

Faculty involved with NYCCT's NEH grant who attended were Elaine Leinung, Kara Pasner, Sarah Standing, Lisa Fischer, Mary Sue Donsky, Shauna Vey, Barbara Grumet, and Gwen Cohen-Brown. Jim Stubenrauch and Joy Jacobson facilitated the discussion. We did some reading and writing together and then discussed the goals of the grant, some barriers that prevent faculty from easily implementing those goals, and some possible solutions.

Grant fellows who participated in the workshop identified challenges they may face in using reflective techniques in their classes:

- A mandated curriculum – so few electives, so they're all the more important. Students have room for two electives. The Pathways initiative allows students not to take any humanities.
- Being at a tech school makes "other classes" secondary. There are financial constraints, so students work; they're trying to feed their families – how to get them to look at a van Gogh? So the tech/science people need to integrate the arts into their classes. Develop observational skills using art – Rita's message of reading art and reading patients.
- Students are afraid to express critical thinking – teach them not to be afraid and overcome their high school just-know-it mindset.
- Using the library is intimidating. Students underutilize it; they need to be taught how to use it. (Librarians discouraged Shauna from bringing students because that's something the English dept. does.)
- Sarah: Few students have a strong sense of themselves. They collapse when things are difficult, and if you encourage them, they become arrogant.

Participants also identified strategies and possible solutions to overcome the challenges to using reflective techniques with students:

- Being able to recognize resistance in students if you can recognize it in yourself.
- Telling students you get nervous taking tests – students appreciate the understanding – showing how you took notes or marked books – using the personal narrative of your own difficulty.
- CITI IRB: Gwen has students go thru IRB-compliant, online test (2-hr student version).
- "Stump Dr. Brown" or "Pathology Jeopardy" – students are motivated to fool the teacher.
- Taping class – transcribing – sending to Gwen to check for errors – going thru the material multiple times.

- The natural – (in public speaking) vs. The learner – “Anything can be learned.”
- Example: Acting classes helped Elaine’s son Eric respond to social cues. Acting class would be so great for nursing students. Discussion of acting the subtext in nursing role play; those who intuitively know this do better. Shauna noted that some actors write the subtext under every line of script. It would be good for nursing students to play the role of patients.
- Play analysis – Pathways requirement to justify course – Shauna’s reason is empathy – (reminded Jim of the Elaine Scarry article, “[Poetry Changed the World Injury and the Ethics of Reading](#),” about the development of aesthetics leading to empathy and civilizing impulse).
- Sarah: listen to *tone* of voice.
- Sandra: 2-min exercise, pair of students, one describes an artistic image while the other listens, and then the other reacts to the image.

Joy asked: What are we doing on the bridge represented by this grant, “Comparative Perspectives on Health, Illness, and Healing”?

- Participants noted the “sidedness” of the table – participants had grouped themselves, humanities on one side, health sciences/law on the other.
- Bridge the analytical and the expressive.
- Humanize medical students.
- Lisa: Becoming better teachers.
- Sarah: The science people are articulate – mutual learning.
- One GPA for the student’s major and another for electives.
- Elaine: BA/BS is so important because this education makes students more well rounded – says they’re starting to make it explicit to students and faculty with the grant, this integration of humanities into sciences – how are you going to get along in the world without ability to collaborate, to connect in many different ways?
- Afraid to express critical thinking, teach them not to be afraid and overcome their high school just-know-it mindset.
- The detail is most revealing.
- The universal misunderstanding about the arts is that anything you do is great – we encourage our students to break the rules and to learn the rules. You don’t want “creative wishy-washiness” – empathy and critical thinking are not either-or.
- In the law and in nursing, the rule about taking the self out of the statement.
- The objective sender and the empathetic receiver: the nurse isn’t going to be talking to the patient about her kids – or is she? Elaine says it’s discouraged for nurses to self-disclose.

EMPATHY + CRITICAL THINKING – what might each discipline have to offer the other?

- Elaine: actively encourage students to take a humanities course; always used to encourage them to take speech.
- Acting is a general elective.
- Shauna described a drawing exercise – one student tells another what to draw – are instructions accurate and well executed?
- Elaine: Physical assessment: pick out person on subway and describe height, weight, dress, profession, background, destination, etc. Used to do colleagues but people would get upset. Shauna did same exercise in acting class, act out the person, their subtext.
- WAC is good for crafting writing assignments – in optometry, everything is a term paper, she wants them to read trade journals, separate the substantive from the fluff, become information literate; Assignment: go thru digital sources, what's in them, then go thru print sources, what's in them, how are they different, now what do you think of it, now develop script to convey information to average person.
- ANYTHING CAN BE LEARNED.

ONE THING I COULD TRY as a result of this workshop:

- Sandra: role-play an artist, a patron, viewer, critic; role play Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling, write a script.
- Shauna: Try holding writers' conferences, follow Murray and assume that the student actually knows the answer, just wait for the answer, assume this in public speaking as well.
- Sarah: Writing and performance project on health and healing, will use DeSalvo's 5-point healing narrative.
- Kara: assign reflective writing piece related to having a refractive condition (extreme near-sighted or far-sighted) or disease process (macular degeneration), and daily living with that – these conditions can be simulated with glasses.
- Mary Sue: will start class with breathing exercise, observation exercise, reflective writing: how does this law make you feel.
- Elaine: will try reading poetry, or an excerpt of *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, (community health class) slow down pace of class.