FACULTY TEAM FACILITATES IN THE TEACHING,
LEARNING & RESEARCH COLLABORATORY
IN THE ACADEMIC COMMONS

There are two entrances to the new Collaboratory on the second floor of Hege Library. Etched into glass above one are the words “IDEA Incubator” and above the other, “Experimental Classroom.” IDEA is an acronym for “Innovations, Dreams, Edifications, Aspirations.”

Heather Hayton, Ph.D., Professor of English and Director of the Honors Program; Melanie Lee-Brown, Ph.D., Professor of Biology and Director of Research and Creative Endeavors; and Maria Rosales, Ph.D., Professor of Political Science and Director of Faculty Development, make up the resident faculty team that is working to make the dream of the Collaboratory reality. In a recent conversation with Drs. Hayton, Lee-Brown, and Rosales, I first asked, what are your roles when they are in the library outside of their own departments and classrooms?

Melanie Lee-Brown (Director of Research and Creative Endeavors): “I serve both faculty and students. I am involved with programming and helping to encourage and further research efforts. I channel funds for students to travel to research programs/workshops/meetings during the year and also summer research Programs. I help match students with faculty sponsors for their research projects.”

Maria Rosales (Director of Faculty Development): “As my title suggests, I work with faculty members. This includes working with them to make them better professors. I organize workshops and reading groups and I handle the budget of several funds for these purposes. I act as a resource and a sympathetic ear for professors to talk with if they are having problems in or out of class.”

Heather Hayton (Director of the Honors Program): “I work primarily with students. I do some fundraising and a lot of recruitment of new students into the Honors
We are here to create a space where faculty can get out of their silos and work with one another to approach a problem from different perspectives. And most importantly, if we can do that, then we are able to help our students do it too. It's about breaking down the walls. And it's not a silent process! Learning should be joyful and loud and we want the Academic Commons to be that space where this can take place, outside of the silos. A place where we can enter into the conversation from different places and enjoy it and benefit from it. The unexpected happens and it’s inspiring and exciting! This is a space where that creativity can happen.

Melanie Lee-Brown: For example, there is an exciting new Academic Commons partnership forming called the IDEA Design Team, which will be based in the IDEA Incubator. Using “Design Thinking” as its framework, the IDEA Design Team will offer collaborative consulting for faculty interested in exploring innovative approaches to pedagogy and scholarship. Maria, Tamika Davis (Digital Pedagogy and Scholarship Technologist), and I will form the core of the team, and will draw other faculty and staff in as partners for support as we discern the focus and scope of proposed projects.

Heather Hayton: I would say that the Academic Commons is an intentional partnership between faculty and the library professionals to try and make our core mission more 21st-century if you will, to fit with contemporary needs, more interdisciplinary, more collaborative, and importantly, more exciting.

Suzanne Bartels, Director of Hege Library, added “Everyone in this building is part of the Academic Commons. The Academic Commons is the library and the library is the Academic Commons. There is no difference. As we stated in the strategic plan, our dream was the library as academic commons.”

For more information on this and other exciting new developments in Hege Library, go to http://www.guilford.edu/library.

Efforts are now underway to build an endowment to support this work in Hege Library, the Academic Commons – to advance innovations in teaching, learning, and scholarship. We urge our readers to consider contributing to this effort by pledging your support which you can do by visiting http://www.guilford.edu/giving.

- From the Guilford College Beacon

Collaboratory Dedication

The Teaching, Learning, and Research Collaboratory was introduced to the College on March 26th. A fitting tribute was paid to H. Curtis & Patricia Shields’77 Hege. A dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony was held, commencing with a formal program in the Art Gallery Atrium and culminating in a reception and showcase in and around the new Collaboratory on the Library’s second level. Curt and Pat Hege were honored for their continuing commitment and belief in the re-imagining of Hege Library as Guilford’s Academic Commons, a belief solidified by their investment in the construction of this new and exciting learning space.

As part of the Collaboratory dedication program, the winners of the third annual Hege Library Research Award were announced and presented to graduating seniors and Honors Program students Ro (Rocio) Lutenbacher and Taryn McFadden. Established through the generosity of the Heges and the Friends of the Library in 2014, the Hege Library Research Award annually awards two students $1,000 each for exemplary research theses.

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