



Newsletter

"Democracy in Education, Education for Democracy"

Volume XLIV, Number 1 ricaft@ric.edu February, 2015 Erik Christiansen, Editor

Greetings and welcome to the end of winter! Beginning with this issue, we are setting out to bring you a monthly newsletter that will keep faculty informed of labor and other issues on campus.

Below, after the News and Updates section, you'll see profiles of faculty members new to campus this academic year, arranged alphabetically. These will continue over the course of the semester. As you can see from their biographical information, we are blessed with another remarkable cohort of scholars and educators. After reading, perhaps you'll be inspired to connect with some of them.

If I miss anyone, please let me know at echristiansen@ric.edu. And please email me with appropriate announcements or information that you'd like to see included in future newsletters.

In solidarity,

Assistant Professor, Department of History

News and Updates

Contract Negotiations: Negotiations for a new contract have begun between the state negotiator and the RIC/AFT negotiating committee. Our committee has been meeting twice a week since December and will continue to do so for quite some time.

Thank you to those faculty members that participated in the December survey about contract priorities. Your responses helped the committee and our chief negotiator to begin the process with a deeper understanding of faculty concerns.

Complete College Act: Members may be interested in the proposed legislation known as the Complete College Act, currently in the House Committee on Health, Education, and Welfare as HR 5077. The bill identifies

retention and graduation rates as the key measurements of a higher education institution's success. In other states, this has resulted in state funding being tied to the ability of an institution to meet specified retention and graduation rates. The bill is on the state website here:

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText15/HouseText15/H5077.pdf>

Committees and Participation: The RIC/AFT welcomes faculty members to participate actively in Union leadership and activities. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact Vice President Quenby Hughes at qhughes@ric.edu. The RIC/AFT has several standing committees, but also is looking for faculty members interested in more active engagement with the Union in other capacities as well.

Departmental Representatives: A heartfelt thanks to Robin Kirkwood Auld for her service as Chair of the Assembly of Departmental Representatives. This important group, which meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month, will be electing another Chair at the March meeting. Faculty members who have served two years on the Assembly are eligible for nomination as Chair. Please send nominations to Quenby Hughes via email by Wednesday, March 11.

FCTL Sessions in March:

Giving Students Feedback

Monday, March 23, 12:30-2:00pm

FCTL—Adams Library 405

Do you find giving students feedback time-consuming and tedious? There are several ways of making that process more efficient. Blackboard, Lync, Camtasia and other tools can help. Facilitated by Marie F. Beardwood, FCTL and Kyle Jackson, USS.

Faculty Approaches to Writing: A Series

What's Blackboard Good For??? Teaching Writing!

Tuesday, March 24, 12:30-2:00pm.

This session will focus on using Blackboard to facilitate low- and high-stakes writing instruction. Facilitated by Carolyn Obel-Omia (Elementary Ed) and Mike Michaud (English, Writing Board).

New Faculty for 2014-2015

Toni-Marie Achilli has joined the Biology department at Rhode Island College in a post-doctoral position. Her appointment includes both a research and teaching component. A native of Rhode Island, Toni-Marie joins RIC after receiving her PhD in Biomedical Engineering at Brown University, where her work focused on creating drug development assays in 3D cell culture systems. Prior to her work at Brown, she received her BS in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at The Johns Hopkins University. Toni-Marie has two young children, and is an avid curler and enjoys coaching and umpiring girls' fast pitch softball.

Dr. Eliani Benaion Basile was trained in Linguistics and Applied Linguistics at Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro and Boston University. Her fields of expertise are Second Language Acquisition Theory and Sociolinguistics. A native of Rio de Janeiro, she lived in Brazil and Spain before moving to Boston to study at Boston University.

Previous faculty positions include Assumption College, Tufts University and Harvard University, where she taught courses in Sociolinguistics, Spanish and Portuguese and Methods in Foreign Language Teaching, and received three awards for teaching excellence.

Her current research focuses on language-contact phenomena and issues of identity among Portuguese-speaking and Spanish-speaking communities in the United States. Eliani is also writing her first book, about the Brazilian Diaspora in the United States.

She writes the Editorial for the *Hello Brazil News* newspaper in Boston (the largest Brazilian newspaper in Boston area), and is also a columnist at a Brazilian newspaper in Paris, France (*Comunidade Brasileira na França*).

Dr. Caroline Caswell has joined the departments of Mathematics & Computer Science and Educational Studies as an assistant professor. Caroline has spent 24 years in K-12 public education as a middle and high school mathematics teacher, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent and superintendent. Her vast professional experience spans urban, urban ring, suburban, and rural communities.

Earning an undergraduate B.S. degree in Mathematics, a MAT in Mathematics and a Ph.D. through the URI/RIC joint doctoral program, Caroline is

excited to be at RIC as a joint appointment in the Mathematics and Computer Science and Educational Studies Departments.

Dr. Jennifer Costanza has joined the Sociology Department.

Veteran RIC adjunct **Dr. Moira Collins** has now joined Educational Studies.

Dr. Andrea L. Dottolo has joined the psychology department. Her research explores how social identities are constructed and maintained, and the ways they are shaped by social and institutional structures. Her work in feminist psychology centers on race, class, gender, sexuality, and qualitative research methods.

Dr. Chiara Falangola has joined Modern Languages. Raised and born in Rome, Italy, she discovered the poetry of Rimbaud and Baudelaire at the age of 16 and it was love at first reading. After obtaining a *laurea quadriennale* in Foreign Languages and Literatures at the University of Rome "La Sapienza," she taught Italian in the beautiful French Alps for a year and then moved to Vancouver, Canada to complete a PhD in French Literature. She defended her dissertation on contemporary fragmentary novels in June 2013. After working for a year at the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, she is very happy to be teaching French and Italian languages and literatures at RIC.

Chiara's research interests are in disaster literature (WWII, AIDS), literature and the visual arts, the genre of the novel poetics, French and Italian cinema. She would love to collaborate with other departments to create GE courses and study abroad programs.

Chiara also is a sponsor of the ongoing...

Tournées Film Festival

Wednesdays at 5pm in Horace Mann 193.

There are two upcoming screenings:

March 4: *La Belle endormie/ The Sleeping Beauty* (Catherine Breillat, 2010, France, 82 min.)

March 18: *L'image manquante/ The Missing Picture* (Rithy Pann, 2013, France & Cambodia, 92 min.)

More new faculty bios to come in the March newsletter....