhance learning; build a faculty community across disciplines that offers peer support and collaboration; and develop effective assessment tools to evaluate learning and improve teaching.

Washington-Based Hewlett Seminars Course Descriptions

Fall: 2002

The remarkable range of intellectual and cultural institutions in the nation's capital makes Washington, D.C. an exceptional setting for the work of a university. The Washington-based Hewlett Seminars seek to exploit the city's resources to introduce students to the liberal arts in ways that are engaging and challenging.

The Hewlett Seminars, supported by a grant from the Flora and William Hewlett Foundation, are highly interactive courses where students and faculty engage in a series of problem-based activities that take them beyond the traditional classroom to explore the resources of Washington, DC. Most of the seminars are small (less than 25 students), and all are taught by some of GW's best faculty. Each Hewlett seminar meets a Columbian College general curriculum requirement. Students may register for only one Hewlett seminar in the Fall semester. Hewlett courses are not open to students in the University Honors Program.

[ASTR 1.11: Introduction to Astronomy I: Journeys Into the Universe](#)

Instructor: Earl F. Skelton, Visiting Professor of Physics

CRN: 32937 Natural Sciences GCR

In **COR** 101, MW 11:00 to 11:50, and lab

When I behold the heavens, the work of thy fingers, what is man that thou art mindful of him? This question, recorded in the *Old Testament*, was asked by the ancient Hebrews as they contemplated the awesome heavens. From that time to the present, all peoples, and all religions, continue to ask: *Why are we here? What is the cosmos? Where does the universe begin and end?*

In modern times, we add some newer questions: *Are we alone? Can we travel backward or forward in time? What was there before there was time and space? When and how will the universe cease to exist?* All of these profound riddles about the cosmos will be addressed, as we journey together and learn what science presently knows and can answer.

This course will address the breadth and scope of the known universe, and our place within it. In the first semester, our solar system will be studied: *How did it come into existence? How does the Sun generate the energy that is necessary for all life on Earth?* We will discuss the planets and how they differ from comets, and asteroids.

All of this fascinating subject matter will be presented in an easy to understand, fun, and engaging manner. There will be viewings of the popular Carl Sagan's *Cosmos* series and similar videos, student visits to astronomy shows, exhibits at the National Air and Space Museum, among other interesting web-based ways of gaining insights into the universe around us.

Earl Skelton is an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Physics. In 1999, he retired from research in order to pursue his true passion full time: *teaching*. Dr. Skelton is the "Patch Adams" of academia. His teaching philosophy is that he will do anything, within the law, to make learning fun and pleasurable.

BISC 710.MV: Biology in the City I (*freshmen only*)

Instructor: Terry Hufford, Professor Emeriti of Botany

CRN: 36248 Natural Sciences GCR

In **SCIE** 101 (biology lab), W 1:00 to 5:00

The course introduces students to science through the process of discovery and the utilization of observation and information-gathering using the vast resources in Washington, DC. The topics that will be covered are: the nature of science and scientific inquiry/the biology of cells; the flow of matter and energy; and heredity. Sites that will be visited include the Potomac and Anacosta Rivers (each quite different in their water chemistry and biological populations), the local water supply reservoir, Rock Creek, and a variety of terrestrial sites. Students will then engage in a variety of laboratory investigations appropriate to the particular area being covered.

Terry L. Hufford is Professor Emeritus of Botany and a Distinguished Teaching Professor.

ENGL 710.MV: Washington DC: Literature, Politics, and Culture (*freshmen only*)

Instructor: Christopher Sten, Professor of English

CRN: 36249 Humanities GCR

In **ACAD** 220, TR 2:30 to 3:45

Washington, DC, has a rich literary history that reveals much about life in the nation's capital from early in the nineteenth century to the present. While some writings are of local interest and portray the lives of everyday citizens, many others engage large national issues and conflicts-slavery, the Civil War, the corruption of government by money and special interests, Black migration, Cold War politics, the imperial state. This course will focus on the work of several prominent American writers who engage these larger national issues-Frederick Douglass, Williams Wells Brown, Walt Whitman, Louisa May Alcott, Henry Adams, Willa Cather, Gore Vidal, and Robert Coover-and some who speak more directly about everyday life in the nation's capital-Jean Toomer and Marita Golden. Students will read, discuss, and present reports on these works and related subjects, and complete research projects, using local libraries and historical sites, on the life and writings of other Washington-based writers. The class will also take several field trips to explore the many resources, especially museums and archives, of contemporary Washington having relevance to the course's principal themes.

Christopher Sten is Professor of English. He teaches American literature, with special interest in the American novel, modernism, ethnicity, the city, and the writings of Herman Melville.

FA 710.MV: Monuments as Image? On Becoming an Artist

Instructor: Jeffrey L. Stephanic, Associate Professor of Design

CRN: 36250 Creative and Performing Arts GCR

In **LIBR CAD** (3rd floor of the library), TR 2:30-3:45

Additional field and studio time required, \$100 lab fee

This course will exploit the visual resources of the Washington Metropolitan Area by posing the problem of creating an on-line and physical exhibition of works of art relating to monuments and monumentality. Collaborating on discovering what is necessary to define, create and mount both an on-line and physical exhibition relating to the theme of "Monuments" is the focus of the course. Students with varying degrees of visual art expertise are encouraged to register. The emphasis is focused on the whole process of being an artist rather than on development of expertise with a particular medium.

Although all will be required to learn how to use the computer as a visual arts tool, any medium may be used for the exhibited works. All will contribute to the design of the exhibition, web site and promotional material. All students will be required to participate in: defining the theme Monuments; focusing the theme of exhibition; defining venues for promotion of project; designing on-line version of exhibition; and creating works of art and mounting physical exhibit

Jeffrey Stephanic is an Associate Professor of Design in the Department of Fine Arts and Art History. His artistic research currently focuses on digital printmaking and he is represented by Anton Gallery. A forthcoming print and multimedia exhibit at Anton Gallery will focus on the theme "Identity."

MATH 710.10: The Mathematics of Social Choice

Instructor: Daniel Ullman, Professor of Mathematics

CRN: 36363 Quantitative and Logical Reasoning GCR

In **FUNG** 222, MW 12:30 to 1:45

There is a fascinating, rich, and not-widely-known theory of social choice that illustrates the way mathematical reasoning addresses problems of the real world. The problem of apportionment is a familiar example from the political arena where a mathematical treatment is available and where a theorem is known that asserts the impossibility of solving the problem subject to certain axioms about avoiding paradoxes. Another such problem is that of deciding elections when voters submit a list of their preferences. Also there is the theory of voting power in block voting schemes like our electoral college. In addition, we will explore several areas of mathematics, such as game theory and probability theory, that impinge on decision-making.

Student learning will be problem-based. Class time will be devoted to exploration of issues of social choice, with model problems devised to stimulate controversy and discussion. There will be lectures, group work, experiments, simulations, and debates. In addition, students will meet with those involved in elections, apportionment, and redistricting policy. The course is targeted toward students of the liberal arts. There is no mathematical prerequisite.

Daniel Ullman is Professor of Mathematics and current Chair of the Department of Mathematics.

REL 710.MV: Religion and the Public Square

Instructor: Harry Yeide, Professor of Religion

CRN: 36251 Humanities GCR

In **ACAD** 310, W 1:00 to 3:30

Because Washington DC is the seat of national government, many groups have offices and staffs placed here with the primary goal of helping to influence legislation and public policy formation. Among them are the public affairs offices -- known by a variety of names -- of a wide variety of religious communities, all eager to find their place and voice their concerns in the "public square." The Constitutional separation of Church and State both encourages and sets limits to this type of activity. These offices differ from many other groups in forming their judgments on the basis of deeply held religious and moral convictions. Additionally, they generally see themselves responsible to educate their constituencies regarding important public issues. Often, those who staff these agencies are politically at some distance from the communities they represent.

This class will select several issues that seem important to class members. Different groups in the class will do preliminary research on these problems. This will be followed by research into the views being developed in religiously sponsored public affairs offices on those issues and the reasoning by which they arrive at those views. For comparison reasons, some attention will be paid to agencies that are not religiously based, but for which the selected issues seem important. This phase of the course will involve extensive interviewing as well as study of the publications from these offices. Using the selected cases, some insight should be developed regarding the degree to which these agencies can and cannot cooperate with one another. It is anticipated that this class will develop new knowledge about the activities of these offices and arrive at a deeper understanding of how the public can participate in national policy formation.

Harry Yeide is Professor of Religion. He has a special interest in the interface between the different religions and moral life. This interest has led him to do special work in Bioethics and in Peace Studies. Both of these interests in turn entail an interest in the formation of public policies in the United States.

SMPA 710.MV: Democracy and The Development of Culture(s)

Instructor: Patricia Phalen, Assistant Professor of Media and Public Affairs

CRN: 36252 Social and Behavioral Sciences GCR

In **ACAD** 329, W 9:30 to 12:00

Critics blame the American mass media for being too liberal, too conservative, too biased, too invasive, too irresponsible and too passive. So which is it? Do the media create our culture or simply mirror it? Do they control political elections or facilitate them? What influence, if any, does the public have on the content of the mass media, and how do the media affect people's lives? Do we get the information we need to make informed decisions and work towards a better society, or are we all just victims of Hollywood and Madison Avenue? These are just a few of the questions we'll discuss in "Information, Democracy and Culture". Whether you intend to create media products or just consume them – you'll never look at news stories, sitcoms, crime dramas, Internet sites, talks shows or any other media product in the same way again.

Patricia Phalen has been at George Washington University for three years.

SOC 710.MV: American Criminal Justice Philosophy: Myths and Realities

Instructor: Charis Kubrin, Assistant Professor of Sociology

CRN: 36253 Social and Behavioral Sciences GCR

IN **ACAD** 329, M 10:00 to 12:30

SOC 3 prerequisite

Should criminal defendants be given more Constitutional rights? Do private attorneys provide better representation? How do lawyers' perceptions of their clients influence their work? What are the effects of the increased role of plea-bargaining in the court process? Is our court system just? American Criminal Justice Philosophy: Myths and Realities attempts to answer these questions. This course addresses the ongoing debate about what criminal justice is and ought to be in our society by concentrating on the process and decision-making that occurs in criminal courts in Washington D.C. Students will observe and study the court process at various stages including bail hearings, trials and sentencing hearings, as well as interview the key players involved such as prosecutors, defense attorneys, public defenders, judges, members of advocacy groups, and law professors at The George Washington University. Using evidence from observations and interviews, students themselves decipher the myths and realities of American criminal justice.

Charis Kubrin is an Assistant Professor in the Sociology Department. Professor Kubrin's research interests include neighborhood correlates of crime and violence, with an emphasis on race and violent crime. She has taught undergraduate courses including Introduction to Criminal Justice and Deviant Behavior and the graduate course, Race and Crime.

Spring: 2003

Course Descriptions

ANTH 710.10 Human Evolution for Beginners

Instructor: Bernard Wood, Henry Luce Professor in Human Origins

CRN: 86424 Behavioral and Social Sciences GCR

In Amsterdam House 202, TR 5:10-6:30 pm

Open to all students

This course is for people who have a curiosity about, and an interest in, the origins of humankind. In this class you will be introduced to the human fossil record in a novel way. You will be given a real fossil discovery to interpret. In doing so, you will be introduced to the sciences that underpin the study of human evolution. One course will not equip you to make the next important discovery about human evolution, but this course will enable you to understand the context of such discoveries and also show how an intelligent understanding of human evolutionary history can make you a more thoughtful citizen.

The Class will be in the format of a Problem-Based Learning Seminar. There will be an initial meeting of the whole class to explain the process. Then the Class will divide into two seminar groups, one led by Professor Wood and another led by a colleague who has experience with PBL instruction. Both groups will tackle the same problem, which will be based on an actual fossil discovery.

Students are encouraged to take advantage of the Anthropology Department's close links with the Human Origins Program at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum for Natural History and the unrivalled resources of the Library of Congress.

The only prerequisites for the class are intelligence, curiosity, and a willingness to be challenged.

Bernard Wood is the Henry R. Luce Professor of Human Origins in the Department of Anthropology and Adjunct Senior Scientist at the National Museum of Natural History, the Smithsonian Institution. He is a medically-qualified paleoanthropologist who moved into full-time academic life in 1972. His research centers on increasing our understanding of human evolutionary history by developing and improving the ways we analyze the hominid fossil record. Dr. Wood is the Director of the Center for the Advanced Study of Human Paleobiology at GW.

ASTR 2.11 Introduction to Astronomy 2: Journeys into the Universe

Instructor: Earl F. Skelton, Adjunct Professor of Physics

CRN: 82626 Natural Sciences GCR

In **COR** 101, TR 2:00 to 2:50, and lab

Prerequisite: ASTR 1

Open to all students

When I behold the heavens, the work of thy fingers, what is man that thou art mindful of him? This question, recorded in the *Old Testament*, was asked by the ancient Hebrews as they contemplated the awesome heavens. From that time to the present, all peoples, and all religions, continue to ask: *Why are we here? What is the cosmos? Where does the universe begin and end?*

In modern times, we add some newer questions: *Are we alone? Can we travel backward or forward in time? What was there before there was time and space? When and how will the universe cease to exist?* All of these profound riddles about the cosmos will be addressed, as we journey together and learn what science presently knows and can answer.

This course will consider the breadth and scope of the known universe, and our place within it. In the first semester, our solar system will be studied: *How did it come into existence? How does the Sun generate the energy that is necessary for all life on Earth?* We will discuss the planets and how they differ from comets, and asteroids.

All of this fascinating subject matter will be presented in an easy to understand, fun, and engaging manner. There will be viewings of the popular Carl Sagan's *Cosmos* series and similar videos, student visits to astronomy shows, exhibits at the National Air and Space Museum, among other interesting web-based ways of gaining insights into the universe around us.

Earl Skelton is an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Physics. In 1999, he retired from research in order to pursue his true passion full time: *teaching*. Prior to teaching full-time, Dr. Skelton was a research physicist at the U.S. Naval Research Lab where he published over 300 papers and won many awards for his work. Dr. Skelton is the "Patch Adams" of academia. His teaching philosophy is that he will do anything, within the law, to make learning fun and pleasurable. At GW he was recently awarded the 2002 Bender Teaching Award for Teaching with Technology.

GEOL 710: Washington DC: The Land Before the City (*freshmen only*)

Instructor: George Stevens, Professor of Geology

CRN: 86426 Natural Sciences GCR

In ACAD 301, TR 10:00 to 11:15

Includes weekend field trips

Regular weekly inquiry-based lectures and discussions will serve as a prelude to several day-long field investigations to observe, explore and describe the geological underpinnings of such areas as Great Falls National Park, Roosevelt Island, Shenandoah National Park, the C and O Canal National Park, and others. We will explore the influence of natural geomorphic features, the natural landscape, on development patterns of the Washington metropolitan area. Taken together, the field sites span the spectrum of geologic and geomorphic provinces of the east coast (i.e., the Coastal Plain, the Piedmont, the Blue Ridge Mountains, and the classic Valley and Ridge of the Appalachians). Each of these provinces is characterized by unique topographic, physiographic and geologic conditions that give rise to a host of botanical and cultural differences. Each has made an indelible imprint on the subsequent human settlement/land use patterns. To cite one example; it is no coincidence that Dulles International Airport is located in the center of the Mesozoic-age Culpepper Basin. The underlying geology closely controls the extraordinarily flat terrain needed for its extensive runway system.

Three to four mandatory one-day field trips will be held on selected Sundays during the semester. These trips will serve as the laboratory component required to meet the Natural Sciences curriculum requirement in the CCAS.

George Stephens is Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences. He is a field geologist who specializes in the structure and evolution of mountain ranges. He has published widely on the results of his field research in the Appalachians, the Wyoming Rockies, the Alaska Range, and, most recently, the Andes Mountains of Argentina.

MATH 710.10: The Mathematics of Social Choice

Instructor: Daniel Ullman, Professor of Mathematics

CRN: 85675 Quantitative and Logical Reasoning GCR

In **FUNG** 210, TR 11:00 to 12:15

Open to all students

There is a fascinating, rich, and not-widely-known theory of social choice that illustrates how mathematical reasoning can be used to address problems of the real world. The problem of apportionment is a familiar example from the political arena where a mathematical treatment is available and where a theorem is known that asserts the impossibility of solving the problem subject to certain axioms about avoiding paradoxes. Another such problem is that of deciding elections when voters submit a complete preference ordering of the candidates. Then there is the theory of voting power in block voting schemes like our electoral college. In addition, we explore a bit of game theory and the prisoner's dilemma.

The year 2000 presidential election debacle and the new census data make these topics especially timely. Students, working in groups, will explore scenarios involving elections, decisions, and power and will learn how mathematicians prove that some things are impossible. Theorems of Arrow, Balinski and Young, and Taylor and Zwicker play a central role.

The course is targeted toward students of the liberal arts and is an ideal choice for a student interested in politics.

Daniel Ullman is Professor of Mathematics and current Chair of the Department of Mathematics.

PSC 710.MV: Central and Eastern Europe: US Assistance and Democratization

Instructor: Sharon Wolchik, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs

CRN: 86427 Behavioral and Social Sciences GCR

W 1:00 to 3:30

Open to freshmen and sophomores

To what extent has the US contributed to efforts to establish democracy and market economies in Central and Eastern Europe? What lessons, if any, are to be learned from our role in the transition in this region? In the period immediately after the end of communism in Central and Eastern Europe, political leaders proclaimed their desires to create democratic political systems and market economies. They also announced their intention to move "back to Europe," or become members of European and Euro-Atlantic institutions. The US government undertook numerous programs to support this process. In this course, we will look at how effective these programs have been and what this experience has to tell us about future US assistance programs and foreign policy.

The class will feature meetings with some of the actors involved in this process, including US government officials who have worked with our aid programs; representatives of international organizations, such as the IMF, World Bank, and EU; and embassy officials from some of the recipient countries. We will also hear from critics of US efforts. Students will engage in discussions and small group projects to decide what we need to know about democracy and economic reform, as well as about the politics, history, and societies of the countries involved, to evaluate US policy and make recommendations for the future.

Sharon Wolchik is Professor of Political Science and International Affairs. For the past five years she has served as a consultant to the East European Constitutionalism Project, which focused on retraining civic education teachers in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary.

SOC 711.MV: Mr. Marx Goes to Washington: A Study of Class, Inequality, and Poverty

Instructor: Daina Stukuls Eglitis, Assistant Professor of Sociology

CRN: 86428 Behavioral and Social Sciences GCR

MW 11:00 to 12:15

SOC 1 highly recommended

Open to freshmen and sophomores

This course will examine issues of wealth, poverty, and inequality using Washington, DC, as a laboratory. Students will study sociological perspectives on class, inequality, and poverty and will learn social research skills. Students will actively participate in the design of research questions about issues relating to inequality and prepare research projects based on primary data collection in the Washington area. Students will have the opportunity to meet with speakers who are experts on various issues in inequality such as housing discrimination, poverty, and homelessness and to participate in community service as part of the learning experience.

Daina Stukuls Eglitis is an Assistant Professor of Sociology. She works in the areas of class inequality, gender, social theory, and social change. She loves teaching students to use their sociological imaginations.

TRDA: 710.MV: The Uneasy Alliance: Government Support of the Arts During the Federal Theatre Project

Instructor: Leslie Jacobson, Professor of Theatre

CRN: 86430 Humanities GCR

IN **ACAD 302**, MW 2-3:45

Open to all students

The United States government has a history of being uncomfortable supporting arts organizations. The National Endowment for the Arts and various state arts councils (most of which have been in operation for only 30 to 35) are continually being scrutinized by various political groups and leaders including Congress, governors, and mayors. At the source of many of these controversies lie questions of morality, political bias, and artistic merit, which can make evaluating artistic endeavors a difficult proposition. Yet, one of the most fertile periods of American theatre was during the Great Depression, when President Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration launched the Federal Theatre Project.

Students in this inquiry-based course will examine some of the works created during the Federal Theatre Project, the artists and administrators involved in the Project, and its impact and influence on the development of theatre in the US. They will look at some of the controversies surrounding

theatre funding by the NEA in the last 10-15 years. The course will culminate in a public project that will demonstrate various discoveries made about the relationships between politics and theatre in 20th and 21st century America.

Leslie Jacobson is Professor of Theatre and Chair of the Department of Theatre and Dance. She is an award-winning director and the founding artistic director of Horizons Theatre, the longest-running women's theatre still in operation in the U.S. Professor Jacobson helped to inaugurate GW's graduate acting program with The Shakespeare Theatre and the Women in the Arts Women's Leadership Program on the Mount Vernon campus.

HEWLETT FACULTY SEMINARS

September 21, 2001: Robert Thompson, Dean of Trinity College, Duke University: *Pedagogies of Engagement*. Dean Thompson presented a forceful invitation to revamp and invigorate undergraduate education and provided an excellent introduction to the many details involved in any large-scale redesign of the academic program, from curriculum issues to faculty workloads. Thompson then focused on examples of pedagogy that promote student engagement including inquiry-based courses, PBL courses, and strategies for integrating undergraduate research into courses.

October 12, 2001: (kickoff event) Shirley Kenney, President of SUNY at Stony Brook (and Chair of the Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates at Research Universities): *Reinventing Undergraduate Education: The New Agenda*. In a thoughtful and thought-provoking talk, President Kenney charged research universities such as ours with providing our undergraduate students with an education that is substantially different from that provided at non research universities: one that is intellectually rich, academically challenging, and exposes students from the very beginning to the passion, excitement, and rewards of academic research.

November 9, 2001: Barbara Duch, University of Delaware Institute for Transforming Undergraduate Education: *Introduction to PBL*. Duch offered a presentation of Problem Based Learning with specific examples and faculty participation. Duch also discussed the details of preparing and presenting a PBL course.

December 7, 2001: Bill Koffenberger, Director of the Center for Instructional Design and Development, GW: *Incorporating Instructional Technology*. A discussion of the various resources that the GW's Center for Instructional Design and Development had to offer the Hewlett Fellows as they develop their courses.

February 22, 2002: (Teleconference) Tom Angelo: *Teaching and Assessing for Critical Thinking and Deep Learning*. A discussion of the advantages of employing various types of assessment, with a focus on promoting and measuring critical thinking skills in students.

March 8, 2002: Cheryl Beil, Director of the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment, GW: *The Nuts and Bolts of Assessment*. A more detailed discussion of the various types of assessment that the Hewlett courses will employ: measuring student understanding of the course material, before, during, and after the course; measuring the effectiveness of the PBL pedagogy; measuring the relative suitability of PBL to various types of material (science, art, humanities), various class sizes, etc.

April 5, 2002: Bernard Wood, Henry Luce Professor of Anthropology and instructor of a currently offered PBL course in Hominid Paleobiology, GW: *PBL --- Learning Not to Teach*. A detailed description of his PBL course in Hominid Paleobiology, with class handouts, PBL problems, student comments, etc.

May 3, 2002: Nina Mikhalevsky, Director of Women's Leadership Programs, GW: *DC Resources* and PBL Student Panel. Guest speaker: Marya Annette McQuirter of the Humanities Council of Washington DC, who talked about the Washington D.C. Online project, and Sharon Widmayer of GW's Center for Instructional Design and Development. A discussion of the features, landmarks, and resources of Washington that could be easily and advantageously incorporated into the Hewlett courses, opportunities for student research growing out of the

Hewlett courses to be published in the new DC Encyclopedia, a brief discussion on instructional design, and a conversation over lunch with students from the abovementioned GW Hominid Paleobiology PBL course.

June 16 to 20, 2002: PBL Workshop in Baltimore. Hewlett faculty and members of the Steering Committee attended the conference and workshops on PBL.

June 25, 2002: Faculty who attended the PBL conference shared what they learned at the conference. One faculty member received permission to download several power point and streaming video presentations from the PBL conference and presented those to the faculty who were unable to go. Some of these materials were later added to the Hewlett website.

September 27, 2002: First meeting of the semester when the Hewlett courses were running. Faculty brought copies of their final course syllabi as well as other instructional materials. Each faculty member offered a short presentation on his/her course and their initial impressions, problems, etc. There was extensive discussion comparing notes and assisting each other. Metro cards were also distributed for faculty to give to their students so they could visit various Washington, DC venues required for their courses. A writer from *By George*, the university's primary publication, was also in attendance gathering material for a story on the Hewlett initiative. (See Appendix)

October 25, 2003: William Frawley, the Dean of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, attended the meeting and presented his goals for achieving focus, engagement, and excellence in undergraduate education. He discussed a call from the Columbian College for faculty to submit proposals to teach Dean's Seminars in the fall 2003. The Hewlett faculty then continued their ongoing discussion about pedagogy, problem based learning, and what they we're learning in their classrooms. Dean Frawley participated in this discussion, indicating at the close of the meeting that he was very impressed with their work, and strongly encouraging the Hewlett faculty to propose their Hewlett courses as Dean's Seminars and maintain their current momentum.

November 22, 2002: Planning for the End of Semester Poster Session. Meeting was largely devoted to planning the Poster Session, assessing instructional technology needs, set up of student displays, etc. Faculty teaching spring semester Hewlett courses also had an opportunity to discuss the development of their courses and obtain input from faculty currently teaching Hewlett courses.

December 2, 2002: *Hewlett Poster Session*. The purpose of this event was to give students taking fall semester Hewlett courses an opportunity to display and share their work. The invitation was a post card designed by Professor Stephanic, one of the Hewlett faculty. (See Appendix) In addition to a mailing that went out to all Columbian College faculty, students in the Hewlett courses were given batches to mail to their families and friends. There was a reception in conjunction with this event attended by all the students/faculty involved in Hewlett courses, as well as department chairs of Hewlett faculty, and senior GW administrators including Don Lehman, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Craig Linebaugh, Associate Vice President for Academic Programs and Planning, William Frawley, Dean of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, and Betsy Curtler, Associate Vice President of Advancement.

Each Hewlett course provided display materials and students were in attendance throughout the session to discuss their work. The Poster Session was an unqualified success and the faculty

received substantial praise, particularly on the articulateness and enthusiasm of the students. Comments received included the following:

“Congratulations to all for a job well done! I was impressed with students’ high level of engagement in their projects!”

“Thanks again for inviting me to the ‘Hewlett’ student presentations. I was really pleased -- with the caliber and originality of the work, the diversity of the presentations, and -- mostly -- the enormous personal investment and pride of the students. This was certainly the intent of the grant, and I don't think there's any doubt at all about the success of the student experience”

“Please allow me to add my thanks and congratulations to those of the others you've received regarding the Hewlett project, and in particular the poster session. I was very impressed by the excitement of the students (There were some who would have talked all evening!), the quality of their work, and the genuine excitement of the faculty who directed the courses.”

“Virtually all of the students with whom I spoke thought the courses were terrific and would like to do take other courses in the same format... I heard only one negative note the whole time I was there. One woman told me she did indeed try to register for another Hewlett course in the Spring, but it was closed! Alas, victims of your success yet again!”

February 14, 2003: Cheryl Beil presented a summary of the fall Hewlett course evaluations and an analysis of the initial results of her assessment of student learning in those courses. Fall Hewlett faculty (who had already met individually w/ Beil to discuss their course evaluations) presented their analyses of the strengths/weaknesses of their teaching and their views of the positives/negative of PBL and inquiry-based pedagogies.

April 11, 2003: Planning for the May 1, end of semester Poster Session; there was also an extensive discussion of “where do we go from here?” Many Hewlett faculty had submitted proposals to teach Dean’s Seminars. There was a clear consensus that not only should the courses continue to be offered but that the “community” of faculty that had developed over the two years needed to remain active and provide a “brain-trust” and resource group for on-going undergraduate curriculum development and teaching initiatives in the Columbian College.

May 1, 2003: *Spring Hewlett Poster Session*. Following the successful format of the fall semester Poster Session, students taking spring semester Hewlett courses displayed and shared their work. The invitation again was a post card designed by Professor Stephanic and there was a reception in conjunction with this event attended by all the students/faculty involved in Hewlett courses, department chairs of Hewlett faculty, and senior administrators. There were also several visitors from outside of the university, connected with cultural, political, and other kinds of organizations, who had served as Washington, DC resources for a number of the courses. Each Hewlett course provided display materials and students were in attendance throughout the session to discuss their work. The spring Poster Session was also a success and, again, those present were particularly impressed with the student’s enthusiasm and interest in explaining their work.

May 2, 2003: End of the grant reception for all the Hewlett faculty and Steering Committee members at the home of Grae Baxter, Executive Dean of the Mount Vernon campus. Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Don Lehman congratulated the entire Hewlett faculty on their excellent work; Dean of the Columbian College, William Frawley, also praised the work of the faculty and articulated his commitment to sustaining their work through the Dean’s Seminars initiative.

Hewlett Project Steering Committee

Co-chairs:

Cheryl Beil, Director of Academic Planning and Assessment

Michael Moses, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies

Coordinator for Hewlett Seminars and Faculty Training:

Nina Mikhalevsky, Director of the Elizabeth J. Somers Center & Women's
Leadership Programs

Committee Members:

Cornelius Bennhold, Associate Professor of Physics

Ed Caress, Executive Associate Dean and Professor of Chemistry

Paul Churchill, Professor and Chair of Philosophy

Paul Duff, Associate Professor and Chair of Religion

Laura Eisen, Associate Professor of Chemistry

Jerry Feldman, Assistant Professor of Physics

Nate Garner, Professor of Theatre

Leslie Jacobson, Professor and Chair of Theatre

Katherine Keller, Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies

Michael King, Professor and Chair of Chemistry

Bill Koffenberger, Director, Center for Instructional Design and Development

Craig Linebaugh, Associate Vice President, Academic Planning & Special Projects

Chris Sten, Professor of English

George Stephens, Professor of Earth and Environmental Science

Dan Ullman, Professor and Chair of Mathematics

Harry Yeide, Professor of Religion

Laura Youens, Professor and Deputy Chair of Music