At a Glance

SPRING 2011

Classroom Innovations: For the Final Class, Nutrition and Health Students Play Iron Chef with a Twist

Students studying swallowing disorders at the Steinhardt School during intersession finished their class with the Iron Chef Dysphagia Challenge, a competition modeled on the popular cooking show.

Interdisciplinary Case-Based Management of Dysphagia brought together students from the varied disciplines of communicative sciences and disorders and nutrition and food studies to learn how to manage patients with different stages of dysphagia, a swallowing disorder.

“The basis for the course was collaboration,” said Erin Embry, an associate director of the master’s program in Communicative Sciences and Disorders (CSD).

Researchers to Look at Housing Upheaval for Clues to Students’ Learning Difficulties

Amy Schwartz and Leanna Stiefel, professors who hold joint appointments at the Steinhardt School and the Wagner School of Public Service, are among NYU researchers who have been awarded an $800,000 grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Schwartz and Stiefel of the Institute for Education and Social Policy, are co-primary investigators on the project that will study the effects of housing instability due to foreclosure on children’s educational outcomes.

Jane Goodall Gives Keynote Address at Sci-Ed Expo; Gift for Science Education Center Announced

Creativity and invention were on display at the second annual Sci-Ed Innovators Expo & Symposium, where more than 250 budding scientists—public school students from local middle and high schools—descended on NYU’s campus in February to showcase their science projects.

Sponsored by NYU Steinhardt and the Jhumki Basu Foundation, the event celebrated the work of the late Jhumki Basu, a science educator and Steinhardt faculty member who was devoted to making high-quality science education accessible to students in high-needs schools.

A funding commitment from the foundation will be used to establish the Center for Science Education at NYU Steinhardt. Jhumki’s mother, Radha Basu, said that the goal of the center would be to “make science come alive for both students and the public.”

At a Glance

At the Expo students from local schools explained to visitors the scope of their projects, methods, findings, and conclusions.

Jane Goodall gives the keynote address at the Sci-Ed Expo.

Iron Chef Dysphagia Champions (from left to right): Laura Mase, Ina Flores Montero, Emma Mack, and Kara Ellis.

Amy Schwartz and Leanna Stiefel
Robert Teranishi, an associate professor of higher education in Steinhardt’s Department of Administration, Leadership and Technology, has been appointed to the Department of Education Equity and Excellence Commission. Teranishi is among 28 education advocates, civil rights leaders, scholars, lawyers, and corporate leaders named to the commission by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. The commission will examine the impact of school finance on educational opportunity.

Teranishi is co-director for the Institute for Globalization and Education in Metropolitan Settings and a faculty affiliate with the Steinhardt Institute for Higher Education Policy. His research has been influential to federal, state, and institution policy related to college access and affordability, as well as recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions on affirmative action and school desegregation. Named one of the nation’s “up-and-coming” leaders by Diverse Issues in Higher Education, Teranishi’s most recent book is Asians in the Ivory Tower: Dilemmas of Racial Inequality in American Higher Education (Teacher’s College Press, 2010).

Jacqueline Mattis, professor in the Department of Applied Psychology, has been awarded NYU’s Martin Luther King, Jr. Faculty Award. The award is presented annually to five faculty members at NYU who exemplify King’s spirit through their teaching, public service, leadership, and community-building activities.

Mattis, who teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in Steinhardt’s counseling for mental health and wellness programs, was awarded Steinhardt’s Graduate Student Organization’s Faculty Star Award in 2006.

Mattis has published in The American Journal of Community Psychology, Personality and Individual Differences, and The Journal of Clinical Child Psychology. She serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of Black Psychology and the Psychology of Women Quarterly. She researches the role of religiosity and spirituality in the lives of African American adults, and is interested in the ways that religion and spirituality inform pro-social development and positive psychological outcomes, including altruism, volunteerism, civic engagement, optimism, and forgiveness.

Halkitis Invited to Serve on U.S. Health and Human Services HIV Advisory Committee

Perry Halkitis, professor and associate dean for research and doctoral studies at Steinhardt, has been invited to serve on the Advisory Committee on HIV and STD Prevention and Treatment for the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Kathleen Sebelius, U.S. secretary of health and human services, appointed Halkitis, who serves as director of Steinhardt’s Center for Health, Identity, Behavior, and Prevention Studies (CHIBPS).

The CDC/HRSA Advisory Committee on HIV and STD Prevention and Treatment advises the HRSA activities related to prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and other STDs, the support of health care services to persons living with HIV/AIDS, and the education of health professionals and the public about HIV/AIDS and other STDs. Halkitis is co-editor of Barebacking: Psychosocial and Public Health Approaches (Informa Healthcare, 2006) and HIV+Sex: The Psychosocial and Interpersonal Dynamics of HIV-seropositive Gay and Bisexual Men’s Relationships (APA, 2005). He is the recipient of the American Psychological Association’s (APA) 2010 Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology in the Public Interest.
Gabriella Coleman on Hacking

What is a ‘hacker?’
The term hacker usually conjures images of basement dwellers typing furiously away at their keyboards bent on causing Internet hell. As an anthropologist whose focus of ethnographic study is hackers and geeks, it is important to start by addressing the stereotypes that so dominate public perceptions. In the most general terms, “hacker” is a technologist with a love for computing and a “hack” is a clever technical solution arrived through a non-obvious means. It doesn’t mean to compromise the Pentagon, change your grades, or take down the global financial system, although it can, through definition.

Do hackers have a code of ethics?
Hackers tend to value a set of liberal principles: freedom, privacy, and access; they tend to adore computers; some gain unauthorized access to technologies, though the degree of illegality greatly varies (and much, even most of hacking, by the definition I set above, is actually legal).

Talk about how hacking has been used as a form of political protest.
Recently the question of “hacktivism” has been raised in the news, following the wave of distributed denial of service attacks against Mastercard and PayPal coordinated by activists bearing the name Anonymous who did so in support of WikiLeaks. These events have sparked a heated debate as to whether denial of service attacks should be considered “hacking” and whether this digital tactic can be used for legitimate political dissent or if it simply works to silence speech.

Is hacking an exercise of free speech?
Just as there is depth and variability to hacking, there are many rich and distinct connections between free speech and hacking. Since I am not a lawyer or legal scholar, I can’t provide a definitive legal answer as to whether the actions of Anonymous constitute free speech. What is clear, however, is that hackers and geeks tend to embrace a politics of information freedom in variable ways and have devised fascinating legal, political, and digital tactics by which to broadcast and enact their commitments to information freedom. Since the Internet is home to so many fields of human endeavor, it is clear that it, too, will be a site for protest activities.

Follow Gabriella Coleman on Twitter @BiellaColeman

Grants & Gifts

Jennifer Hill and Marc Scott, associate professors of applied statistics in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, have been awarded a grant of $918,000 from the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences to support their project, “Sensitivity Analysis: If We’re Wrong, How Far Are We from Being Right?”

Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, Courtney Sale Ross University Professor of Globalization and Education, and Carola Suárez-Orozco, professor of applied psychology, received a grant of $325,000 from the Carnegie Corporation for a pilot study, titled, “Civic Trust and Engagement Among Latino and Asian Immigrant Youth Adults.”

THE NYU STEINHARDT MISSION
NYU Steinhardt advances knowledge, creativity, and innovation at the crossroads of human learning, culture, development, and well-being. Through research and education, within and across disciplines, the school’s faculty and students evaluate and redefine processes, practices, and policies in their respective fields and, from a global as well as community perspective, lead in an ever-changing world.
International Ranked is the Topic of Steinhardt Institute Forum

Professor Jürgen Enders, director of the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies at the University of Twente, Netherlands, began the discussion noting that in recent decades universities across the globe have begun competing in “a rankings arms race,” devoting more money and resources to improve their standings. Enders said that rankings are popular because they help to create order, reduce complexity, and provide useful shortcuts that aid in decision-making about research investment and student choice. He suggested reformulating rankings to emphasize research, teaching, and knowledge transmission within the university.

In response, Craig Calhoun, University Professor of Social Science at NYU, discussed how students might be drawn to a university that ranks high because of the research accomplishments of its faculty, and overlook the fact that an intensely research-focused faculty member may be a less effective classroom teacher. Calhoun also argued that the rankings system is one that is driven by inequality.

Robert H. Frank, professor of economics at Cornell and visiting research scholar at NYU Stern, added that while most economists believe that more competition yields a more efficient marketplace, in the case of university rankings more competition might lead to harmful results. He said that his view had been influenced by the philosophy of Charles Darwin, who “believed that increased competition might result in traits that, while helpful for the individual, prove to be harmful for the species.” The competition for a higher ranking may similarly lead universities to take on traits that run counter to their missions.

Iron Chef continued from page 1
“Speech pathology students taught nutrition students about swallowing assessment and evaluation; nutrition students taught CSD students how to translate different stages of dysphagia into a diet that could meet the client’s nutrient, cultural, and caloric needs.”

Kara Ellis, a master’s student in clinical nutrition, felt the class was essential for nutrition and speech students interested in working in clinical settings. Her team won the event by creating a meal for a Southern lawyer with tonsilar cancer. The group prepared talapia mojito over grits and rice pudding with a berry glaze. Steinhardt Associate Dean Beth Weitzman and Drs. Preeti Raghavan and Matt Diamond from NYU’s Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine, were among the judges.

Housing continued from page 1
Using longitudinal data linking foreclosures and other kinds of housing upheavals to individual public school student records, the research team will test the hypothesis that housing instability negatively affects students’ educational outcomes.

“This study connects education and housing, two areas of children’s lives that are often considered separately by policymakers—education and housing,” said Stieffel. “We know that children don’t experience these as separate, and we think that the findings and policy implications will be useful for helping children keep on track in their schooling as they experience one of America’s largest housing crises ever.”

The project is one of nine research projects funded by the MacArthur Foundation that examines the role housing plays in the long-term health of children, families, and communities. The NYU research team is characterized by its multidisciplinary nature, pulling researchers from its schools of public service, law, and education.

Jane Hsu (MA ’06)

Finding a Network for Special Needs Children

“Every parent with a child who has autism knows the pain of trying to schedule play dates with other children,” says Jane Hsu, a special education teacher in a New York City public school. “While parents of typical children spend weekends carting their kids around to activities, the parents I know struggle to find places where their kids can fit in and feel welcome.”

Helping her student Natalie inspired Hsu to start her own Web site SpecialPlaydate.com. The new online service connects parents seeking opportunities for their children. Membership to the site is free. Hsu developed the resource with her own savings.

Tech Happens

Steinhardt Launches Mobile Web site

You can keep Steinhardt in the palm of your hand by visiting our mobile site. Use your tablet or any Smartphone to read our news, listen to a podcast, watch a video about our faculty and programs, and even get directions to our door.

www.steinhardt.nyu.edu

Rice pudding with raspberry glaze. At the competition, food was evaluated for taste, appearance, and texture, as well as the use of the secret ingredient, pumpkin puree.

“Food should always nourish the body and soul,” said Lisa Sasson, clinical associate professor in the Department of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health. “We should never assume that because a patient has swallowing problems that their food choices will be limited to pureed mush.”
Gabriel Alegria, music assistant professor of jazz studies, led Steinhardt’s scholars on a unique tour of Lima, Peru, introducing them to some of the most important figures in Afro-Peruvian jazz. Students documented the experience in words and pictures.

“...Every Saturday afternoon, Pepe Villalobos opens his house and heart, converting two rooms at the back of his home in La Victoria into one of the most exclusive peñas in Lima. The brightly colored press tag around my neck with the words, "NYU PERU 2011," is my ticket in. My eyes and ears are overwhelmed by the strong Cajun beats and feverish guitar strumming...” writes Hailey Pierson in A Great Day in Lima, an online blog. Pierson was among 31 students who took part in Steinhardt’s Dean’s Research Travel Colloquium, immersing themselves for a semester in Afro-Peruvian jazz culture before their weeklong trip to Lima in January. Read their stories at http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/agreatdayinlima.

Gabriel Alegria, music assistant professor of jazz studies, led Steinhardt’s scholars on a unique tour of Lima, Peru, introducing them to some of the most important figures in Afro-Peruvian jazz. Students documented the experience in words and pictures. 

Photos clockwise from upper left: Pepe Villalobos leading a “peña,” a jazz experience in his home, by Eva Jaeger; Singer Rosita Guzmán leads a dance, by Marie Ortinau; a portrait of aster poet Carlos Hayre, by Camille Beinhorn; Freddy “Huevito” Lobaton drums while his mother watches from their living room sofa, by Christina Thomopoulos.
Art Meets Technology in David Darts’ PirateBox

The PirateBox? What is it?
The PirateBox is an electronic device that creates mobile, autonomous, wireless hotspots that allow people in the same space to communicate anonymously and share electronic files without connecting to the Internet. It was inspired by the free culture and Pirate Radio movements.

What’s behind your invention?
I wanted to provide people with an easy way to communicate electronically without the need for intermediaries like telephone companies or Internet service providers. This has cultural and political implications, and so the PirateBox is also an artistic provocation designed to generate discussion about the issues we confront in the digital age.

What kinds of things have you found inside the PirateBox?
People have shared an eclectic mixture of materials on my PirateBox. Common media include electronic books, songs, and even feature-length films.

What is the question that PirateBox answers?
Is it possible to re-purpose existing electronic equipment and free software to provide local communities with increased electronic privacy and control over their communications? Recent events in North Africa have underscored the importance of establishing alternative communication networks that are mobile and not easily shut down.

David Darts is an assistant professor of art education in Steinhardt’s Department of Art and Art Professions. Learn how to make your own PirateBox. Visit wiki.daviddarts.com/PirateBox.