Fall 2005 Mellon Salon

Thursday, 10 November 2005
Morrison Library – 101 Doe Library
4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

GOALS

• to convene Mellon Fellows from the three cohorts to share their experiences implementing changes in their courses and assignments
• to share good practices and strategies for advancing research opportunities in undergraduate coursework
• to generate ideas for engaging students’ interest and commitment to the learning goals of the class
• to entice students to engage in the course beyond grades and requirements
• to reflect on and contrast the ways in which different course assignments are designed
• to strengthen personal connections among Mellon Fellows and between Fellows and Mellon Partners

AGENDA

Facilitators: Mary Kelsey and Brian Powers

4:00  Sign in
4:10  Welcome & Introductions
4:15  Presentation by Brian Powers (10 minutes)
4:25  Presentation by Mary Kelsey (10 minutes)
4:35  Small group discussions
4:55  Facilitated large discussion; reporting results of small groups
5:25  Wrap up | Summary of significant findings
5:30  Networking | Socializing
Discussion Questions

- Please break into small groups of 3-4 people.
- Choose one of the following questions to discuss.
- You will have 20 minutes to spend in small group discussion followed by 20 minutes of reporting back to the group as a whole.

Q1 What approaches have you tried to engage students’ commitment to the learning goals of your class?

- Consider any of the following groups: the overworked, the unit grabbers, the requirement fillers, the under-prepared, the overwhelmed?
- Which approaches with these groups have worked and why?
- Which approaches have been less successful and why do you think they have been less successful? What modifications might you make to insure success?

Q2 What elements of your course challenge students to question their preconceived notions of the topics covered by your course?

- ... to question themselves?
- ... to question how the world works and the role that knowledge plays in it?
- If students are discomforted by a challenge to previously held assumptions, how do you deal with this?

Q3 What approaches have you taken to help students understand the relevance and importance of independent research?

- How do you help students overcome their apprehensiveness about the research process?
- How much guidance do you offer to launch them on their independent research?
- How to you keep them interested in research that unfolds over an extended period of time?
- What are some of the barriers that inhibit student involvement in active, research-based learning and how to you help students to overcome them?

Q4 What role might student collaboration and teamwork play in the research process and how might you build collaboration into the research assignment?