

Monday, March 6, 12:30-1:20 pm.

Library Lecture Room

Lunch will be served (doors open at 12:15)

Please RSVP to Jillian Rubman (jrubman) by March 2nd, and indicate if you have any dietary restrictions.

**Supporting Blended Learning after the Mellon Grant
A Conversation with Andy Shennan, Kathryn Lynch, and Ravi Ravishanker**

We would like to invite you to a conversation about your experience with blended learning. We are interested in hearing about the impact blended learning has had on *your* teaching, which aspects of the initiative have been particularly helpful, and the kinds of support for your work on blended learning you would like to see in the future.

As we move forward to the final stages of this grant period, we are working on a set of recommendations to the administration regarding the kinds essential support needed to support blended learning and the digital humanities on our campus once this grant period has ended.

It would be very helpful for us, therefore, to hear your feedback and suggestions on any topic related to your experience with blended learning, including but not limited to questions such as:

How has blended learning impacted your teaching?

What kinds of support would be essential to make possible future work in blended learning? You may consider various kinds of support, including: financial, consultation and assistance in creating projects, support for collaborative projects (team-taught, interinstitutional, etc.), clear deadlines (or perhaps a no-deadline, rolling process for proposal submission), continued speaker series or lunch-time conversation series, LTS/faculty contact for consultations, among others.

Thoughts about other recommended institutional support such as recognition of these activities at the time of Reappointment, Tenure, or Promotion; additional questions in the SEQs or developing other evaluative tools while experimentation takes place in courses.

We hope you can join us for this conversation on March 6, 12:30-1:20 pm, in the Library Lecture Room.

*You are also welcome to send your comments via email to eguzausk@wellesley.edu or dosteen@wellesley.edu.

While our previous events have been well attended, I'd like to take this opportunity to give a brief overview of some of the main activities undertaken by the Blended Learning Initiative, or BLI as we like to call it, over the last (nearly) three years.

The Blended Learning Initiative was launched in the fall 2014, thanks to the generous funding received from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. It has been co-directed by David O'Steen

(LTS) and myself, and led in collaboration with the Provost's Office and the LTS. The continuous support that Cappy Lynch, Andy Shennan, and Ravi Ravishanker have provided over the last three years has been truly invaluable and it has been instrumental in helping us bring blended learning to where it is today. David and I are very grateful for everything you have done to show your support and to ensure the success of this initiative.

The BLI has also benefited from various collaborations and conversations with other programs, initiatives, and constituencies, including (in no particular order) the Tenure Track Advisory Committee (TTAC), the Writing Program, the First-Year Seminar Program, the Pforzheimer Learning and Teaching Center, the Knotty Problems series, the Advisory Committee on Library and Technology Policy, the Quantitative Analysis Institute, and the Quantitative Reasoning Program.

I am particularly grateful to the faculty and staff members who have served on ad hoc committees and offered their advice and expertise to me during this initiative, especially: Justin Armstrong, Daniela Bartalesi-Graf, H el ene Bilis, Bryan Burns, Veronica Darer, Alex Diesl, Lesley Curtis, Sara Fulmer, Anjeana Hans, Tom Hodge, Jeannine Johnson, Yu Jin Ko, Takis Metaxas, Eni Mustafaraj, Dave Olsen, Casey Pattanayak, Anjali Prabhu, Smitha Radhakrishnan, Guy Rogers, Corri Taylor, Lyn Turbak, Adam Van Arsdale, Sarah Wall-Randel, Ann Velenchik, David Ward, Akila Weerapana.

Having started off with 6 proposals in the Fall 2014, we built up to as many as 15 proposals or more received per submission cycle. To date, the BLI has supported blended learning projects developed by 37 faculty members that have enhanced over 50 courses (and counting) in the humanities, humanistic social sciences, and several interdisciplinary projects. We also recently launched the Digital Humanities Pilot Program, and five courses will be taught as part of this program in 2017-2018. To date, 19 departments and programs have already participated in the initiative, and faculty teaching 12 different languages of the total of 15 languages taught at Wellesley adopted a blended approach. There is still time to submit a proposal by the next deadline, and because snow has created some havoc in many schedules, we are extending the current submission deadline to February 28.

It is important to note that each proposal submission was accompanied by an individualized consultation process. David O'Steen and Jillian Rubman in particular as well as other members of the LTS, including but not limited to Jen Bartle, Becca Darling, Jason Estey, Laura O'Brien, Jordan Tynes, Jarlath Waldron, among others, have offered countless hours of their time as listeners, experts, and collaborators. Many proposals were resubmitted and reshaped prompted by these thoughtful and fruitful conversations.

In addition to providing support for project development, the BLI has dedicated energies to several other efforts.

We organized the Blended Learning Speaker Series and, over the three years, brought to the Wellesley campus speakers that delivered presentations and led workshops related to various aspects of blended learning and the digital humanities. We also organized several lunch-time gatherings during which our own faculty talked about their projects and blended methodologies.

The Blended Learning Peer Mentorship Program was put together to allow faculty and staff to meet for conversation about blended learning ideas in an informal setting over lunch. To mark the mid-point in this initiative, we organized a showcase of faculty-led projects and conversations about blended learning in December 2015. This event, held in the Newhouse Center for the Humanities was attended by over 60 faculty and staff and gave inspiration to new projects and conversations. You can watch a video of faculty speaking about their projects (created by Jason Estey) shown at the event on the BLI website at <http://www.wellesley.edu/lts/bli>. Veronica Darer (Spanish) conducted several in-depth discourse analysis studies of blended courses, both focused on individual courses and comparative studies of more than one course or course sections. This has given us insights into class organization, student participation, student learning, and overall impact of blended learning on teaching and learning. In collaboration with Casey Pattanayak from the Quantitative Analysis Institute and Sara Fulmer, the Teaching and Learning Assessment Specialist, we are currently in the process of analyzing some of the more general patterns in participation and of the impact of blended learning on teaching and learning (a survey will be going out to the BLI participants).

Moreover, the vitality of this initiative would not have been the same without the enthusiasm and expertise of participating faculty, staff, and students. The BLI co-sponsored events that explicitly focused on the pedagogical innovation made possible by the uses of digital tools. Some of the outstanding examples of such faculty-led events include the AALAC workshop, “Blended Learning Approaches to Teaching Early Modern France in a Liberal Arts Context” organized by Hélène Bilis; the presentation by the renowned expert in blended methodologies, Prof. Fernando Rubio, organized by Flavia Laviosa; and the upcoming event on March 8, “Transcribe-a-thon of an Early Modern Manuscript,” collaboratively organized by Sarah Wall-Randell, Ruth Rogers, Laura O’Brien, and Katherine M. Ruffin. Faculty and staff have also presented their work on blended learning elsewhere, including the conferences held annually at Bryn Mawr College, Bucknell University, EDUCAUSE/ELI, and field-specific conferences.

Finally, we benefited greatly from engagements and conversations with other individuals – in particular the MOOCs pioneers at the College who have provided invaluable insights – as well as initiatives and programs such as the Liberal Arts Online Consortium and the Alliance to Advance Liberal Arts Colleges.