



The Office of the Vice President for Academic
Affairs and the Center for Teaching Excellence

announce

the fourth annual Providence College

**Interdisciplinary Faculty
Seminar**

“Beauty”

2009-2010 Call for Participants

Deadline: June 1, 2009

Description:

The Providence College Interdisciplinary Faculty Seminar (IFS) brings together eight faculty members from across the disciplines on campus in a collaborative teaching and learning experience each year. Participants devote an entire semester to a multidisciplinary and multidimensional study of a particular theme. In addition, the seminar invites outside scholars to campus who will present on the seminar topic to the larger PC community.

2009-2010 Theme: “Beauty”

In selecting each year’s IFS theme, the Committee for the Enhancement of Learning considers connections between the theme and various disciplines. This consideration leads to several questions related to the theme. Some of those questions are posed here as prompts for further thinking, but the CEL welcomes other perspectives on the theme as well.

- *What is the impact of the perception of beauty on human behavior?*
- *In what sense is God “the beautiful”?*
- *Is science beautiful? What is an elegant experiment?*
- *Does beauty help marketers to promote their products or enhance stock value?*
- *Is there beauty in mathematics?*
- *What is the history of beauty?*
- *Is there beauty in nature?*
- *What are the political uses of beauty?*
- *Is there beauty in symmetry?*
- *What is the relationship between beauty and objectivity/ subjectivity?*
- *Can beauty be taught?*
- *Is beauty bound to desire?*
- *Does the evolutionary process select for beautiful organisms?*
- *Does knowledge enhance beauty?*
- *Can beauty in the arts be measured?*
- *Is there beauty in words?*

Seminar Format:

- Eight faculty members from different disciplinary fields will participate.
- Each participant will be given a one course-load reduction and a stipend of \$3,500.
- One of the selected participants will act as seminar coordinator for an additional stipend.
- One or more outside scholars will come to PC each year: 1) to share their work with seminar participants and the PC community and 2) to become acquainted with ongoing scholarly activity at PC.
- The seminar will take place during the Spring semester and will meet once each week.
- Two meetings will be held in the fall of 2009 for planning and preparation.
- Each seminar participant will lead at least one seminar session, in which he or she identifies and assigns seminar readings featuring a problem, crisis, or change in the participant's discipline.
- At least one Open Forum will be held during the spring semester, where the seminar is both public and participatory, involving all attendees in the discussion.
- IFS participants will present a panel at the end of the year open to the entire PC community to share their research developments and teaching and learning experiences.

Objectives:

The Providence College Interdisciplinary Faculty Seminar:

- advances the Mission of the College by fostering academic excellence in the sciences and humanities, providing a supportive and unique opportunity for faculty members to engage in intellectual, social, moral and spiritual growth, and enhancing the Dominican tradition of quality teaching and scholarship;
- provides time, space, and institutional arrangements for faculty to venture beyond the walls of their disciplines to interact with fellow faculty as mutual scholars, teachers, colleagues, and students;
- examines the connections among disciplines that make up the fabric of university life and represents in palpable form a microcosm of the idea of the university;
- provides faculty with critical tools in interpreting and understanding issues from other disciplinary perspectives;
- promotes scholarly research and publications among PC faculty;
- increases visibility of scholarly and intellectual activity at Providence College to outside academic communities;
- allows faculty the opportunity to be students as well as teachers, giving them an appreciation for the problems and needs of their own students; and
- generates cross-campus conversation, partnership, and *communitas*.

Application Process:

Any member of the ordinary, full-time faculty is eligible to apply. Applications are made to the Committee for the Enhancement of Learning (members ineligible). In its selection process the CEL will take into account the overall makeup and representation of the disciplines in the IFS.

Applications consist of three items; all should be submitted electronically:

- a cover sheet with summer contact information and a title for the proposal
- a 2-4 page essay stating:
 - ♦ why this topic is of relevance and interest to the applicant
 - ♦ how the applicant will contribute to the seminar from a particular perspective and discipline
 - ♦ how participation in the seminar might translate into teaching and research goals
- a current *curriculum vitae*

Time Frame:

June 1, 2009 – Applications Due

July 30, 2009 – Participants Notified by CEL

Fall 2009 – Two Participant Meetings; Reading List Prepared by Participants

January, 2010 – Seminar Begins with Start of Semester

Send Applications to:

cte@providence.edu

Chair, Committee for the Enhancement of Learning

Center for Teaching Excellence

Providence College

Providence, RI 02918

For more information, go to

<http://www.providence.edu/cte/seminar>

or contact the Center for Teaching Excellence at

cte@providence.edu or x1340