

GALLAUDET UNIVERISTY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Committee on Academic Affairs

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Academic Affairs Highlights

Carol J. Erting, Provost

General Education Redesign

Academic Affairs has been engaged in a review and redesign of the General Studies Requirement for the past two years. The review consisted of a faculty-led self-study, an on site review of the program by three external reviewers, and student and faculty discussions to solicit feedback about the current General Studies Requirement (GSR) curriculum and ideas about future directions. The *GSR/General Education Redesign Initiative* began this past summer under the leadership of Dr. Kirk VanGilder, faculty in the **Department of History, Philosophy, Religion, and Sociology** and Ms. Niesha Washington-Shepard, faculty in the **Department of ASL and Deaf Studies**. The summer work group included General Studies Requirements (GSR) coordinators and faculty members from a variety of academic disciplines who have taught in the GSR program, as well as faculty who played a major role in Gallaudet's Internationalization Lab (IZN).

As a result of the summer work, the co-facilitators produced a report presenting three possible models for redesigning Gallaudet's general education curriculum. The report as well as more detailed information about the General Education Redesign Initiative is available [here](#).

On September 9, a campus-wide forum was held to provide a summary of the report and to begin the process of soliciting feedback from faculty, students, and staff. Dr. Van Gilder and Ms. Washington-Shepard have formed a council consisting of current GSR coordinators and members of the summer work group [to gather input on the models](#) during the fall semester and finalize a proposal for the redesigned general education curriculum for presentation to the Council on Undergraduate Education (CUE) and then the University Faculty Senate in the spring.

The administration is working with the faculty to shape a curriculum that is responsive to our students, provides a foundation for student success in a changing, dynamic and challenging world, and a curriculum that is sustainable. The excellent work accomplished by the workgroup this summer and committed engagement by the Gallaudet community in the discussions this fall will result in a redesigned general education curriculum ready to roll out in the fall of 2020. The Academic Affairs administrative team is committed to providing the resources needed to support this ambitious timeline and the redesigned curriculum.

Gallaudet Library and Archives

The new Dean of the Gallaudet Library and Archives, **Ms. Amy Malm**, began in her new position over the summer. Dean Malm's work to date has focused on creating a culture of value and influence. As the dean and the staff look at multiple aspects of change and growth for our students, staff, and faculty they are identifying their priorities to "change the game" for the Gallaudet Library and Archives. Summer work was devoted to mission and vision creation, generating assessment with data-

rich objectives that align with the national academic research library assessments and learning objectives and with Gallaudet University's priorities. An important goal is to create a more permeable and flexible learning space within the library to better serve students' learning habits, patterns, and culture. The library has also begun to explore a partnership with the department of Linguistics on the digital preservation of visual language. Additionally, they are working to reduce barriers and strengthen accessibility by hosting a new braille printer in partnership with the Accessibility Committee and the Office of Students With Disabilities (OSWD).

Research Centers and the Office of Sponsored Programs

Three **Technology Access Program (TAP)** members – Dr. Christian Vogler, Linda Kozma-Spytek and Norman Williams – worked with Dr. Raja Kushalnagar from the IT Program in the **Department of Science, Technology, and Mathematics (STM/IT)** to mentor a mix of deaf and hearing undergraduate students during the second year of the NSF-funded Research Experience for Undergraduates grant on accessible information and communication technologies, leading projects on Alexa accessibility, hearing assistive technology usability, caption latency, and caption user interfaces/display. **TAP** also collaborated with **STM/IT** on the captioning metrics and usability grant and submitted a joint petition for rulemaking on caption quality to the FCC with consumer advocacy groups, based on our research findings. The Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Technology for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH-RERC) hosted a successful site visit by HHS Deputy Secretary Eric Hargan. **TAP** also submitted a successful proposal for the 2019-2024 grant cycle for the DHH-RERC and was awarded funding in the amount of \$4.6M, beginning October 1, 2019. Finally, **TAP** collaborated with Google on user testing for their captioning apps in a recent visit in September.

The Deaf Health Communication and Quality of Life Center (DHCQoL) received three new grant supplements to Dr. Poorna Kushalnagar's existing NIH-R01 grant. These helped create new programs within the Center:

- 1) Health outcomes of deaf caregivers who care for individuals with Alzheimer's or related dementias
- 2) Health outcomes of mid-to-older women, with specific focus on osteoporosis, reproductive health (hysterectomy), nutrition and behavior, and oral health (includes oral cancer screening)
- 3) Adverse childhood experiences and resilience among LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ deaf adults

The **Schuchman Deaf Documentary Center** continues to engage and work with students. The *Deaf NYC: Signs of Change* project, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and ZVRS, is now in the 2nd year of the 3-year grant period. Over 20 individuals have been interviewed, and some sites important to Deaf New Yorkers have been filmed. A student intern is starting her second semester with the Center on the New York project. The Center director, Dr. Brian Greenwald, received a Gallaudet Priority Research Grant to study state sterilization laws and their impact on deaf people in the United States. Jean Bergey co-authored an article published in the *Journal of Folklore and Education*. The Center is collaborating with a group of deaf printers from *The Washington Post* to create a virtual exhibition on deaf printers experiences at the *Post* and \$12,000 in funding, or 2/3 of the proposed exhibition costs, has been secured. The Center continues to seek funding for a documentary on Deaf involvement in early space research.

The current portfolio of the **NSF/Gallaudet Science of Learning Center on Visual Language and Visual Learning (VL2)** is rich with exciting science and translation. The **Petitto Brain and Language Laboratory for Neuroimaging (BL2)** team, under Dr. Laura-Ann Petitto's leadership,

completed work on the NSF INSPIRE grant. The creation of the RAVE language learning tool achieved significant success in, first, engaging young infants' sustained visual attention (ages 6-12 months). Second, information from the thermal IR imaging system successfully triggered RAVE's Avatar as to when *to start and to stop* a conversation as per the baby's interest. Specifically, the thermal IR imaging system triggered the Avatar to produce ASL Nursery Rhymes only at specific times when the baby was most engaged, "ready to learn," and it did so in socially-contingent ways (based on the baby's moment-by-moment emotional engagement). However, the linguistic *content* of the Avatar's language productions was fixed (unchanging). The Avatar produced the same set of four ASL Nursery Rhymes (again and again), but it could not generate other new socially/semantically appropriate language content. In next-step advances, Petitto (on sabbatical in Professor Arcangelo Merla's Thermal IR Imaging+Brain Imaging Center at the Universita D'Annunzio Chieti-Pescara, Italy) will engage in scholarship, plan, and research the creation of artificial machines that can change their linguistic content (and produce new socially/semantically appropriate linguistic content) through machine learning, using Big Data and Cloud technologies, as per the information the system learns from an individual baby's behavior.

Under Dr. Thomas Allen's leadership, the **EL2** team continued intensive advanced statistical analyses of EL2 databases: 1) The Early Education Longitudinal Study (EELS) and 2) the Visual Communication and Sign Language online data repository. Four manuscripts are in process (including one that is in "Revise and Submit" status from PLOS-One). EL2 reached five as the number of Gallaudet dissertations that have used EL2 datasets. EL2 served as the site for summer internship placements for two undergraduate students from Penn State University, representing the intersection of three large NSF programs: Science of Learning Centers (VL2); Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU-Accessible Information and Communications Technology, led by Dr. Raja Kushalnager); and Penn State's Partnership In Research and Education (PIRE).

Under the leadership of Ms. Melissa Malzkuhn, **ML2** initiated work on the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation (MEAF) grant to create a train-the-trainers program for the VL2 Storybook Creator. The goal of this grant is to implement a nationwide training curriculum by working through the Gallaudet University Regional Centers (GURCs) to support local Deaf communities in learning skill sets that 1) create more bilingual storybook apps, and 2) lead to increased employment opportunities for participants. ML2 also is collaborating with the Action and Brain Lab (ABL) under the leadership of Dr. Lorna Quandt, on the project, "Signing Avatars & Immersive Learning (SAIL)." In this project, ASL lessons are presented in a virtual reality environment and accessed via a head-mounted display where an avatar teaches users ASL.

In addition to continuing to improve **VL2** translational materials and services, such as the Family Information Package, the Research Briefs, Signwise, and widespread informational presentations, TL2, under Dr. Melissa Herzig's leadership, participates in the broader Gallaudet "birth to five" priority, playing a major role in the campus efforts to contribute research perspectives to the ongoing dialogues and plans for action.

The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) provides services and support to Gallaudet faculty and staff seeking external funding for research and training projects of benefit to the Gallaudet community and the world. Despite the federal government shutdown that ended on January 25, 2019, the majority of Gallaudet's existing grants were approved for continuation although new awards were delayed. Overall we experienced minimal disruption. In fiscal year 2019, the OSP submitted 41 proposals totaling \$22,786,636 and has received 23 awards totaling \$3,602,848.

The OSP staff has worked with the Finance Office and Human Resources to provide various training workshops. These workshops provide professional development for principal investigators/project directors and departmental support staff while promoting research integrity and fiscal stewardship of sponsored research funds. This fiscal year the OSP completed implementation of the Cayuse grants management system and input all 34 grant/contract proposals, making information more searchable and reporting easier. The OSP continues to work toward centralizing grants, performance and research related contracts, and other research development related functions and activities on campus for the purposes of providing increased customer service to our faculty, professional staff, and students.

Academic Programs

Dr. Teresa Crowe of the **Department of Social Work** has initiated a research partnership with the Urban Institute to conduct research evaluation of a deaf program for intimate partner violence for the District Attorney's Office in NY. She is also working with the Behavioral Health Administration in Maryland to conduct research on deaf and hard of hearing consumers, adults and children, who utilize the public behavioral health system. Dr. Elizabeth Moore, the Chair of the Department, gave a keynote speech at the senior citizens luncheon at the NBDA Conference last August in Oakland, California and received an award in recognition of her ongoing commitment and dedicated service. Foreshadowing future restructuring, the **Department of Hearing, Speech, and Language Sciences** is collaborating with the **Departments of Business, and Art, Communication and Theater** by having a student intern from each department work in our Hearing and Speech Clinic. **The Department of Counseling** recently won a \$150,000 training grant from the US Department of Education for 2019-2020.

The Department of Physical Education and Recreation launched *Camp Discovery* in summer 2019, serving 26 deaf, hard of hearing, and KODA children ages four to 11 years. Children attending the weekday camp were from New York, Pennsylvania, California and the metro DC area. Collaborating with various programs on campus, the children received instruction in swimming, rock climbing, science, video production and editing, and ASL; as well as enjoyed sports and arts and crafts. Donated scholarship monies supported some children's attendance. Camp staff, counselors and volunteers came from an array of majors, including education, social work, math education, theatre, PER, and ASL. *Camp Discovery* will be offered again in the summer of 2020 (tentative dates are July 13-24).

An interdisciplinary collaborative effort is underway on campus focusing on emergency preparedness and people of disabilities. The effort is to incorporate the expertise from environmental and social scientists (along with community-based organizations (CBOs), disability people organizations (DPOs) and community members. The Gallaudet team includes two faculty members from **Science, Technology and Mathematics (STM)**, Dr. Caroline Solomon with expertise in Environmental Science and Dr. Roseanne Rushing with expertise in Public Health, and one faculty member from the **International Development MA (IDMA)**, Dr. Audrey Cooper. They are partnering with University of Rochester, University of Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico Sea Grant, FEMA, Federación Nacional Puertorriqueña de Sordos, and Discovering Deaf Worlds, to examine the increased frequency of natural disasters due to climate change and the inherent risks posed for deaf communities. The goal is to hold a summer institute for a pilot activity to address the issues through a well-developed research agenda incorporating contributions and active participation of deaf and hard of hearing people. The findings will be shared with the research community and more importantly at the local level with implementing partners.

The Information Technology Program within the **Department of Science, Technology, and Mathematics (STM)** has been collaborating with Northrop Grumman in the area of cyber security. For the second year in a row, the program hosted an IT Summit to build a concentration within the major to support this high demand career pathway. The department is also spearheading the establishment of a data

science program, a multi-disciplinary program focusing on the use of scientific methods, processes, algorithms and systems to extract knowledge and insights from both structured and unstructured data. It is currently becoming one of the most in-demand careers fueled by the age of big data analyses.

Within the context of multicultural curriculum transformation work initiated by the Provost for faculty and staff in Academic Affairs and with support from the **Graduate School**, the Council on Graduate Education (CGE) formed an ad-hoc committee in Fall 2016 to establish a core diversity requirement that will apply to all graduate students in degree seeking and certificate programs across the school. This committee has faculty representatives from each graduate program as well as graduate student representative and is receiving external consultation from a specialist in multicultural education and curriculum transformation as well as guidance from another university that has implemented a similar requirement for their graduate students. The ad-hoc committee is expected to submit its proposal to CGE for review by the end of this year, with anticipated approval by the Faculty Senate in Spring 2020 and implementation of the initiative in phases, starting in Fall 2020.

The **Graduate Admissions** team is adopting several new strategies as part of a more aggressive push in recruitment and conversion to completed applications and acceptances of our admission offers: (i) maximizing our use of the Radius CRM platform, e.g. using a plug-in to reach prospective students via text messaging in addition to email, (ii) centralizing the inquiry process across program directors / coordinators for better tracking and follow-up, and (iii) leveraging the graduate assistantships from the Graduate School to assist with social media marketing for their respective programs.

Center for Continuing and Online Education (CCOE) is partnering with Gallaudet Technology Services (GTS), the Finance Office and the Registrar's Office to centralize registration and billing functions for continuing education programs along with undergraduate and graduate programs, with the goal of making our operations more automated and efficient and freeing up resources to support the marketing and growth of continuing education programs. Our anticipated timeline for integrating the processes is by the start of Summer 2020.

An internal advisory group has been formed to guide the **Burstein Center for Excellence in Leadership and Innovation's (BCELI)** strategic direction and activities. A subcommittee has been charged with developing a draft purpose and framework that will guide the development of programs to be offered through the center. The draft will be presented to the full advisory group for feedback in the fall semester, after which an action plan will be developed for each year. In the meantime, **BCELI** has supported a number of leadership training programs including leadership training for over 80 Deaf women from all states of Nigeria on June 23-27. BCELI is also partnering with Discovering Deaf Worlds (DDW) to offer a Global Deaf Leadership course this spring that will be targeted at developing leadership capacity in international students, who can then bring these skills to their home country.

Student Success and Academic Quality

Student Success & Academic Quality (SSAQ) currently provides student support services including academic advising and career consulting from two different Units--Academic Advising and the Career Center—respectively. This organizational structure creates a barrier for students' holistic understanding of their pathway to success because students are often engaged in separate conversations about their academic and career goals. SSAQ is redesigning these support services to integrate the academic journey with career education. Academic and Career advisors will intentionally link academic goals and pathways with career goals and pathways beginning with their initial meetings with advisees. In their first semester, students will be oriented to the milestones and benchmarks required for them to

navigate their student success journey as they explore career pathways through experiential learning and internships. As they continue consulting with their academic and career advisor, they will explicitly discuss how academic programs and the classes they are taking support their career goals. In addition, the first year experience is being redesigned as part of the comprehensive general education redesign discussed above to infuse career readiness and core career competencies into the students' first-year experience through co-curricular engagement, internships, service learning, and other high-impact practices.

The Office of International Affairs

Gallaudet's objectives to infuse a global aspect into the learning experience for everyone at the University, advance international students as assets to the campus community, and favor transformative worldwide partnerships culminated in 2019 when the **Gallaudet Internationalization (IZN) Laboratory** completed its 18-month comprehensive review, earning high praise from the American Council of Education (ACE), which has led 130 universities through the IZN process. The two-year planning effort involved a core group of 80 people representing all campus constituents. The findings of the planning stage were condensed into three grand themes: internationalize the learning experience; advance international students as assets and ensure their equitable participation in all campus activities; and favor multi-faceted global partnerships and transformative partnerships. A team of peer reviewers from ACE evaluated the recommendations. One reviewer, Dr. Susan Sutton, formerly the senior international officer at Purdue University, endorsed the University's plans, saying, "I'm impressed with what Gallaudet wants to do to enhance its role as the heartbeat of the world." Another reviewer, Dr. Robin Helms, director of ACE's Center for Internationalization and Global Engagement and Gallaudet's primary IZN advisor, praised the University, saying, "You've tailored the process to the way Gallaudet works and modified it as needed. You had a plan, but you were flexible. I commend you for your hard work. A really big pat on the back for a stellar process." Helms shared ACE's final peer review report on September 12, 2019, and the campus will be asked for input during an engagement activity on October 11. Gallaudet's **Office of International Affairs** is developing an action plan to re-organize and collaborate in implementing the recommendations made during the IZN Lab process, while working with the President's Office of Planning to integrate internationalization themes into the university's forthcoming strategic planning effort.

This report has highlighted some of the many accomplishments within the division of Academic Affairs from May-September, 2019. I recognize with gratitude the faculty, staff, students, the Academic Affairs administrative team, President Cordano and my colleagues on the Executive Team for their energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to our students and our mission of academic excellence. Our primary focus is on student success—to support and prepare our students for lifelong learning, success in the workplace, and responsible citizenship in the global community.