Teaching Millennials in the New Millennium

A Conference on the Theory, Challenges, and Opportunities of Teaching College-Age Students in the 21st Century

Conference Schedule

Breakfast and Registration (7:45-8:30)

Introduction (8:30-8:40) – Welcoming Remarks by Rena Fraden, Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Part I:
Who Are College Students? Competing Theories (Morning Sessions)

Many voices argue that the students entering college today are “different” from people the same age a generation ago. Psychologists, sociologists, student services professionals, faculty, and just about everyone involved in higher education point to evidence of irresponsibility, anxiety, pressure, and uncertainty in student behavior; students seem less willing to take risks academically (but sometimes all too willing socially), more focused on grades and achievement, but less confident about the path they will take after college.

Are these differences real, or merely a matter of perception? And if they are real, what explains them? The morning sessions of this conference explore these questions by taking a snapshot of young people today and considering a variety of explanations offered for their behavior.

Prelude – Looking at Today’s Students (8:40-9:00)

Testing Millennials: Does a Millennial Generation Really Exist? (20 min)
Rachael Barlow, Trinity College, Social Science Center
Gary Reger, Trinity College, History Department and Center for Teaching and Learning
In the next two panels, we consider competing explanations for the behavioral phenomena described in the first paper. Many theories have been offered: that today’s students form a new “Millennial” generation with new personality characteristics resulting from their upbringing; that students belong to a developmental stage of “Emerging Adulthood” that is distinct from the early teen years; that the physical development of the brain sets boundaries on the emergence of metacognition; and that today’s social environment has created new demands on college-age people requiring different responses from the past. And all of these views have been subject to critiques, ranging from the theoretical to the practical.

Panel 1 – 9:00-10:15

Moderators:
Jim Trostle, Trinity College, Department of Anthropology
Erica Klein, Trinity College, Class of 2011, Psychology

Connecting the Dots: Insights into Millennial Students from Learning Research (20 min)
Michele DiPietro, Kennewick State College, Center for Teaching Excellence

Generation Me: Misery or Milestones? (20 min)
Anne Law, Rider College, Department of Psychology

Millennial Students and the Social Organization of College (20 min)
David Reuman, Trinity College, Department of Psychology

Questions and Discussion (15 min)

Break – 10:15-10:30 (15 min)
Panel 2 – 10:30-11:45

Moderators:
Kathleen Archer, Trinity College, Department of Biology
Andrew Page, Trinity College, Class of 2011, Mathematics

Looking Inside the Mind of Millennial Students: What do They Know or Not Know about Learning (20 min)
Dina Anselmi, Trinity College, Department of Psychology, Center for Teaching and Learning
Nicole Dudukovic, Trinity College, Department of Psychology

Diverse Millennial Students in College: Implications for Faculty and Student Affairs (20 min)
Fred Bonner, Texas A&M University, Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development, Office of the Dean of Faculties

Digital Natives? Web and Filmmaking Technologies, and Public Accountability (20 min)
Luis Figueroa, Trinity College, Departments of History and Programs in Caribbean and Latin American Studies, and Film Studies

Questions and Discussion (15 min)

Lunch -- 12:00-1:00 (60 min)
Part II:
The Implications for Teaching (Afternoon Sessions)

What do we as faculty, and young people as students, do with the ideas we explored in the morning sessions? Does it matter, from a practical point of view, whether any of these theories is “correct”, or should we be concerned with the day-to-day questions of teaching and learning, and let the theory go?

Panel 3 – The View from the Chair in the Classroom (1:00-1:45 pm)

What is the student experience? How do the views expressed in the morning panels jibe with our own students’ lives and learning? On this panel three Trinity College undergraduates talk about their own sense of their peers, learning, and the challenges of the new century.

Moderators:
Allison Read, Trinity College, The Chaplaincy
David Tatem, Trinity College, Information Technology

Trinity Student Participants:
Alexandra Aldredge, Trinity College, Class of 2011, History, Religion
Caitlin Crombleholme, Trinity College, Class of 2013, Theater and Dance, English
Andrew Page, Trinity College, Class of 2011, Mathematics

Questions and Discussion (15 min)
Panel 4 – The View from the Podium (1:45-3:00)

And what do faculty see? Trinity College faculty talk about their sense of student life, how students think and learn and the challenges of teaching students in the new century.

**Moderators:**
Kat Power, Trinity College, Department of Theater and Dance
Mary Sullivan, Trinity College, Class of 2013, Public Policy

**The Challenge of the College Classroom for First-Year Students (15 min)**
Margaret Lindsey, Trinity College, First-Year Program

**The Challenge of Ambiguity (15 min)**
Sheila Fisher, Trinity College, English Department, Office of the Dean of Faculty

**Advising the Millennial Student (15 min)**
Stefanie Chambers, Trinity College, Department of Political Science

**Lessons from the Court: Coaching the Millennial Student-Athlete (15 min)**
Jennifer Bowman, Trinity College, Department of Athletics,

**Questions and discussion – 15 minutes**

**Break – 3:00-3:15 (15 min)**
Panel 5 – The View from the Disciplines and Programs (3:15-4:15)

How do faculty teaching in particular disciplines or programs manage teaching and learning of today’s college students? How do they inculcate the particular practices of thinking that are required to be successful practitioners of a discipline or engaged citizens of the world? What opportunities arise in teaching today’s students?

Moderators:
Lida Maxwell, Trinity College, Department of Political Science, Trinity Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies
Ashley Meilleur, Trinity College, Class of 2011, Psychology

Science Writing, Wikis, and Collaborative Learning (15 min)
Mike O’Donnell, Trinity College, Department of Biology

Poetry, Close Reading, and Self-Critique (15 min)
Ciaran Berry, Trinity College, Department of English

A Place for Civic Engagement (15 min)
Carol Clark, Trinity College, Department of Economics

Questions and Discussion (15 min)
Summing It Up (4:15-4:35)

Moderators:
Alexandra Aldredge, Trinity College, Class of 2011, History and Religion
Caitlin Crombleholme, Trinity College, Class of 2011, Theater and Dance, English

Concluding Remarks
Anne Law, Rider University, Department of Psychology (10 min)
Jerry Watts, Graduate Center at City College of New York, Institute for Research on the African Diaspora in the Americas and the Caribbean (IRADAC) (10 min)

General Discussion (4:35-5:00)

Moderators:
Anne Law, Rider University, Department of Psychology
Jerry Watts, Graduate Center at City College, IRADAC