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## FSTC News

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*Governors State University*

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## Editor's Note

By Dr. Bradley Smith



Welcome to the Fall 2015 issue of *FSTC News*. The Newsletter is designed to help the GSU faculty community stay connected with the faculty development events and initiatives happening here on campus. It also provides a way for faculty to share ideas that might be of general interest to us all as teachers and scholars.

This issue marks a change in editors. I am happy to take over the position from Dr. Christopher White, who worked to create and develop the FSTC Newsletter. The FSTC is thankful for his initiative and excellent stewardship.

### **FSTC's Faculty-in-Residence Position**

The change in editorship coincides with my current role as the FSTC's Faculty-in-Residence. This year, I hope to further engage faculty in conversations about the use of portfolios and e-portfolios that has already begun on campus. My goals are to discuss and work with faculty on the use of portfolio-based pedagogy and assessment, particularly the use of e-portfolios. The use of e-portfolios can help us consider more deeply the kinds of learning that we want to occur as part of our instruction. In addition, portfolios and e-portfolios facilitate knowledge transfer; offer students the opportunity for life-long learning, if students continue to develop their portfolios after graduation; and assist students in their job search, by providing work samples showcasing their abilities. My hope is to build on what we learned from the campus-wide symposium conducted by Dr. Kathleen Yancey in April 2014 and implement some of these positive benefits.

The first workshop in this set of conversations is scheduled for Tuesday, December 8 at 3:15 in B1241. At that meeting, I plan to discuss some of the different kinds of portfolios and share ideas for their use in courses and across programs.

During the spring semester, I will also offer workshops where participants will analyze e-portfolio examples, work with different technologies to build e-portfolios, and begin to explore avenues for collaborative and interdisciplinary research projects in the use of portfolios.

### **Volume 4, Issue 1**

This issue begins with Teri Sosa's reflections on her vision for FSTC programming, which is to facilitate more faculty-driven initiatives through the creation of Faculty Learning Communities. The newsletter continues with an article by Josh Sopiartz, Librarian, and chair of the Faculty Development Advisory Council, who provides an overview of FSTC's programming in the coming year. In addition, the newsletter features articles by Dr. Colleen Sexton, who writes about the implementation of the e-portfolio software Tk20; Lydia Morrow Ruetten, who explains how faculty can create an account in OPUS; and Marco Kratochiv, II, who discusses what resources are available to faculty through the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness.

If you or your colleagues are planning any faculty-development related speaker, activity, or workshop, let us know—we'll help you publicize it. Also, if you'd like to propose a short article for a future issue, we would love to hear from you! Email me at [bsmith7@govst.edu](mailto:bsmith7@govst.edu), or Teri Sosa at [tsosa@govst.edu](mailto:tsosa@govst.edu). Enjoy!

## Director's Note

By Dr. Teri Sosa



It has been another busy semester for the Faculty Scholarship and Teaching Center.

We began the semester with new faculty orientation. This year's orientation was spread over three days and included new Unit A, Unit B, and Adjunct Faculty. During the first day, we made sure that all new faculty members had access to and an understanding of the university's technology resources. On the second day, we presented an interactive, day-long program that covered essential information about working as a faculty member at GSU. That day concluded with a reception where new faculty members met current faculty members and administrators. On our last day of orientation, we held an open Blackboard workshop so new faculty could get a start on their courses.

Throughout the semester we have provided programming for new faculty including new faculty lunches each month. We also ask new faculty to attend FSTC workshops. This semester we scheduled three workshops, "Crafting Your Statement of Accomplishments," "Faculty Initiated Learning Communities," and "Why Portfolios?" These workshops were open to both full and part time faculty.

For the spring semester, we hope to fully implement Faculty Learning Community initiative. We are looking forward to supporting and advising faculty as they form collaborative communities to study teaching and learning. Here are some proposed topics for faculty learning communities at GSU:

- Cross Disciplinary Research
- Collaborative Research Qualitative Research
- Writing/Publishing Group
- Mindfulness
- Civic Engagement
- Improving Teaching: Connecting w/students
- Improving Teaching with Technology
- Writing Across the Curriculum
- Cultural Diversity
- Mentoring/Support Group
- Faculty of Color
- Work-Life Balance
- Men of Color
- Grant Writing
- Latin American /Caribbean/ Diaspora
- Science Advocacy for Communities
- Engaging the Community

Our long-term plan is for Faculty Learning Communities to become part of a balanced multi-tiered

supportive mentoring strategy that includes formal career mentoring, work-life balance mentoring, faculty learning communities, and induction mentoring.

Other plans for the coming semester include a whole university adjunct meeting, programs on ADA compliance, use of Portfolios and Tk20, and open educational resources. We will also have another Rapid Fire Research workshop and our annual Faculty Summer Institute. As you can see, this year will be a fun year of innovative, supportive programs. Please feel free to contact me with any ideas or comments.

## Spring Programming for FSTC

By Josh Sopiarz



Greetings and welcome to the Fall edition of the *FSTC News*. I write today as the new Chairperson of the Faculty Development and Advisory Council (FDAC)—thank you former Chairperson, Dr. Christopher White, for your leadership. The new year presents new opportunities, and I am looking forward to working with the Faculty Scholarship and Teaching Center (FSTC) to continue to serve the needs of the GSU faculty community.

The charge of our small, though dedicated, council is to advise and assist Dr. Teri Sosa and the FSTC on programming relevant for all faculty at GSU. As such, the FDAC and the FSTC spent the fall term planning some informative and important programs for

Spring 2016.

Of note, the FSTC is planning spring programs based on partnerships with several campus units including the Provost's Office (assessment and mentoring); Disability Services (universal design principles, online course design, and ADA course design); the University Library (open access and copyright); Student Affairs (civic engagement); and the Center for Online Teaching and Learning.

Dates, times, and locations for these events will be advertised widely in the coming weeks. Keep in mind that the FSTC and FDAC are looking into ways to facilitate remote access to programs via streaming services or as canned events for instances when you are unable to attend the live sessions.

The FDAC and FSTC have heard the call for more peer-to-peer experiences, and we strive to enhance faculty-driven programming here at GSU. We have a busy spring ahead of us, and we hope to see you out at events as you are able to attend. We also encourage your proposals and welcome any feedback on programming you might have.

## Tk20 Pilot to Begin in Spring

By Dr. Colleen Sexton



As noted in the mission statement for the Office of the Provost “Academic Affairs is committed to designing, offering and assessing an exceptional, and learning-centered educational experience which imbues students with the knowledge and skills that fosters confidence to succeed in an interdependent and technology-driven world.” In order to achieve this goal, we must systematically and regularly assess our progress and use the data we collect to inform where we focus our efforts to improve. To assist us in assessment the university has invested in Tk20, a comprehensive assessment, planning, and reporting system.

There are many faculty members across campus that have experience in using similar comprehensive assessment systems such as LiveText, Chalk and Wire, or Task Stream to name a few. Faculty with those experiences will find that Tk20 has many of the same user functionalities, such as the ability to create standards-based portfolios for accreditation purposes, ability to build rubrics aligned to different standard sets and to run reports based on those standards, and the ability for users (both students and faculty) to store artifacts and build their own portfolio capable of handling video and image files.

Tk20 is not is another learning management system like Blackboard, yet one reason it was selected was for its compatibility with Blackboard. Once we “go live” faculty will be able to utilize the single sign-on feature to move between Blackboard and Tk20. Assignments can be created in Blackboard and scored in Tk20 all through the initial Blackboard login. Students, once logged into Blackboard, can move into Tk20 for submission of assignments without the additional step of a separate Tk20 login.

Of particular interest to faculty members may be the Faculty Qualifications module. This powerful feature of Tk20 provides faculty members with the capability to create an Activity Portfolio. I liken this feature to a virtual professional dossier. Compared to the two crates of documentation I submitted long ago when seeking tenure, and the countless hours I spent amassing all of the documentation for that process, this feature may minimize the hours and at the very least, save a tree or two. It can be a powerful organizing tool for the procrastinator in us, as it has the capability of keeping electronic versions and/or links to all of those documents that can be added over time. It includes tabs for uploading and/or linking to research or scholarly activities, a tab to address all teaching related activities, a tab for service, for grants, and one for other types of experiences. Faculty in programs whereby their accrediting bodies require certain types of documentation categorized into different fields, and faculty who just want to personalize their portfolio, will find that they can create additional tabs to highlight unique accreditation needs or unique accomplishments.

It is my hope that the full functionality of Tk20 will be available to all by fall 2016. Between now and then Dr. Ann Vendrely and I are working closely with the Director of the General Education Council, Dr. Maristela Zell, to build the juried assignments so that the members of her general education learning communities can have an electronic means of assessing the GE outcomes. By piloting some of the Tk20 features in early spring with those learning communities, we intend to use their questions and concerns to streamline Tk20 professional development workshops which will be available for all faculty members in late spring 2016.

In fall 2016, when our first freshmen class become juniors, all programs will experience the infusion of those

students with our traditional transfer students. A cornerstone experience built into this infusion is the offering of a junior seminar course aligned to criteria identified in [Policy 72](#). What better way to capture the intended outcomes of this experience across a variety of courses than through the use of Tk20!

## Open Access: How to Create your Own Account on OPUS

By Lydia A. Morrow Ruetten, Dean of the Library



Very simply stated, Open Access refers to publications that are free and digitally available for all to access. If you wish to learn more about Open Access, I recommend [Peter Suber's](#) site as a place to start.

The term Open Access became much more familiar to many on our campus when Senator Daniel Biss (D-Evanston) and his senate colleagues approved Senate Bill 1900 by a vote of 52 to 0 on August 9, 2013. That bill became Public Act 098-0295 or the "Open Access to Research Articles Act." In response to that act, a Task Force was established to design a policy for open access for the scholarly articles produced at Governors State University. For more information about the task force, their final report and other open access resources, consult the [Open Access Task Force](#) page on the Office of the Provost Web site.

One of the charges to the Task Force was to create an Open Access Policy for our campus. This policy is in place ([policy 74](#)) and effective as of January 1, 2015. The composition of the Open Access Policies Committee is currently being created.

The GSU Library's response to the growing global emphasis of Open Access is [OPUS](#), Open Portal to University Scholarship. The goal of OPUS is to provide open access to scholarly work and to document and preserve the scholarly legacy of Governors State University.

The Faculty Research and Creative Activity Series in OPUS collects the research output of Governors State University faculty. We welcome submissions of preprints (working papers), post prints (final accepted manuscripts), conference presentations, and other digitized work. OPUS also showcases multimedia presentations such as artwork (paintings, photography, sculpture, etc.), multimedia presentations (documentary film, audio, etc.) and nearly anything that can be stored digitally. OPUS staff will work with faculty to help determine rights and permissions.

As long as you are a GSU faculty member, you can create your own account and manage your scholarly information in one location, free of charge, on OPUS. Should you leave or retire from GSU, your account can go with you. In addition, when you visit OPUS, you will have an opportunity to learn the impact that your scholarship has globally.

If you are interested in creating your own OPUS account, you can begin by selecting "Submit Research" located in the left hand column on the OPUS home page and follow the links to create your own account. If you have any questions, please let me know. I will be very happy to answer your questions or get you started. I can be reached at [Lruetten@govst.edu](mailto:Lruetten@govst.edu) or x 4110.

# Institutional Data Available to Support Faculty Work

By Marco Krcatovich, II



In your work as scholars, educators, and administrators, your Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness is at your service. Much of the institutional data you will need is available on our website (<http://www.govst.edu/IR/>). The [Common Data Set](#), [University Fact Book](#), and [Profile of Academic Majors](#) are annual reports that contain much of the general information on the university and degree program-specific data on enrollments, admission, and degrees awarded. The [University Fast Facts](#) provides a snapshot of the current term. All of these resources are designed to help answer quick questions, give the public and our university community an overview of campus, and provide the template for deeper investigation.

If you are working on a grant or accreditation, our office can assist on grant applications and annual reports and can aid in the design of research instruments and methodology. With the assistance of our university Survey Monkey license, many university research projects and grants run through the office, where we can help administer and provide significant protection and confidentiality. In all cases, where information is needed or a longer conversation is warranted, you can contact the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness in two ways. First, for questions and to set up a meeting you can email the office at [oir@govst.edu](mailto:oir@govst.edu). Second, for data requests, research design and implementation, and annual reporting, please submit a data request using our online form: <https://mygsu.govst.edu/facultystaffinformation/ir/Pages/Data-Request-Form.aspx>. The online form is designed to help direct requests to the right resources and ensure a quicker and more efficient turnaround.

In all things, our Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness supports not only the administrative work of the university, but the scholarship and education on campus.



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