

GCFA Newsletter April 2013

President's Message:

Has a student of yours ever complained to the dean about your teaching, your textbook, your grading, or you in general?

Have you ever had a student tell you in front of other students to "Kiss my ass?"

Have you ever had a student who was so disruptive that other students begged you to somehow bar his or her attendance?

Have you ever had a student threaten to beat you up?

I really truly deeply hope not.

And yet, as I worked through an explosive situation in my own teaching life this semester, it seems as if every colleague I confided in had a horror story of his or her own. Who knew? But I'd like to discuss three levels of trouble students sometimes get into, and what are prudent and appropriate responses to each at Gavilan.

I hate to do it. We all went

into teaching to share our passion and our wisdom. Being afraid to go to class is not something anyone bargained for--and yet I'm finding a surprising number of us have been there, done that--male and female, young and old, part-time and full-time. With the pressures students are facing, a notable lack in our towns of affordable mental health services for students (something a great group at Gavilan is working to address), and easy access to weapons of terrible power, maybe it's time we all stop and attend to doing all we can to ensure our safety and security. This little guide will be online at

http://www.gavfaculty.com/GCFA_Files/troublewstudent.htm

Case One: the student who doesn't like your teaching, your textbook, your grading, or you. We've all had chemistry problems with a student, or had students who simply don't agree with or respect us. 1. In this case, it is important to review your academic freedom rights, which are on the GCFA website at

http://www.gavfaculty.com/GCFA_Files/academicfreedompolicy.htm .

These essentially say that you have the right to teach without fearing reprisals based on your methods or content. 2. Review, if applicable, Article 32 of the Gavilan Contract on Public Charges, which outlines what happens if charges are made against you at a public meeting or in a public way. See contract here:

http://www.gavfaculty.com/GCFA_Files/gcco.html

3. Then review the Student Grievance Procedure,

http://www.gavfaculty.com/GCFA_Files/stcomplaintacadfreed.html which strictly sets forth the detailed, step by step process a student must follow if she or he wishes to challenge some aspect of the learning experience in your classroom. If a student jumps the gun and goes directly to the dean without checking with you, for example, the dean must send the student back to talk to you. If this does not happen, the dean has opened the door to a grievance filed on your behalf (but only at your request) by the union over the procedural violation. It is not all right for administrators to meet at length with students who have not yet taken even an initial complaint to their professors.

Case Two: the student who tries to bully you. Not everyone bothers to follow process when they are unhappy about some aspect of class. Some students try to bellow,

intimidate, or manipulate you into giving them their way. If you are in such a situation, my best advice is to attend the session this week with Dr. Charles Majuri of our counseling department on bullying at 4 p.m. on Thursday April 18 in the NS Lounge. We'll talk about the bully and his or her motives, our responses, prevention. (Not all bullying situations involve students--we'll discuss other possibilities too.) Notes from the workshop will go up on the Gavilan website as soon as is practical. If you can't attend the workshop but you are suffering such a situation, tell someone--your department chair, a colleague, a union officer, our Grievance Officer Leslie Tenney, Security, your dean. We are experts in our fields, but not all of us have had experience with the full range of negative human behaviors that a college can encompass. It's not a shame to need, and get, help. And bullying can escalate into threats and worse.

Which brings me to Case Three: the student who disrupts class or threatens you or others. You have the right to feel secure and safe at Gavilan. Your students have the right to a class that is productive and free from chaotic disruption. If class is being disrupted or threats are occurring, you must (for your safety and the safety of others) get help. Such a situation is beyond one teacher's control, and the college's procedures must be followed for everyone's good. Again, talk about it--preferably with Campus Security, your Dean, and VP of Student Services John Pruitt. Keep calling until someone answers. If a threat is involved, make a report to the security officer on duty so you are on record with a concern. Discuss with VP Pruitt whether you would like him to declare a two-day "summary suspension"--this removes the student from your class for the next two sessions so the VP of Student Services can meet with the student to investigate the situation. Often problems are resolved here, as many students want to continue in class and are able to modify their behaviors to do so.

If the problem is not resolved, or the student fails to contact VP Pruitt, or the student fails to come to an appointment with VP Pruitt, the next step may be a "trespass warning" that tells a student not to come to campus for any reason other than a meeting with VP Pruitt. If a student disregards this, s/he may be arrested. If a meeting does occur, many results are possible. Depending on the severity of the student's behavior, and the extent of the student's efforts to make amends, consequences may range from requiring an apology to suspending the student from the college--and everything in between. The consequences part may be out of your hands, but it is important to note that the college has standards of student behavior that must be respected--it's not just you, but the entire college community, that has a strong interest in students who peaceably pursue their educational goals. If you are uneasy, you can ask our excellent Security Department for advice and/or backup. They are very supportive--and I speak from experience.

There's no shame in having trouble with students. It happens to everyone. Really. The real problem is not reaching out for help that you need and deserve.

Leah Halper
GCFA President

Ever get that feeling you're being bullied?

Bullying happens at colleges--students, faculty, staff administrators can all bully. At Gavilan, bullying is not unknown.

Come for a discussion jointly sponsored by CSEA-GCFA on

*why people bully

*how to recognize if you are being bullied

*when bullying breaks the law

*personal and community responses to bullying

*free speech and bullying on a college campus

Thursday, April 18, 4 p.m., North Lounge. All welcome.

Presenter will be Dr. Charles Majuri, who's spent the last 35 years before coming to Gavilan College working with emotionally disturbed children and families in many different venues: hospitals and acute care, residential treatment, day treatment, outpatient, private practice, public and private schools. His last position in mental health was executive director of a three county mental health system in Oregon. He also served as a school psychologist for Sutter County, Ca. and in Hollister, Ca. for one year at Margarite Maze and Gavilan Hills Schools. His training includes a B.A. in psychology/zoology from San Diego State University, a Masters Degree from the University of San Diego in Counseling and Ph.D. in clinical psychology from United States International University. Dr. Majuri is a registered Horticulture Therapist and has written and consulted nationally and internationally on this subject.

Graduation regalia deadline - April 19

Last reminder for ordering your regalia for the May 24th Graduation: If you plan on attending and did not confirm already, please respond no later than April 19th.

Alexis Bollin|Store Manager|Gavilan College Bookstore|Ph:408-848-4742|Fax:408-847-0280| 0282mgr@fhcg.follett.com

BBQ

Plan to come and hang out at the GCFA's

Annual staff Springtime BBQ- Thursday April 25, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. at the Mayock House

Food : Chicken, Vegetarian, salads, desserts, beverages

Dessert and Salad Judging contests; Music - Croquet - Fellowship

All Gavilan Staff welcome! Don't bring your lunch! Bring a friend, and make some new friends! Sponsored by GCFA; Desserts provided by administration

RSVP to slawrence@gavilan.edu

Give Some Credit

Any Gavilan employee is considered to qualify for an account at Santa Clara County Federal Credit Union. Check out the Credit Union's offerings at <https://www.sccfcu.org/ASP/home.asp>

Did You Know?

If you have an office or use an office or classroom at Gavilan, it should work for you without causing ergonomic problems. If you have ergonomic issues such as carpal tunnel, the college Health and Safety Officer Pam Gangloff can help you resolve the cause of your trouble. Contact Eric Ramones at HR, eramones@gavilan.edu, to get the process started.

Graduation

All faculty are welcome to attend graduation and walk in the procession in academic garb. You can bring your own cap and gown or rent through the bookstore (though the deadline has now passed.) For the first year, PT faculty will be listed in the program. Please let Andy Van Tuyl, membership chair, know asap if you have an academic title (MFA or PhD.) that you would like listed with your name! He's savantuyl@gavilan.edu

Our Other Lives: Gavilan faculty and staff talk about their projects!

When: Wednesday April 17, 5:15-6:15pm

Where: Mayock House

Who: Eric Ramones, Kathy Baameur, Daniel Munoz

What: Please join us for our second informal discussion featuring three more of our colleagues. This event was so fun the first time, we're doing it again! We're excited to set aside this time to hear about the projects that our colleagues are most passionate about (in addition to what they do here at Gav, of course). Kathy, Eric, and Daniel will reflect on these questions: please describe your Other Work and how you find time for it; describe a current or favorite project; and what challenges does your work pose for you?

- Kathy Baameur (ESL) will talk about her work with the diverse South Valley Islamic Community (SVIC).
- Eric Ramones (Human Resources) will talk about his upcoming presentation at the Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education National Conference entitled, "Putting the Human Back into Human Resources: Soft Skills in Leadership."
- Daniel Munoz (Music) will talk about his PhD dissertation, an ethnography of the Los Angeles noise music scene.

All are welcome! We are hoping that the later time will make this event possible for staff, students, and faculty. Also, please feel free to come late or leave early. We are looking forward to some fun conversation in an informal setting!

Congratulations

Congratulations to Dr. Nick Vasallo for landing a cool fulltime job teaching what he loves at Cal Poly Pomona!

And to Jane Rekedal, GCFA VP, who is recovering from generous organ donation surgery!

Emergency funds

Suffer a fire? Flood? Earthquake? Our national and state unions both have emergency funds to help you start picking up the pieces. Contact a GCFA officer if you can use a little help.

Would You Like to Help Give Money Away?

GCFA annually gives scholarships at graduation to deserving students.

This year, we will award a Transfer scholarship, Career-Technical scholarship, and a scholarship to a student in any field who has overcome significant adversity to complete at least forty units.

Please contact GCFA VP Jane Rekedal or Grant Richards ASAP to volunteer for the pleasure of choosing recipients!

Staff Recognition

Please save the date for the 2013 Staff Recognition event that will take place on **Friday, May 17, 2013** at the Gilroy Elks Lodge.

The dinner is complimentary for this year's retirees, years of service recipients, board members and employees.

The cost for all guests will be \$35 per person.

Be sure to look for the invitation in your mailbox the week of Monday, April 15, 2013 and check our website for updates and more information about this

event: <http://www.gavilan.edu/tlc/dinner.html>

Sincerely,

The Staff Recognition Committee

(Chair: Ron Hannon, Members: Connie Campos, Diane Stone, Lorraine Welk, Lucy Alvarez, and Sabrina Lawrence)