Renowned fiction writer Carmen Maria Machado reads at Suffolk on March 5. Author of *Her Body and Other Parties*, winner of the Bard Fiction Prize, and finalist for the National Book Award, Machado read one piece of fiction and one piece of nonfiction that both grew from the same moment she experienced, offering examples of how both genres can build art from the same experience in different ways. You can watch the full hour-long reading and Q&A, including the introduction by our own Wyatt Bonikowski at https://suensemble.suffolk.edu/hapi/v1/contents/permalinks/Xn43BzZq/view.

You Can Stream Videos of Readings from English Faculty Lecture Series

This will be much easier if you’re reading the PDF of this, but with the links below, you can watch each event from the English Faculty Lecture Series from the past year.

From SP18: **Gerald Richman’s** "The Literature of Beacon Hill 1788-2018" (Run time 17:17)
https://suensemble.suffolk.edu/hapi/v1/contents/permalinks/x6R5HgEe/view

From FA18: **Amy Monticello’s** "The Darker The Night, The Brighter The Stars," a reading of nonfiction at the intersection of pregnancy and grief (Run time 1:14:59)
https://suensemble.suffolk.edu/hapi/v1/contents/permalinks/Ys2e5M8D/view

From SP19: **Leslie Eckel’s** "Failing Beautifully: Utopias and Dystopias in American Literature" (Run time 1:23:10)
https://suensemble.suffolk.edu/hapi/v1/contents/permalinks/k6S2Mec7/view
Calendar

**Meetings and Workshops**

English Department Meets: 12:15-1:30 p.m., Poetry Center, March 28, April 23

UCC Meets: Thursdays, April 4 and April 25

EPC Meetings: April 9, and Wednesday, May 1 from 10-1.

Faculty Assembly will meet on May 15 in Sargent B18 with reception in somerset Cafeteria from 1-3 p.m.

First-Year Writing Program Professional Development Workshop Thursday, April 18 12:15-1:30 in 73 Tremont 8002.

**Events**

April 8: English Department Awards and Sigma Tau Delta Induction Ceremony, 4:30-6 p.m. in the Poetry Center.

April 9: David Ferry reading 7 p.m. in the Poetry Center.

April 18: Alumni Poets Reading with Mitch Manning and Chris Siteman 7 p.m. in the Poetry Center.

April 19: Honors Thesis Presentations 10 a.m.-noon in the Poetry Center.

May 17: Senior Brunch 12-2 p.m. in the Poetry Center

On June 20 from 6-8 p.m. in the Poetry Center, *Salamander* will host an issue release party for issue #48, guest-edited by Fred Marchant, and a retirement celebration for Jennifer Barber.

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Letter from the Chair

**Consider what we do**

I generally endorse humility as a virtue—except when it comes to Suffolk University’s English Department. Why bother? There’s too much praise. Too bold? Well, take a look at this newsletter.

Consider the English faculty’s commitment to teaching—in and out of the classroom.

Consider the list of faculty publications, including George Kalogeris’s award-winning poetry collection.

Consider all the faculty presentations, conference papers, and talks.

Consider the caliber of majors who graduate from our department.

Consider the writers we invite to campus, including Carmen Maria Machado. And then consider this: The content of this newsletter captures only a fraction of the amazing work we do as a department.

One source of genuine pride for me is that we excel at serving the broad range of students here at Suffolk.

Consider the number of English majors in the honors program, the number of students who write honors theses, and the number of faculty who teach honors classes.

Suffolk, however, also has a proud tradition of access, perhaps the feature I most admire about this institution.

I cannot praise highly enough the outstanding work of the First-Year Writing Program and the ways it provides targeted instruction for all students. Some incoming students are well-prepared for college-level writing—but others are not. For those students, the instruction they receive from the conscientious, thoughtful, and dedicated faculty in the writing program is, quite simply, inspiring. What better way to provide students with the means to excel in their college courses and to participate in our democracy than by helping to improve their critical writing, reading, and thinking skills?

To add to our department’s embarrassment of riches: José Araguz, a gifted and talented poet and teacher, will be joining our faculty next year. Professor Araguz will teach creative writing and will also edit *Salamander*, our nationally-respected literary journal.

In addition to celebrating José, I would like to take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks and gratitude to so many people in the department for everything you’ve done throughout this search: those who attended the teaching demonstrations, those who stopped by to meet the candidates during the informal gatherings, those who went out to dinner, and those who gave campus walking tours. Every single candidate commented on our department’s warmth and generosity—at length.

Our past and present are promising, and our future is even more so. My sincere gratitude to the hardworking and compassionate faculty members of the English department.

—Bryan Trabold
**Why veterans?**

Visiting writer Jon Chopan signs copies of his newest story collection *Veterans Crisis Hotline* following a reading in the Poetry Center on Feb. 21. Chopan is an assistant professor of Creative Writing at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, FL. His collection won the 2017 Grace Paley Prize for Short Fiction from AWP (The Association of Writers & Writing Programs). He also briefly discussed the one question everyone always asks about this book: why do you write about veterans if you’re not a veteran? His answers are longer and smarter than will fit here, but he said that one of the things fiction does best is to imagine other perspectives, but it can’t do that carelessly or exploitatively. It needs interest, curiosity, empathy, research, and a lot of work.

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**Brief Interviews with English Alums**

**Gabrielle Winant**  
**Class of 2015**

Each semester, we’ll catch up with one of our alumni to see what they’ve been up to, and to hear anything they’d like to say to current students and faculty—or to their younger selves.

If you are or know an alum we can feature, let us know! Email jwtucker@suffolk.edu.

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**Q:** What industries have you worked in since you graduated from Suffolk in 2015? Give us a brief professional narrative.

**GW:** Not long after I graduated, I began working at a tech start-up downtown as a social media manager. I quickly made the transition from social media to working on large scale marketing campaigns, and eventually took over a majority of the company’s communications. I left the tech start-up last year for an academic publishing company. I am now the North American Marketing Manager for Author Engagement at Emerald Group Publishing.

**Q:** How has your English degree helped you professionally? What skills or knowledge do you regularly use at work?

**GW:** My work revolves around storytelling. I am charged with distilling information and synthesizing it into a compelling narrative. I’m fortunate enough to be marketing to academic writers where I am able to use the analysis techniques I was taught in my classes to market their work to the public.

**Q:** What advice do you have for current English majors as they think about transitioning from college to the workforce?

**GW:** The options for English majors are limitless, seriously. The ability to communicate effectively through prose is so undeniably valuable. Also, be sure to maintain the connections you have with peers and your professors. Networking brings opportunities you would never imagine!
Kalogeris's poems both study Greek and live Greek

George Kalogeris's mother stood washing dishes at the kitchen sink. Her son walked in after a particularly rough day learning the Greek language in class. He'd had a dispute with the teacher over the pronunciation of a single word. He was at a disadvantage, he complained to his mother. He was supposed to be learning the nuances of one of the world's great languages, but at home, he'd only ever been taught English and this "peasant Greek."

"Picture the water stopping. Her hands folding the towel, laying it where it goes. Her turning in the way she would have always turned in moments like that. Her eyes. She knew how to say that word."

"This teacher of yours," she said. "Where does she come from?"

"Athens," George said.

"I knew it," she said, and turned back again.

She was not Athenian. She was Spartan. And the word was "sink."

That story came up when Kalogeris talked about his recent book of poems, Guide to Greece. Like him, this collection carries the influences of high academic study of classical Greek literature and history, and intimate personal moments growing up in America with parents from isolated Greek villages. The mission is not to reconcile these things, he said, but to represent living with them both. His parents' experience was one not emphasized in his formal education, and his formal education steeped him in a Greekness that was outside his parents' experience.

"They felt alienated from certain kinds of Greek language," he said. "That high diction. They may have felt it was more aristocratic speech. They were speaking a language rooted in a place."

Those places were Sparta and Arcadia. These were the areas in which a Second-Century prose writer named Pausanias spent a lot of time. He walked the entirety of mainland Greece. His meticulous reporting on the sacred sites throughout the country, detailing history, myth, architecture, became a travelogue titled Guide to Greece.

Throughout Kalogeris's poetry collection of the same name, he's in dialogue with Pausanias, sometimes directly, sometimes through working with the myths and history that persist today from the ancient times of this same place.

"I wanted the classical and ancient Greek to be part of a living tradition," Kalogeris said. "Not a direct lineage. These are poems that retell classical myths juxtaposed to personal childhood stories. Being a working class Greek kid, you use what you're given."

What he was given straddled socioeconomic classes, continents, millennia, the personal and the academic. He's far from the first to retell myths in modern ways, but there's something particularly organic in how that plays out in this collection.

In the introductory poem to the collection, "Basil," looks through the eyes of a boy Kalogeris, just barely open from sleep on any number of endless Sundays where his father, a butcher, was already up, blessing all the parts of their home by sprinkling water from a sprig of basil.

"We were Catholic," he said. "I bet he never new how much older, and pagan that kind of ritual was."

Kalogeris noticed such rituals that persisted across and despite history. He noticed words that traveled through folk songs and so sounded the same in his parents' mouths as they did in classical times. These poems notice those things and purposefully do those things. At times they talk about rituals; at times they are rituals. They are incantatory. They are worlds made of the things that made Kalogeris himself. So when asked about a poetry reading he put together for a Greek Independence Day, he approached cautiously. "I'm wary of theme parks," he said. "I tell the poets not to try to be thematic. It doesn't need a Greek theme in order to be Greek."

He's hesitant to have any one person claim to embody what it means to be Greek. That's oversimplifying, overgeneralizing, tokenizing. He'd rather poets be the people they are and look honestly at whatever interests them, which will inevitably reflect their own unique manifestation of their Greekness. The idea here is that, as long as you're not trying to pander to a theme or a stereotype, what you write—no matter what you write about—will reflect your way of looking at the world, and that way will have been made by whatever experiences and identities you carry.

As with Kalogeris, some of that is inherited, and some of that is cultivated, but the work will reflect it all. You just have to use what you're given.
All the usual questions for a new hire

Araguz will join the department in Fall

This is totally not fair to our recent hires who did not get this kind of space or attention in the newsletter. But since we had time and space this time, we decided to start giving it where we could, and to keep doing it in the future.

New arrivals often get bombarded with the same basic questions, so we thought we’d get that out of the way here for our new hire José Araguz, who will join the department in Fall 2019 to both specialize in creative writing (poetry), and to take Jenny Barber’s place working with Katie Sticca to edit our nationally recognized literary journal *Salamander*. Here’s a brief chat we had with him:

Q: What’s your educational background?
JA: I have a Bachelor’s in Creative Writing from the College of Santa Fe; a Masters of Fine Arts from New York University (also CW, poetry); and a Ph.D. in Creative Writing and Comparative Literature.

Q: Where are you most recently coming from?
JA: Most recently, I’ll be coming from Linfield College in McMinnville, Oregon, where I taught classes in English and creative writing as well as served as faculty advisor for *Camas*, their literary magazine. Along with teaching multi-genre introduction to creative writing courses, I taught a composition-style writing course centered on Latinx Poetry & Culture; intermediate courses in poetry and creative nonfiction; and an upper level topics course on speculative writing (poetry & prose in the genres of sci-fi, fantasy, horror, and magical realism).

Q: Where are you originally coming from?
JA: I was born and raised in Corpus Christi, Texas, which is two hours away from Matamoros, Mexico, where my family is originally from.

Q: What are your specific areas of interest and expertise?
JA: My main areas of interest are Latinx poetics and hybrid forms, the latter a term that includes the lyric essay as well as prose poems, aphorisms, haiku, haibun, and other forms. I am also a book reviewer and am interested in both traditional and creative literary criticism. My reviews have appeared in *Poetry International*, *Queen Mob’s Teahouse*, and *The Bind* as well as on my poetry blog, *The Friday Influence*. I have also been sharing erasure/blackout poems on my Instagram poetry account @ poetryamano.

Q: Is anybody coming with you?
JA: My wife Ani, a disabled artist.

Q: It’s too early to be too specific, but do you yet have any plans for *Salamander*?
JA: I’m looking forward to continuing the traditions of the magazine and contributing my own part to the great community fostered by the magazine and Suffolk as a whole.

Inclusive classrooms face the "Paradox of Tolerance"

In a lively and well-attended workshop this Spring, Robin Mangino and Scott Votel led English and Writing faculty through a reflective discussion on cultivating inclusive classrooms. From identity issues like race, gender, religion, disability, and sexuality to more amorphous factors like political orientation this session mostly focused on choosing readings, designing class activities, and moderating class and group discussions in ways everyone could access.

Faculty described their strategies for not ignoring these issues, and preparing materials with honesty and sensitivity toward them. But, like so many Americans right now, everyone seemed to have experienced Karl Popper’s "Paradox of Tolerance," in that faculty are often faced with the challenge of making room for diverse perspectives without condoning perspectives rooted in hatred, oppression, and intolerance.

Faculty shared many titles and authors whose work helped them understand and advocate for vulnerable minority perspectives and identities, whether part of the course reading, or as material teachers can draw from directly when confronted by a (to put it politely) "less-informed" student comment.

Another strategy: Asking students to cite textual evidence helps keep students honest and focused on the actual argument at hand. Another: Simple paraphrase from a teacher can also be powerful. Restating an offensive comment can illuminate the intolerant things a student may not have realized they’d said. One question persisted, though: What do you do when the student absolutely does realize their offense, and means it?
On January 10 at Coolidge Corner Theatre, Professor Quentin Miller and Senior English Major Heba Munir led a post-screening discussion of the film *If Beale Street Could Talk*, writer/director Barry Jenkin's adaptation of the James Baldwin novel by the same name.

"At this talk, I spoke mostly about the intersection between gender and incarceration," Munir said. "I tried to highlight how black men's incarceration does not just impact black men. It also impacts the black women that surround them. That's often understated in African American literature, and I'm trying to give these black women a voice just like how Baldwin did so effortlessly in his novel. It's important to mention that I'm not arguing that black women have it worse than black men, but that they both have their own separate struggles, and they need to hear each other's narratives to move forward, but that is proven difficult through how society has restricted them."

In describing what it was like joining her thesis advisor as a peer, she said, "I was nervous and honored to talk to so many people who genuinely valued my perspective. I've learned through that experience, that although I am only 22, I can still be an advocate and make differences in my sphere and that speaks a lot to what I believe is my purpose. I want to help other people, specifically people who have been marginalized. That's why I'm going to law school. I am going to be an advocate for people who have been put at a disadvantage by their gender and/or race. This discussion was a reminder and proof that through the right mentors, like Professor Miller, and through your own passion and drive you can make a difference and people will listen."

Her thesis is on gender, incarceration, and race in at the works of Morrison, Gaines, and Baldwin. She'd been accepted by several law schools by press time, with more to hear from. She hasn't made any final decisions, but assures us that law school is just the next step to becoming a better advocate.
Conferences, awards, talks, teaching news, research, travel

**Elif Armbruster** Following her fall talk on Louisa May Alcott at the Boston Public Library in September, Elif attended the SSAWW (Society for the Study of American Women Writers) conference in Denver in November where she organized and participated in a roundtable on "Resisting the Canonical Syllabus: Teaching Nasty Women Writers." Her presentation centered on Louisa May Alcott and Fanny Fern. She also presented a paper on a panel on Female Friendship entitled "Sisters by Design: The Intertwined lives of Edith Wharton, Minnie Cadwalader Jones, and Beatrix Farrand," which she was asked to submit to the "Legacy Best Paper Contest--SSAWW Conference, 2018" (results not yet in). For Suffolk’s Public Domain Day on January 31, 2019, Elif interviewed Whitney Scharer about her new book, *The Age of Light* (Little Brown), which reimagines the relationship between photographer Man Ray and his muse and fellow photographer, Lee Miller. Scharer’s book is one of the most anticipated titles of 2019. On March 7, Elif gave a talk about her new course, "Rebel Girls and Nasty Women: American Women Writers and Literary Activism" for the Sawyer Library’s Speaker Series.

**Lisa Celovsky**, Associate Dean and member of the English Department, has been promoted to full professor. She also co-facilitated "Lessons from Creativity Studies: Teaching Honors Students about Risk-Taking and Resilience" at the National Collegiate Honors Council Conference, Boston, MA, November 2018.

**Leslie Eckel** was this semester’s featured speaker at the English Department’s Faculty Lecture Series in the Poetry Center where she presented "Failing Beautifully: Utopias + Dystopias in American Literature." She’s teaching two sections of Young Adult Literature this spring, one Honors and one non-Honors. Students will be reading and discussing (among other books) Angie Thomas’s *The Hate U Give*, a bestselling YA novel published in 2017 (and released on film in 2018). She’s planning to teach a new 100-level course on Immigrant Stories in Fall 2019, which "explores the stories of individuals and groups who have traveled to the United States—a country that the poet Walt Whitman celebrated as a 'nation of nations'—in search of greater freedom and opportunity. While some discover their version of the American Dream, others find themselves lost in exile, caught in between identities, and in danger due to their undocumented status. Students will analyze fiction, nonfiction, and film and visit an immigrant advocacy coalition in Boston."

**Hannah Hudson** will be giving two conference talks this spring: “Botany and Empire in Eighteenth-Century Magazines,” at the annual meeting of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies in Denver, CO in March, and “Eliza Haywood’s Periodical Afterlives,” at “Eliza Haywood: 300 Years of Love in Excess,” hosted by Purdue University in April. Honors Senior History and Literature major **Anna Prawidica** will be joining her at this latter conference, presenting on her senior thesis. This fall she taught ENG 301, the department’s literary criticism seminar for majors, on the topic of the eighteenth-century novel. Students explored the eighteenth-century-related holdings at Houghton Library’s rare book room, among other things. She also reinvented her Fantasy Fiction seminar as an Honors course, at the end of which students worked in teams to design board games based on their knowledge of fantasy, which they brought to the Honors Colloquium for everyone to test. This semester, she’s teaching Jane Austen: Page, Stage, and Screen with a great group of budding Austen scholars.

**Peter Jeffrey** will offer a seminar at the Onassis Institute as part of the International Cavafy Summer School titled "Cavafy’s Orientations" that will focus on his Orientalism and formative life in England. (onassis.org/whats-on/international-cavafy-summer-school-2019-cavafys-orientations)

**George Kalogeris** read with David Slavitt on Jan 24 at the Poetry Center and organized the readings for Greek Boston’s World Poetry dDy/Greek Independence day event on March 25 at the Greek Institute in Cambridge featuring local Greek and American poets.

**Amy Monticello** co-facilitated "Lessons from Creativity Studies: Teaching Honors Students about Risk-Taking and Resilience" at the National Collegiate Honors Council Conference, Boston, MA, November 2018. She was a panelist on "Assaying the Work of Nonfiction Studies: Craft and Pedagogy" at the NonfictionNow Conference in Phoenix, AZ, October 2018. She was the featured speaker at the English Department’s Faculty Lecture Series in the Poetry Center, where she presented "The Darker the Night, the Brighter the Stars: Writing Grief" in the Poetry Center in November 2018.


**Salamander** will travel to the Association of Writing Programs (AWP) conference in Portland, OR, in March. On June 20 from 6-8 p.m. in the Poetry Center, *Salamander* will host an issue release party for issue #48, guest-edited by **Fred Marchant**, and a retirement celebration for **Jennifer Barber**.

**Bryan Trabold** and Marjorie Pritchard, deputy managing editor for the editorial page at The Boston Globe, held an on-stage conversation titled "The Enemy of the People? Freedom of the Press and Democracy" at the Ford Hall Forum on Feb. 6. Together, they examined The Globe’s response to Trump’s efforts to discredit the media. He was tapped for his scholarly expertise in this area, exemplified in his recent book *Rhetorics of Resistance: Opposition Journalism in Apartheid South Africa*. 
Scholarly, Creative, and Professional Publications

**Elif Armbruster**  

**Wyatt Bonikowski**  
Two very short fictions: "Black Plastic" and "House Sparrow" at *Wigleaf* (wigleaf.com).

**Olivia Cerrone**  


Story: "No White Saviors," an excerpt from her forthcoming novel *Displaced*, will appear in the spring 2019 issue of *The Compassion Anthology*.


She was recently nominated for Pushcart Prize.

**Lisa Celovsky**  
Essay: "Paradise Lost—On Trial" in *This Rough Magic*, a journal dedicated to teaching approaches for medieval and renaissance literature. The essay is inspired and informed by all of her former classes and students in ENG 335 Milton. It is about the semester-long class project that they all participated in to transform *Paradise Lost* into a courtroom drama. Students took roles and constructed legal documents to put God, Satan, Adam, and Eve each on trial for the fall of humankind.

**Hannah Hudson**  


**Peter Jeffreys**  
Essay “The Cavafy Enigma” in English and in Greek translation as part of the official launch of the recently digitized Cavafy Archive by the Onassis Foundation, a remarkably rare example of a major poet’s archive becoming public. (https://www.onassis.org/el/initiatives/cavafy-archive/cavafy-enigma)

**Jon Lee**  
Poem: "Terroir," in the journal *One*, vol. 17. (one.jacarpress.com/issue-17/#-Jon%20O.%20Lee)


Poem: “[You were cut from the womb Joshua—].” *Lily Poetry Review*, vol. 1, no 1, Winter 2019, pp. 4-5.


His poem "Ring Buoy" was nominated by *The Inflectionist Review* for a Pushcart Prize.

**Amy Monticello**  
Essay: "My Only Child Scatters My Ashes" has been accepted for publication in *CALYX, A Journal of Art and Literature by Women*.


**Salamander**  
A poem from *Salamander #47*, Gail Mazur’s "At Land’s End," has been chosen for inclusion in *Best American Poetry* 2019.

A story from *Salamander #45*, Cady Vishniac’s "Girls Girls Girls," has been chosen for inclusion in *New Stories from the Midwest* 2018.

A story, "Mastermind" by Jared Lipof has been selected by Jonathan Lethem for inclusion in *The Best American Mystery Stories* 2019 anthology.

**Christopher Siteman**  
Poem: "What’s Always," accepted at *Sugar House Review*.


**Jason Tucker**  
Essay: "Drowning Catfish," originally published in *River Teeth: A Journal of Nonfiction Narrative*, will be republished next year in *River Teeth* at 20, an anthology collecting 30 pieces published by the journal in its first 20 years.

**Gerard Waggett’s**  
Story: "My Rudy" placed third in a contest run by *The Writer*. "The news came as a complete surprise," he said, "because I had entered the contest last spring and totally forgotten about it." The theme of the contest was "The Coming Change." His story deals with a man whose lover is leaving for conversion camp the next morning. "I had written the story many years ago and read it aloud in the Poetry Center in Sawyer Library," he said. "Back then Jim Johnson and Jeff Ousborne hosted an annual reading where adjunct faculty members could share their creative endeavors." The story will soon be posted on *The Writer’s* website.
What's good for disabled students is good for everyone.

This may be a tired example, but it's still an, um, accessible one. Curb cuts. Those little ramps we now build into (most) sidewalks to remove an unnecessary obstacle for people with mobility impairments don't just benefit wheelchair users. It is the same when you design your course, your assignments, your attendance policies.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a set of ideas and practices that ask us to think of accessibility not as an answer to a problem student or something we have to retrofit into our course, but to avoid the need to scramble to redesign our classes by building accessible pedagogical infrastructure in the first place.

Andrew Cioffi, director of the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at Suffolk, and Assistant Director Diane Dichtenberg visited one of the First-Year Writing program’s Professional Development Workshops last fall. There, they did field a lot of questions about individual student accommodations, but they also encouraged faculty to build in some flexibility into the assignments and course policies before students confront obstacles and have to ask for them.

"Accessibility has been a big focus for our office and our field for a number of years, but accessibility for students with disabilities does not tell the whole story," Cioffi said. "When it comes to course content, accessible design is good design and can have benefits for all students, especially diverse learners. We have tended to think of accessibility from a compliance standpoint, which is ultimately reactive. Ideally, we will start to focus more on universal design for learning, which is ultimately proactive."

Consider attendance and participation policies

Maybe a student has mobility issues and it is unsafe for them to negotiate snowy sidewalks and unshovelled curb cuts. Maybe a student has a disability that makes their capacity widely unpredictable from one day to the next. Maybe a student has such anxiety that asserting themselves in full-class discussions is impossible. Maybe a student has an invisible disability and needs to be met in trust and good faith.

Already, we recognize and negotiate disability-related attendance and participation issues. Either we can work directly with the student to make plans to adapt, or we can include ODS, who will facilitate accommodations (or help deny them if the needs are beyond what is possible). Generally, students with such attendance issues must still do the work, but must do it in different ways and on a modified schedule.

It can be tricky in many English and Writing classes where attendance is so intimately tied to participation, whether that involves class discussion, peer collaboration, or in-class exercises and activities.

Cioffi encouraged us to consider the pressure we use any given pedagogical strategy to apply, to focus on the goals of any given classroom technique, and to ask if our prescribed methods are absolutely essential to reaching those goals, or if there are other ways to accomplish the same things. Making an accommodation, he explained, does not mean a student does not have to participate or do the work.

"There are three main principles of universal design for learning that are effectively described as the ‘why, the what, and the how of learning,’” he said. "If we approach course design with an understanding that diverse learners may present with a
variety of ways to engage 'the whys, whats and hows of learning,' we are on track to understanding UDL. All learners have strengths and weaknesses. Some groups of learners have greater discrepancy between their strengths and their weaknesses, or may have a weakness that directly relates to either pedagogy or a method of assessment, which could put them at a distinct disadvantage in a traditional course.

"If a new topic is presented in a certain way (i.e. lecture), or a student's mastery is assessed in a specific way (i.e. exam), try to think of just one alternative way to achieve the same result. Providing students with some ability to choose how they engage can empower more students with diverse abilities to reach a level of mastery."

Like (well-shoveled) curb cuts, such flexibility can extend beyond students with diagnosable disabilities to those who struggle for other reasons, those who feel like they don't have good excuses for themselves, those who feel undeserving of help and so may not ask for it. Building in ways to make up for absences, for alternative assessments in participation, for ways of empowering students to emphasize what they can do—rather than what they can’t—to grow as much through the work of the class as they possibly can: all this helps everyone. It allows students to individualize (within reason) within the environment you build for them. And building that environment first is far less work and stress than adapting after the fact.

**Students with disabilities should register with ODS**

There are limits, of course, to how permissive baseline course designs can be and still accomplish the goals of the course. Online course work, for example, can never fully substitute for the concrete classroom experience. So for student needs that extend beyond what faculty can reasonably plan for in their syllabi, it’s important that those students work with ODS so that this office can advocate for them, to learn how to advocate for themselves, and to help strategize with faculty and students the best ways to proceed. There are many technological resources available, both for sending and receiving course content, which ODS can help faculty and students find and learn to use.

One consistent thing students say after visiting ODS is how easy and supportive it was. Unlike what they may have experienced in high school, Suffolk’s ODS office is not operating on the assumption that students with disabilities are lying. There’s not an insistence on verifications from doctors. Just the reassurance of that alone can make the difference between a student reaching out and not, of finishing the coursework and not, of graduating and not.

Anne-Marie Womack, Director of Writing at Tulane University, understands that it sounds right to say you treat all students the same, disabled and not, but that this is misguided. It erases the fact of disability.

"Narrow views of ability, moreover, do not take into account all the ways that every body is continually culturally accommodated," she wrote in an article on the NCTE website. "We all need time to take a test, we all use tools to write, we all use certain methods to compose. When we forget that all these measures are accommodating, it’s easy for us to single out disability accommodations as the exception."

One things this approach asks us to stop is our initial impulse to be punitive—to secure our authority with hard-line punishments extrinsic to the goals of the coursework at hand.

**Resources** (HT Nick Frangipane and Ashlie Liss)


Womack, Anne-Marie. “Students Should Change the University: Disability and Difference in the Classroom.” *National Council of Teachers of English* blog. http://www2.ncte.org/blog/2018/07/disability-and-difference-in-the-university-classroom/?fbclid=IwAR0wOkwNBu0YNvKvNZ9YShsT5gepEZRY1VkU7Mo1rBz-V6hnT4Q8tSrigWo0
Students in Hannah Hudson’s Seminar for Freshmen class "Fantasy Fiction from Beowulf to Uprooted"—an honors section centered around fantasy fiction—designed board games based on the books they read. Above, students and faculty test drive a game (based on "Life" and created by a group of five students that adapted several fantasy books from the class) at the Fall 2018 Honors Symposium. Clockwise from bottom left: Conor O’Creane, a student whose face we can’t see, Amy Monticello, Nick Frangipane, Megan Patch (one of the student game designers), Hannah Hudson, Pamela Saunders, and Kaylin O’Dell.

Attend session on responding to ELL writing

If you’re interested in learning more of the research and current theory, and in improving your skills in responding to the writing of English Language Learners, consider attending the session Jamie Bondar and Elizabeth Robinson, director of the Education Studies Program in the Sociology Department, will present at this year’s CTSE Symposium on Innovation in Teaching & Learning on Tuesday, May 14, in Sargent Hall.

Titled, appropriately, "Responding to the Writing of English Language Learners," this session will run from 10:40-11:55 a.m., and aims to help attendees respond more effectively to the writing of English Language Learners, both international and domestic.

Drawing on scholarship in the fields of language acquisition, composition, and writing center studies, this session will outline best practices in responding to the writing of this growing cohort of students.

Learning activities and discussion of sample student writing will further illustrate the ways that attendees can best support the writing development of ELLs.

Diversity and inclusion seems to be a theme across much of the sessions. This year’s keynote speaker will be Dr. Tia Brown McNair, Vice President in the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Student Success at Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) in Washington, DC.

For more sessions, information, and to register, visit https://sites.suffolk.edu/ctsesymposium/.