

Talk About Learning Trinity Faculty on the Academic Experience



Trinity College
HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

At Trinity, our purpose is both to make music and to study it. One aspect of the music program that is particularly close to my heart is musical theater, to which Trinity is uniquely devoted among its peer liberal arts colleges. Students here, given our numbers and range of performances, get more actual performance opportunities, in leading roles, than they typically will even at large universities with extensive programs. I'm particularly fascinated by and dedicated to recent musicals — ones that not only have great scores but also deal with contemporary ideas, concerns, sensitivities, and production values.

Gerald Moshell
Professor of Music
Ph.D., Harvard
University

Students think that we are teaching them calculus so that they can differentiate and integrate functions. But what we're actually trying to do is show them how to approach problems, look for patterns, and eliminate the extraneous material. These are critical thinking skills that are valuable no matter what a student goes on to do after Trinity. In building these skills, it's important not only to motivate students, but to make them feel comfortable enough to ask questions — otherwise, they will close down. I try to make sure my door is open whenever they need help.

Nancy J. Wyshinski
Associate Professor
of Mathematics
Ph.D., University
of Colorado

It's important for a professor to remain objective in the classroom so that students can develop their own ideas. I hope I provide my students with tools they can use to think about political issues in the future. I want them to feel free to express their views, so I stress that I am evaluating them not on what they think, but on whether they can express their ideas logically and convincingly.

Stefanie Chambers
Assistant Professor of
Political Science
Ph.D., The Ohio State
University

The reason for studying foreign languages is not only to understand foreign cultures but also to better understand our own. Disciplines like languages and literary studies help us to view historical events, cultural artifacts, and people in their proper context and on their own terms, whatever our own points of view. Without this willingness to understand that which might not seem immediately relevant to our own lives, it will be increasingly difficult for people to communicate, never mind come to a common understanding and agreement.

Dario Del Puppo
Associate Professor of
Modern Languages
Ph.D., University of
Connecticut

When you study Islam over its 14 centuries, you see that we're living in an aberrant moment. The entire history of Islam and its relation to Christianity and Judaism is one of tolerance and honor. There have been moments of enmity — the Crusades, for example, and right now. I'm trying to encourage my students to think of studying the Middle East as a way of service to the nation, and to humanity. Trinity is in an ideal position to serve that educational need.

Ronald C. Kiener
Associate Professor
of Religion
Ph.D., University
of Pennsylvania

Talk About Learning Trinity Faculty on the Academic Experience



Welcome to a Whole New World

2

A commitment to the examined life: **Drew A. Hyland**

Charles A. Dana Professor of Philosophy

4

Choosing meaningful questions: **Diane C. Zannoni**

Professor of Economics

6

Challenging assumptions: **Joan D. Hedrick**

Charles A. Dana Professor of History

8

A context for understanding: **Craig W. Schneider**

Charles A. Dana Professor of Biology

10

Art and transformation: **Katharine G. Power**

Associate Professor of Theater and Dance


12

Confidence in the face of uncertainty: **Maurice Wade** Professor of Philosophy and Faculty Adviser, Human Rights Program

14

Trinity: Points of Academic Interest

16



“At Trinity, we teach our students the diverse skills that will enable them to continually learn. We help them expand their knowledge and perspective so that they understand who they are and what their relationship is to the rest of the world. And we impart a sense of passion that gives students the focus, motivation, and profound caring that will cause them to use their skills and understanding to good advantage throughout their lives.”

Richard H. Hersh, President

Welcome to a Whole New World

When you walk through Trinity's gates, you will enter a whole new world of learning in the great tradition of the liberal arts. No matter what major you select or what career path you take, a liberal arts education will give you skills that last a lifetime. You will learn to think independently, pursue knowledge and understanding, make well-reasoned choices, and experience the fulfillment that comes from learning and reflection.

Many elements contribute to a liberal arts education. A sound curriculum, a close residential community, and state-of-the-art facilities are all critically important. But the heart of the liberal arts experience is a faculty of devoted, inspiring teachers. Trinity's faculty brings passion for teaching to the classroom, and to you. These professors will challenge you, guide you, and mentor you as you develop your skills and come to share their love of learning and quest for understanding.

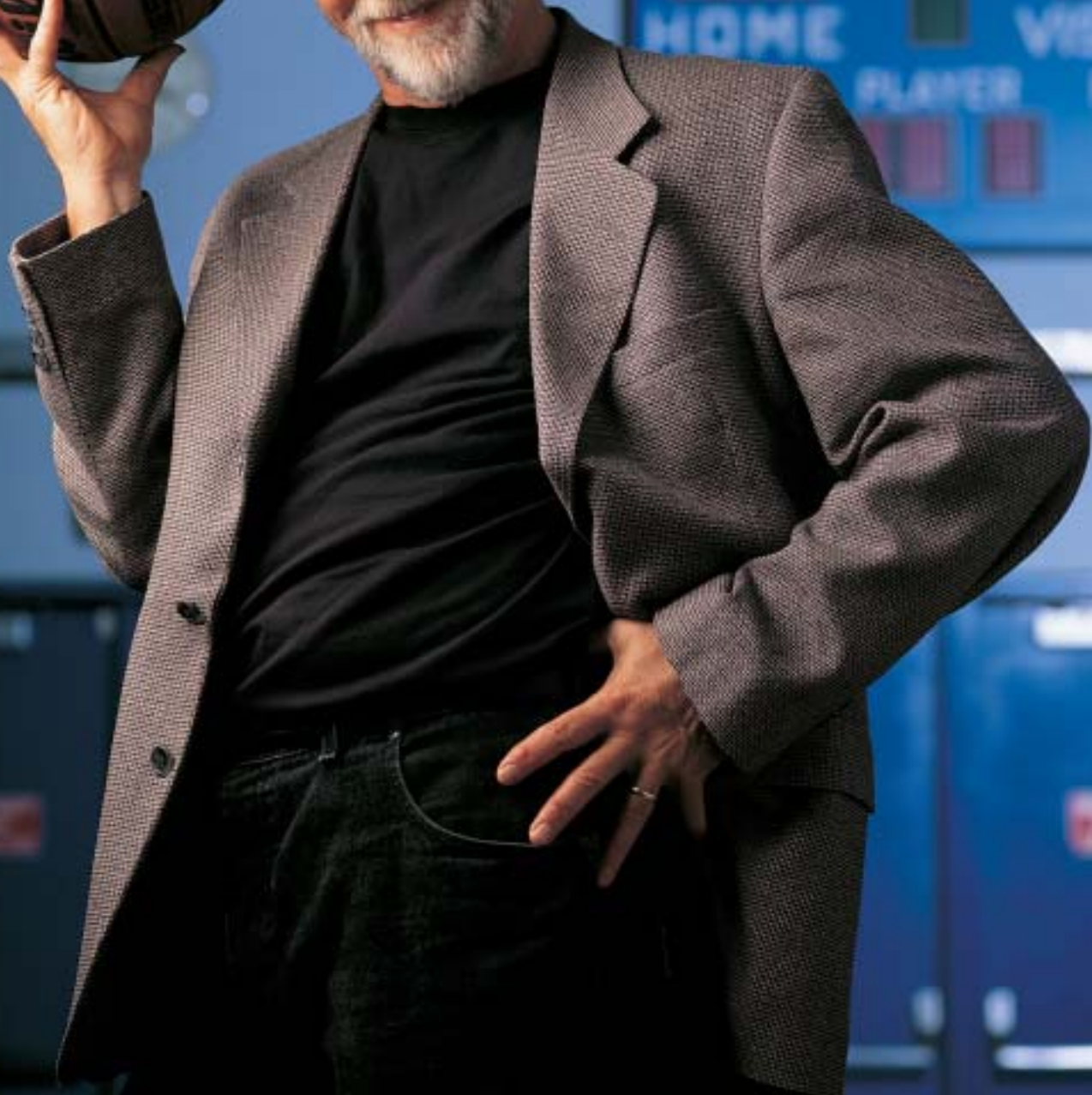
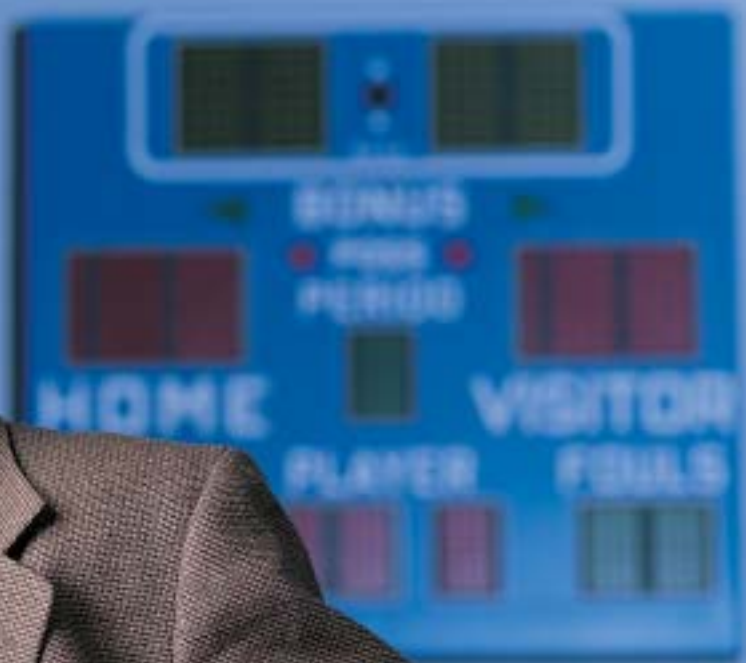
Trinity asks you to be open to learning, and to bring your curiosity and interests with you to campus. If you take up that challenge, the College promises you teachers who will engage you in the

excitement of active, lasting learning. They will have high expectations for you, and they will ask you to stretch your mind more than ever before. They will also give you lots of feedback and support. You will meet them in class, over coffee, at games and performances, and they will become mentors and friends. Like many other Trinity students, you may stay in touch with them long after graduation.

The College has developed a variety of programs that support creative teaching and active learning. The First-Year Program introduces entering students to Trinity's living and learning environment through seminars, activities, student mentors, and faculty advisers. Students with particular interests may be invited to explore them in depth through special interdisciplinary first-year options. These include The Guided Studies Program: European Civilization; The Interdisciplinary Science Program; The InterArts Program; and The Cities Program. By the end of sophomore year, you will choose among 37 majors and also have the option of an interdisciplinary minor. Along the way, you will explore urban living in Hartford through classes that incorporate commu-

nity learning, internships, and volunteer activities. You'll also become a global citizen through such initiatives as the Human Rights Program, which engage students in issues of importance to the world. Trinity's many study-abroad and study-away opportunities can help you to develop this perspective, particularly at the College's Rome campus and global learning sites.

All of these experiences will deepen and enrich your education. But, in the end, the most fundamental learning happens when you work closely with faculty members in the classroom, lab, and studio, and when you meet them in every aspect of campus life. Through this interaction, you will benefit from the full measure of your professors' knowledge, and you will learn through their example. To give you a sense of how Trinity professors teach and inspire their students, we have asked six of them to speak with you in the following pages. We invite you to get to know them — after all, they may influence you for the rest of your life.



A commitment to the examined life: **Drew A. Hyland**

Charles A. Dana Professor of Philosophy / Ph.D., Pennsylvania State University
Winner of the Brownell Prize for Excellence in Teaching

Socrates said that the unexamined life is not worth living. To me, teaching is not primarily about transmitting a body of knowledge to my students. Rather, it's about showing them the value of committing themselves to reflect on their life experiences and think about the significance of their involvements in the world. If I can do that through my own example, then I extend them an invitation that will make their lives deeper and richer. Part of my teaching takes place in hands-on philosophy labs. In my "Philosophy of Art" course, for example, we read and discuss what philosophers have said about art, and then students apply these ideas to works of art. But this doesn't give students a sense of what it's like to make art, so we go into the lab and actually work with materials as artists do, making clay and grinding pigments.

I think that we all learn best through intellectual immersion and intensity. I saw that during my college years, when I played intercollegiate basketball, and it was reinforced when I was an unofficial assistant coach for women's basketball during Trinity's early days of coeducation. Athletics involves the whole self, and that's the way learning should be. I've used these experiences in my "Philosophy of Sport" course. In it, we focus on many issues that might be considered in any good introduction to philosophy, but with constant reference to examples and problems in athletics. We take up ethical issues in sport; we address questions of racism and sexism in sport; we discuss questions of self-knowledge, of the connection of mind and body, of aesthetics, and even of religious experience. When I teach this course, or any other, I always ask myself: How can I show the students that the material of the course is something in which they have a stake, that addresses issues that matter in their lives? Only if I do that will I succeed in giving them the intellectual immersion and intensity that I want them to have. After all, as every good coach knows, if you want to have fun, be the person who hustles the most, who works the hardest.

Choosing meaningful questions: **Diane C. Zannoni**

Professor of Economics / Ph.D., State University of New York, Stony Brook
Winner of the Brownell Prize for Excellence in Teaching

I have taught Trinity students about the economics of shipping from the top deck of a container ship in Oakland Harbor, about the development of banking while standing in the Jewish ghetto in Venice, and about the economic development of Rome surrounded by the Forum. I love economics and have been able to find creative ways to teach economic ideas to Trinity students, in our programs away and abroad as well as in Hartford. Each year I teach econometrics — how economists construct and test hypotheses. You might think this a somewhat dry subject, but I invite students to choose questions that have some meaning to them, such as What can a baseball team do to increase the probability of winning? or Did the needle exchange education program at the Hartford Hispanic Health Council decrease risky behavior among intravenous drug users? Students apply the econometric techniques learned in the class to answer their questions, and by the end of the semester they are able to present their results to about 300 people — faculty, staff, their friends, and people from the Hartford community. Some projects have formed the foundation for senior honors theses, some have been published, and others have helped students determine what their career focus will be.

This is an exciting time to study economics, because the world has opened up so tremendously and there's an opportunity to look at questions from a broad international perspective. It's not just about the U.S. anymore. Students can look at the transformation of the former Soviet Union, the development of the European Union, the Asian economic collapse, and developing economies. Especially at Trinity, where we have students from so many different countries and economic systems, students bring varied experiences and points of view to the classroom. Assumptions get challenged and myths get exploded right there during class. One of the central questions of economics is: What is the responsibility of government in the economy? Should it be hands-off or interventionist? Recent events in the U.S. and around the world are causing economists and students to look very closely at that question.



Quantity 1
Method of estimation = Ordinary Least Squares

Dependent variable F
Current sample 1 to 22
Number of observations 22

Mean of dependent variable = 11.9092
Std. dev. of dependent var. = 2.97237
Sum of squared residuals = 122.751
Variance of residuals = 5.91523
Std. error of regression = 2.43247
R-squared = .28223

Adjusted R-squared = .25228
Durbin-Watson statistic = 1.85191
F-statistic (one slope) = 3.15733
Schwarz Beta Info. Crit. = 7.29226
Log of likelihood function = -68.726

Variable	Estimated Coefficient	Standard Error	t-statistic
C	7.82291	1.29259	6.05701
Press Return to continue or ? for help	.052525	.00704	7.42441
END	.022366	.00371	5.97416

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Stewart & the Franklin D. Roosevelt

by ...

... Revolutionary ...

... complementing ...

HAROLD BEECHER STONE

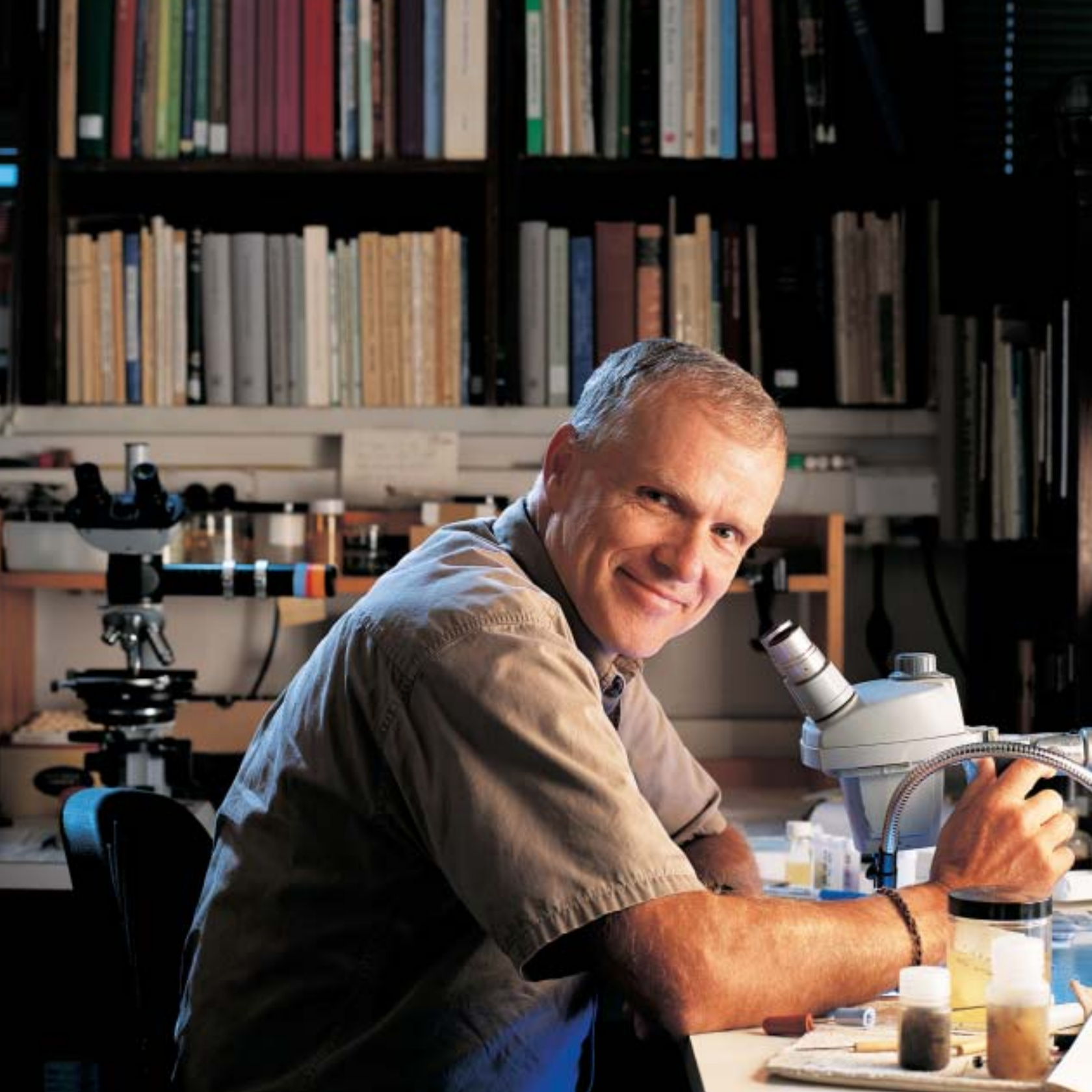
Challenging assumptions: **Joan D. Hedrick**

Charles A. Dana Professor of History / Ph.D., Brown University
Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Biography for *Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Life*

Above all, I hope to show my students how to challenge the assumptions that they bring into the classroom. I learned that for myself when I started researching Harriet Beecher Stowe and found that my notions about what it was like for a woman to become a writer in the early 19th century were inaccurate. I began by thinking that it would be a difficult choice, but I came to see that writing was closely related to women’s social roles in that period. I had to completely revise my assumptions, which were based on what I had learned in graduate school and on the pronouncements of male writers.

In class, I pair readings that take different points of view on a topic so that my students are challenged to think about their own views and how they agree or disagree with the authors. I also use historical documents, because each historical period has distinct social and cultural frameworks and economic and technological realities. Juxtaposing materials from various periods enables students to see very clearly the assumptions people make in their everyday lives. Students also discover differences among themselves during class discussions — that’s always one of my favorite moments, when students are surprised and delighted by the differences they encounter within the classroom.

Hartford is a terrific place for both history and women’s studies. I started working on Harriet Beecher Stowe in part because her house with its wonderful archive is here. I take my “American Literary Realism” class there, and in other classes we use other resources in the city, such as theater. Beyond that, Hartford offers students so many internship possibilities — my students have worked in battered women’s shelters, law offices, and women’s health clinics. These experiences, together with related research, offer involvement in areas of practice that can tell them what kinds of skills they have and what kinds of issues they want to engage themselves in.



A context for understanding: **Craig W. Schneider**

Charles A. Dana Professor of Biology / Ph.D., Duke University
Winner of the Brownell Prize for Excellence in Teaching

My goal in teaching is to help students develop ways of thinking about, and understanding, the natural world. I give them information, and then ask them to put it into context and make a logical explanation. I don't want them to memorize — I want them to think things through, challenge assumptions, ask questions, and even make some mistakes. Mistakes are important, because you learn more from them than you do from success. Through this process, students begin to see things differently, in a way that lasts.

From my own experience, I understand that you can't know science until you "do" science. A professor can tell you something a thousand times, but to really learn, you need to go through the thought process yourself. That's why undergraduate field studies and research are so important. At Trinity, we're very fortunate to have our own field station in rural Connecticut. In one of my classes, we were at the field station analyzing water quality in a pond. It was winter, and we cut a hole in the ice and measured the water temperature both on the bottom of the pond and just under the ice. The water was colder on top of the water column than on the bottom — just opposite of the situation in summer, when warm water rises to the top. You can tell students that water temperature inverts right before freezing, but when they're out on the ice measuring the temperatures, they see the principle for themselves and truly understand.

I have several students working in my labs each year, and this is the norm in science research labs at Trinity. These students are doing far more than helping out — they're doing genuine research that often results in presentations at scientific conferences or papers in peer-reviewed scientific journals. That's truly "doing science," all the way from making observations and asking questions to conducting research to writing and going through the review and publication process. These students are seizing on the unique opportunity that undergraduates have — the four years of college are when most students will learn more than in any other four-year period in their lives.

Art and transformation: Katharine G. Power

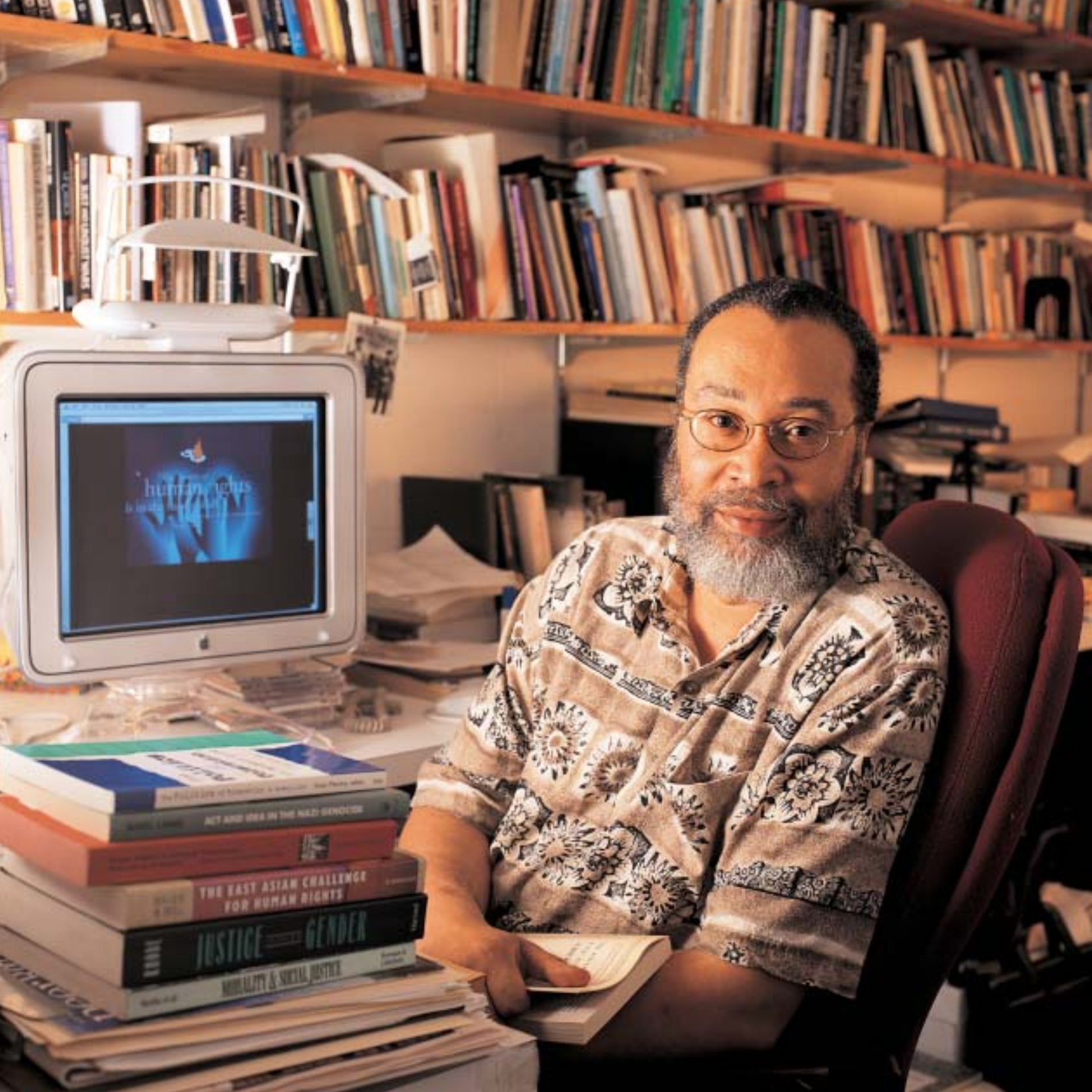
Associate Professor of Theater and Dance / M.F.A., Smith College
Dance critic for several Hartford–Springfield newspapers

For me, teaching involves constant experimentation, because I want to be sure that my students see how exciting ideas about art can be. These ideas are about life as well as art, and they can stimulate us to transform our lives. I try to give students perspectives that aren't yet available in books, as I do when I bring my research on Martha Graham as an artist in the context of Cold War culture into the classroom. When students get exposed to new ideas, they tend to get unsettled in a good way. They break through that confusion and all of a sudden they see.

Students today have the ability to take in a lot of complex visual material all at once, so I use visual arts a great deal. We watch videos and films, and I assign them live performances and arts events both on-campus and in Hartford. That's the advantage of being here in the city — in addition to all the art that's being made on campus, or brought here, there's a huge range to see in Hartford. Also, New York is so accessible. When the highly controversial “Sensation” exhibit was at the Brooklyn Museum, the debate related to issues that my class was studying. We all went to see it together, and the students wrote op-ed pieces to express their responses.

There's also a tremendous advantage for students to study the arts at Trinity. We don't pretend to be a conservatory or art school. As a liberal arts college, Trinity has a broader scope. That's important, because if you're going to make art, you need to have something to make art about. The liberal arts curriculum provides a stimulating knowledge base for you to do that. The College is constantly innovating, as with the InterArts Program, which gives students the chance to spend their first two years looking holistically at all the creative arts. Trinity arts are also increasingly engaged with the wider world, both locally and globally.





Confidence in the face of uncertainty: **Maurice Wade**

Professor of Philosophy and Faculty Adviser, Human Rights Program / Ph.D., Stanford University
Recipient of grants from the Ford, GTE, and Sloan foundations

Ambiguity can be difficult for students, so they initially tend to deal with it by presuming either that everything is relative or that everything is arbitrary. I believe that my job is to help them develop their intellectual faculties so that they can think critically and be able to act confidently in the face of uncertainty. They need to know that, even in complex, ambiguous situations, there are better choices and worse choices to be made. We often discuss these issues in class: Why do we care about competing choices in the first place? How do we get beneath a dilemma to the underlying questions? What threatens — and what protects — human dignity?

Trinity offers many ways to examine these questions. The values that undergird the liberal arts, the College's commitment to the Hartford community, and its drive to understand the broader world come together in an organic fashion in our Human Rights Program. No issue more genuinely ties the local and the global together than human rights. Threats to rights and dignity exist at all levels of human interaction, and so protections must be promoted at all levels. Trinity is able to make this point about the scope of human rights in concrete terms because we are deeply involved in both in our local setting and our network of global learning sites.

Through this kind of active learning and the focus of the Human Rights Program, not only do our students learn important skills, but they also see how they can enrich their own lives and contribute to the world around them. Much of this intellectual exploration happens outside the classroom — at talks by visitors to campus from around the globe, through advocacy work in Human Rights Summer Fellowships, in collaborative faculty-student reading groups. Last semester, I participated in a group with three other faculty members and 10 students, all reading, discussing, and debating about Marx. We each brought something different to the group, and that made it a very powerful learning experience for everyone.

Trinity: Points of Academic Interest

Faculty 2002-2003

- 196 full-time, 53 part-time.
- Over 90% of full-time faculty hold the doctorate or highest degree offered in their field.
- Student/faculty ratio of 9 to 1.
- All faculty members teach both introductory and advanced courses.

Classes

Most Trinity classes have fewer than 20 students, and the average class size is 18.

Students

- 1,900 full-time undergraduate students; 49% male, 51% female, 20% minorities.
- More than half of all undergraduates complete at least one internship in the Hartford area.
- Approximately half of all students study abroad, many at Trinity's Rome campus and global learning sites.

Research

Up to 30% of students participate in faculty research for credit, and 60% work independently or with faculty members on research.

Majors

American Studies
Anthropology
Art History
Biochemistry
Biology
Chemistry
Classical Civilization
Classics
Computer Coordinate
Computer Science
Economics
Educational Studies
Engineering
English
Environmental Science
French
German
History
International Studies
Italian
Jewish Studies
Mathematics
Modern Languages (including Chinese and Japanese)
Music
Neuroscience
Philosophy
Physics
Political Science
Psychology

Public Policy Studies
Religion
Russian
Sociology
Spanish
Studio Arts
Theater and Dance
Women, Gender, and Sexuality

Students may also work with their advisers to design interdisciplinary majors.

Contact Trinity

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E-mail: admissions.office@trincoll.edu

Web: www.trincoll.edu

I learn best by visualizing things and by example. My teaching has shown me that this is also true for students. This hands-on approach — whether using a wind tunnel or a flight simulator program — helps me motivate my students to develop their skills in analysis and experimentation. It also builds confidence, and that's critical, because engineering requires us to perform experiments to confirm or refine concepts. We need confidence and courage, because we could be wrong at any step of the game.

Joseph L. Palladino
Associate Professor of
Engineering
Ph.D., University of
Pennsylvania

I loved being an undergraduate at Trinity, and I always thought I would enjoy coming back to this sort of environment to teach. Teaching my first "Introductory Chemistry" class in the same classroom in which I had taken the course myself was a remarkable experience. Students at Trinity continue to enjoy the highest quality instruction and increasingly have the opportunity to participate in innovative research projects. One of the great strengths of a Trinity education is the mentoring students receive from the faculty.

Maria L. Parr '90
Assistant Professor
of Chemistry
Ph.D., Yale University

The Socratic ideal is the examined life. I ask my students to remember that intellectual growth is about change and the imperative to re-examine ideas, values, and assumptions throughout our lives. Trinity students will go on to hold important positions in society. Among other things, I have the responsibility to help them learn how to make a sound argument and substantiate it. They can rely on computer programs to catch spelling and grammatical errors, but I don't know of any software that will fix faulty logic.

Margo Perkins
Associate Professor of
English and American
Studies
Ph.D., Cornell University

I want my students to experience subjects both intellectually and viscerally. When I teach a class like "The Anthropology of Poverty," I try to get them to look at something that is perhaps not in their own experience and teach something similar to empathy. In the poverty class, the central question is: How does it feel if you're poor, and how do you retain your dignity? Do you tell yourself that you're poor? What does it mean to be poor in a society that counts dignity by wealth?

Vijay Prashad
Associate Professor of
International Studies
Ph.D., University of
Chicago

I'm interested in the relationship between the brain and human behavior, and a major part of my work is my research into improving the cognitive abilities of people with brain damage. The students who work in my lab deal directly with brain-injured people. I always tell them, "You're finding out things that no one ever learned before. You're creating knowledge." Students in my classes have assignments working with patients at medical facilities in Hartford. They learn a lot about the class material when they actually see it in a person with brain damage.

Sarah A. Raskin
Associate Professor
of Psychology and
Neuroscience
Ph.D., City University
of New York



Trinity College

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