



February
2025

FacDev Chatter

The FacDev Chatter is the monthly (or so) newsletter about faculty development at Knox College. These include planned workshops and funding opportunities, both internal and external to Knox College.

Glowing Notes from the ADFA



January is such an interesting month in terms of weather. Of course we are in meteorological winter, but that could mean “Fool’s Spring” or “Spring of Deception” or “Second Winter” to those of us in the Midwest. February will be much more predictable, from what I remember. I’m sure “Mud Season” will be here before we know it.

This month’s issue touches on several areas of importance, not the least of which is an update on our search for a new LMS. The first demonstration (for Canvas) was done on January 30. The second (for Brightspace) will take place on February 11 (probably). After each demonstration, we all will be able to provide feedback to FEC to inform their recommendation.

As someone who has worked with LMSs since (more or less) the beginning, the remaining two share a vast number of similarities. Two things that they both offer that will make our lives much easier are automatic submission of grades *and* the ability to quickly assess our classes in terms of learning goals. This last will really make it easier for you to track student success in your courses. For too long, we’ve struggled to assemble the data to improve our teaching.








These both will ease that struggle.

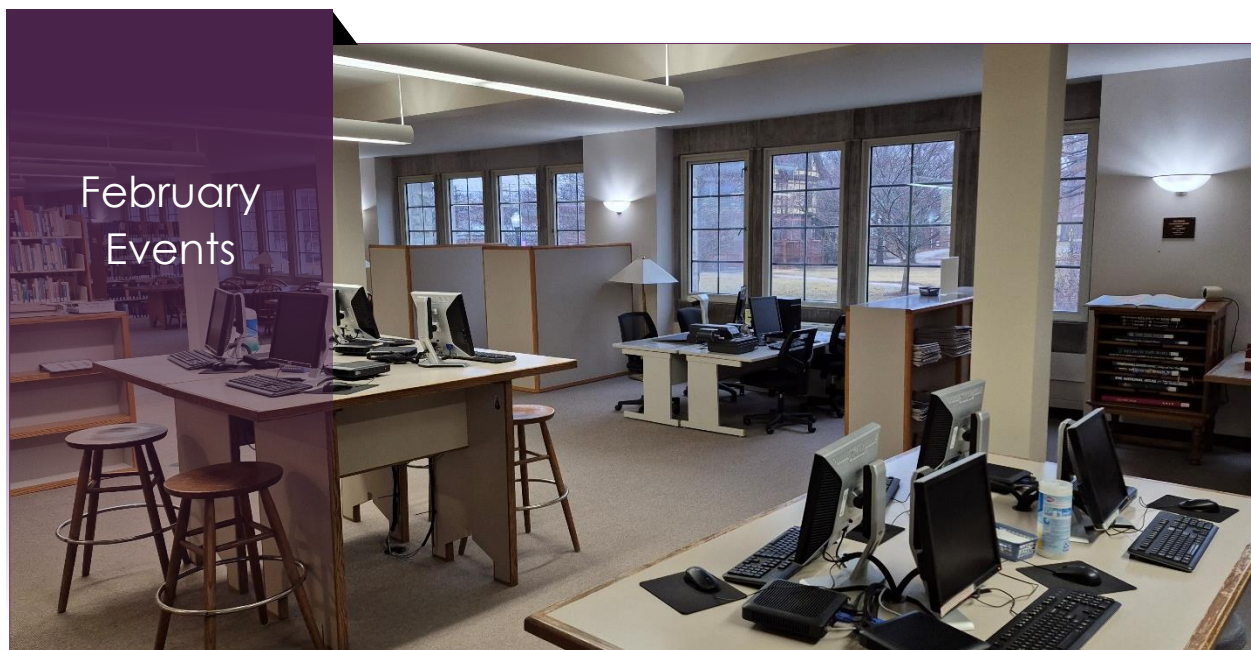
~ Ole

The Fac Dev Calendar

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In this issue:

-  February Events
-  The LMS Update
-  Program Reviews
-  The 411 Corner
-  Something in SMC
-  The Book Corner
-  Faculty Funding



Upcoming February Happenings

Our library is definitely photogenic! It's almost like I spent hours setting up that shot. But, no. It's yet another snapshot on my phone. Maybe we should resolve to visit the Seymour Library this month.

SICK Pedagogy Workshop

When: February 1 at 8:30am
Where: Trustees Room (ALUM 302)

The Supporting Innovation in Classrooms at Knox (SICK) group within the Abolition Lab is organizing a one-day workshop on innovative pedagogies. This workshop will start at 8:30 in the Trustees Room (ALUM 302).

The 2025 Program Review Kick-Off

When: February 6 from 4:00 until 5:30
Where: Trustees Room (ALUM 302)

This is the general introductory meeting to launch the program review process for those programs going up for review in this cycle. In this meeting, we will explain the entire review process, explain key updates to the process that differ from your previous program review, and

as well as provide an opportunity for you to ask questions about the process. If you have not been contacted about this, then your program is not being reviewed this year. For a current list of programs being reviewed, and when, please visit the [Review Schedule on the ADFA website](#).



Friday at Four

When: February 21 at 4:00pm

Where: Trustees Room (ALUM 302)

Our inaugural Winter Term Friday at Four (a month late) is by Katie Stewart. She will be speaking to the effects of Russian nationalism and its effects on Russia's constituent republics. I look forward to seeing all of you there for an interesting discussion on the effects of nationalism in a federal system.

Student Advising and Pre-Registration

When: February 10 through 21

This is the (almost) two-week event that allows us to better know our advisees and their HDAs (hopes, dreams, and aspirations) for Knox and after. I have already emailed my advisees to make appointments on my Google Calendar. This is very efficient for me and the students. If you would like to find out more about this procedure, I'll be discussing it during the February 4th Brown Bag Tuesday.

Brown Bag Tuesdays

Have questions? Want to build connections? Bring your lunch and join us in the Evelyn Handler Forum (ALUM 300). While each week has a topic, the fundamental purpose is just to build fellowship and community. Here are the dates and planned topics for this term:

Making Efficient Use of Google Suite	January 14
CoFR and Faculty Funding	January 21
Designing Engaging Assessments	January 28
Advising Updates	February 4

Fink's Taxonomy	February 11
Library Resources	February 18
Universal Course Design	February 25

Other Upcoming Events

The Day the Music Died (1959)	February 3
February's Faculty Meeting	February 3
Program Review Kickoff	February 6
Summer Collaborative Project Application due	February 9
Day of Dialog	February 12
March's Friday at Four	March 7



The Learning Management System

The Faculty Experience Committee (FEC) continues its exploration of a new LMS for Knox. The Digital Transformation group charged FEC with selecting an LMS to help faculty, staff, and students more easily navigate their time at Knox and to allow us to gain a better understanding of our students and our curriculum, while reducing the amount of time we spend on getting that useful information.

Update: We are in the final moments. We are comparing Canvas and Brightspace. The former had an open demonstration on January 30; the latter, on February 11 (subject to change). Please watch them and bring your questions. The February 11 date may change due to schedule conflicts, so look for emails from the Faculty Experience Committee for information.



Program Reviews

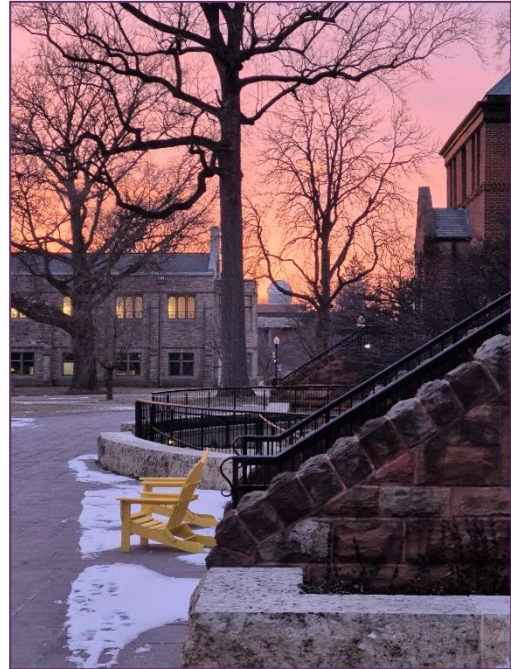
I have emailed the eight programs going up for review in this current cycle. The kick-off event will be on **February 6** at 4:00pm in the Trustees Room (ALUM 302). A Google Calendar eVite has been sent to all programs coming up for review this cycle. If you did not receive this invitation, and you think you should have, then please email me.

Ongoing Program Assessment

For general information about assessing your academic program, as a part of regular ongoing assessment activities or part of a program review, please visit the Departmental Assessment Tools page. This page is growing.

- <https://www.knox.edu/offices/faculty-affairs/departmental-assessment-tools>

Note that plans are underway to give Assessment its own region on the Knox website. This should emphasize the fact that assessment and review are not the same thing, even though they are tied together closely. Assessment is under Judy Thorn, the Associate Dean for Assessment and Curriculum.



The 411 Corner

What is happening with advising under the new J-1 system? In some ways, I don't know. However, there are things that will not change with regards to advising. What will change is the specifics of the "button pushing." The interface will look different to us. However, the important information should be right there for us to see without clicking around, trying to find it.

What is not different is the importance of student agency on their academic planning. This is their education. We are here to help them make the best of their time at Knox. In other words, the five learning goals for advising continue to be at the forefront of our interactions with our advisees. To remind us, the learning goals state that through advising, students will:

1. Identify College resources, including their academic advisors, and external resources for expanding the variety of their college experiences and addressing problems that invariably arise;
2. Develop basic familiarity with College graduation requirements so that they can contrast various academic pathways open to them and chart an academic agenda from both short and long term perspectives;
3. Analyze their academic interests and motives, scholarly strengths and weaknesses, and lifelong ambitions with the aim of selecting courses, majors and minors, and other special opportunities to enhance their educations;

4. Engage in intentional planning and reflection to construct an individualized educational plan that articulates personal and scholastic goals and analyzes how their academic choices can help them achieve these goals;
5. Formulate strategies for navigating life after graduation with autonomy and purpose.

That these are not changing is a relief. With everything else being different, it is comforting that the very core of our purpose as advisors remains constant.

🤔 Did You Know?

I'll slip this in here because Katie Adelsberger deserves a "shout-out." Did you know that the Environmental Studies program created a fascinating interactive display about rocks, minerals, and fluorescence. They did this in December through [the "Museum Mineralogy" December Research Collaborative](#), as funded by the Vovis Center. Katie and her students designed it, 3D-printed all the stands, wrote all the materials, coded the tablet, took the images, wired all the lights, etc. They all worked closely with [the Knox Makerspace](#). ✨ **Wow!** ✨

By the way, the physicist in me remembers that fluorescence is a property that causes some materials to emit light after absorbing light (or other electromagnetic radiation). The reason makes more sense to me using the metaphor of the Bohr Model, but I'm old school on that.

That this display is so interesting (made me late to class once) is a testament to Katie, her students, and the entire program. You can experience the display in the "airlock" of SMC's D-wing, second floor (just off the A-core).





The Book Corner

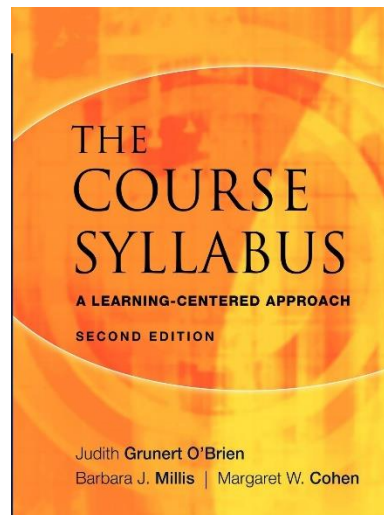
This month in the **Seymour Library Faculty Development Collection**, let me draw your attention to

Grunert O'Brien, J., Millis, B., and Cohen, M. (2008). *The Course Syllabus: A Learning-Centered Approach*, 2nd edition. Jossey-Bass Press.

One of the current trends in education is to provide students with proper syllabus. This is not what we had back in the day. It is something more useful in providing a scaffold for our students to hang their learning upon. The Course Syllabus provides a discussion of how to create syllabuses that focus more on the student than on the class.

The first edition of this book (**LB2361 .G78 2008**) became the gold standard reference for both new and experienced college faculty. Like the first edition, this edition is based on a learner-centered approach. Because faculty are now (or should be) deeply committed to engaging students in learning, the syllabus has evolved into a useful, if lengthy, document (mine tend to be about 12 pages). Today's syllabuses should provide details about course objectives, requirements, and expectations. Just as importantly, they should include information about teaching philosophies, specific activities and the rationale for their use, and tools essential to student success. This last part gives the entire *raison d'être* for the syllabus (in my opinion).

Knox's Faculty Development Collection is located to the right of the circulation desk. This book, along with many others, can be found there. I encourage you to visit the collection and see what else we have available.



EDUCATION BREEDS CONFIDENCE.
CONFIDENCE BREEDS HOPE.
HOPE BREEDS PEACE.

- Confucius

Faculty Funding Opportunities

The important thing on this page is the call for second CTA awards. See below. The following is mostly a repeat of my previous announcements. As always, more information can be found on the “Faculty Funding” page at

- <https://www.knox.edu/offices/faculty-affairs/faculty-funding>

Whether you are looking for seed money for a new project or just need a bit of help finishing something already under way, the Committee on Faculty Resources (CoFR) can help. We support your professional work at all stages of its development.

Support for Research, Creative Work, and Conference Travel

- The final Research and Creative Work (R/CW) deadline for the fiscal year:
 - April 18, 2025
 - This is the last call for Summer 2025 projects.
- The application deadline for a **second CTA award** for this fiscal year:
 - February 14, 2025
 - See the 1/31/2025 email from Helen Hoyt for more information.
- For applications and information for these two resources, please visit
 - <https://www.knox.edu/offices/faculty-affairs/faculty-funding>

Note that other sources of funding are decided on a rolling deadline. These include

- For the Cultural Events Committee, visit this site:
 - <https://sites.google.com/a/knox.edu/cultural-events-committee/>
- For External Grants and assistance, visit our grants office:
 - <https://www.knox.edu/support-knox/grants-office>

To subscribe to the Faculty Development calendar, click here:

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0?cid=Y185YTgyNDcyNjA0Y2ExMTFmODU3YWMyYzVjNGRiM2VhNjZhYmY2ZWU3MTMzNjlkNzM1Y2Y1OTdkNTA0NTQyNTI0QGdyb3VwLmNhbGVuZGFyLmdvb2dsZS5jb20>