Like a locomotive across the frontier, online education has rolled out over the landscape of major research universities in less than one year. In September 2012, Emory partnered with the California-based company Coursera to offer free online courses to the world. At that time, the number of Coursera users had topped 1.4 million. Its university partners already included Princeton, Stanford, and Duke. The company had been founded only six months before.

Online courses are nothing new. The field was already growing steadily, from 1.6 million students in 2002 to more than 6.1 million in 2010—an expansion mostly attributed to for-profit education. What is new is the role of top-tier institutions, which have not only entered the game but have changed it. These “Massive, Open Online Courses”—with their ungainly acronym, MOOCs—aim to bring free, high profile university classes to traditionally disadvantaged learners around the globe. Even though they generally do not receive credit toward a degree for completing the courses, students flock to them by the tens of thousands.
Also new are advances in the technology for greater interactivity and adaptability. No longer a unidirectional delivery of lectures and readings, online education now includes graded quizzes and exams. Students may submit homework assignments and course projects. Forums allow students to collaborate and conduct their own discussion sessions. Carnegie Mellon University’s Open Learning Initiative engages technology to personalize course material—sophisticated artificial intelligence software detects the strengths and weaknesses of individual students and tailors the presentation of textbook material to their understanding.

Many instructors and institutions are using these new technologies not merely to extend their courses to millions, but to blend traditional and online models for more effective teaching and transform the real and virtual spaces in which learning happens. This issue of the AE explores the ways technology and other social and cultural forces are changing those spaces and re-shaping the fundamental notions of what constitutes a university campus—starting with the classroom itself.

**Transformed learning spaces**

One common strategy is to “flip the classroom”—that is, to invert the conventional model so that lectures are delivered via online video for students to watch on their own time, freeing classroom meetings for other activities, such as discussion and collaborative work. Associated Professor in the Practice of Information Systems and Operations Management Steve Walton pre-recorded all the lectures for his Executive MBA course, Supply Chain Management and Operation, this year. “My experience so far suggests that you can get [students] to a much higher order of thinking with this approach. The whole idea is to shift the lecture portion into distance technology so that the in-class portion can be used for more high-value stuff,” he says. “In the regular classroom environment, when it’s primarily lecture, you end up spending most of your time on conveyance of rote facts. Think about how many classes really have time to think creatively, to use integration and synthesis. But with this flipped class design, I can deliver the rote assets off line, out of class, and spend the entire class doing other things.”

New technologies may have birthed these changes, but the current generation of learners is driving its growth. Today’s students reflect a significant shift in how learning occurs. These “digital natives” have grown up in a world entirely connected to information and to one another. With that connectivity in mind, Duke University scholar Cathy Davidson, co-director of the Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Advanced Collaboratory, takes the notion of the flipped classroom a step further, into a radically democratic vision of education. In her book *Now You See It: How the Brain Science of Attention Will Transform the Way We Live, Work, and Learn* (Viking 2011), she argues that students today

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**OPEN ONLINE COURSES IN MAJOR RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES: A TIMELINE**

**February 2012:** After opening his course on artificial intelligence to tens of thousands of students online for free, computer scientist Sebastian Thrun leaves Stanford to launch Udacity, offering university-level online courses to the masses.

**March 2012:** Stanford engineering professors Andrew Ng and Daphne Koller follow suit with Coursera, offering “massive, open online courses,” or “MOOCs,” taught by faculty from Stanford, Berkeley, Penn, and Michigan in math, computer science, economics, and linguistics.

**May 2012:** Harvard and MIT jointly commit $60 million to develop a nonprofit called edX, a platform for interactive online education in humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, offered freely to hundreds of thousands of students at a time. The platform is open-source, so that other universities may also host edX courses.

**July 2012:** A dozen more universities sign on with Coursera, making it the largest provider in the field. Among the new partners are Georgia Tech, Princeton, Duke, and Rice. The University of Virginia also signs on with Coursera, right after UVa’s president was ousted then reinstated in part over the urgency of entering the arena of online education.

**September 2012:** Emory joins the next wave of 17 institutions signing with Coursera and offers three free online courses on digital sound design, immigration law, and AIDS.

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Student 1: 4 scenario let’s use blogs JLMK
Student 2: BME ICAM
Student 3: I2
Student 2: We need 2 write it up WAWA
Student 3: Let’s finish 2MOR
Student 1: K TTYL

The conversation above could have been from my distance-based summer course, Technology Tools for Public Health, in which students explore a myriad of technology tools for collaboration, communication, instruction, productivity, and social networking. Students are presented with public health scenarios and, working in small groups, must identify a technology solution for each scenario. The twist is that they must use Twitter, VoiceThread, and Wikis as their primary modes of communication when discussing the scenarios.

Five years ago, that conversation would have looked a little different:

Student 1: For this scenario, let’s use blogs.
Just let me know what you think.
Student 2: Based on my experience, I couldn’t agree more.
Student 3: Me too.
Student 2: We need to write this up.
Where are we at with this?
Student 3: Let’s finish tomorrow.
Student 1: Okay. Talk to you later.

When my journey as a distance-learning faculty member began in 2001, I had been teaching for nine years in continuing education and the traditional MPH program at Rollins. That year, I began teaching for the Career MPH program, Rollins’s distance-based MPH
driven by “the very nature of interactivity, crowdsourcing, customizing, and inspired inquiry-driven problem-solving.”

Revenue and credentials

As online learning becomes more sophisticated and creditable, new questions arise: Why are universities and venture capitalists pouring enormous resources into developing free courses with no credit and no revenue? Indeed, neither Coursera nor the similar platforms are making a profit. While they are toying with a variety of business plans—job placement services, fee-based certification and testing, alternate admissions systems for universities—none are proven. Another key question is whether students need to have the imprimatur of a diploma with a university seal for their educations to have meaning to employers. Are full degree programs online to students globally—including an MBA scholarship? A way to promote the institutional brand around the world?

Some companies are tackling the questions of both revenue and credentials. 2U invests $10 million into its partner institutions’ technical infrastructures, including skilled “production teams” on campus to help design and produce the courses. It also undertakes much of the global recruiting and marketing for the programs. Some of the content is asynchronous, but classes, which are much smaller than Coursera courses, do meet regularly in a virtual classroom via web cam. Hermalyn says the screen “looks like the Brady Bunch” opening credits—a tic-tac-toe board of faces. “It’s a very intimate experience,” he adds. “Some faculty will tell you they get to know their students online better than the students in the classroom.”

Online learning at Emory

A few “hybrid” programs—part distance, part on-campus—have existed at Emory for more than a decade. The Modular Executive MBA and the Career MPH were both launched in 2001 to target busy professionals. Both programs blend online coursework with periodic sessions on campus. More recently, the Candler School of Theology has been working with the Sloan Consortium to train a cadre of faculty to teach twelve to fifteen core courses in an online or hybrid format. Coursera presents a slightly different scenario. Most faculty teaching via Coursera are drawn to it by the irresistible opportunity to reach minds curious about their subject matter, even though they will likely never have personal contact with their far-flung thousands of students. In late October, enrollments for Emory’s three pilot courses ranged from 5,000 to 10,500.

Indeed, most online learning at Emory and elsewhere is currently focused on professional education and non-traditional student populations. It neatly addresses space and geographical constraints, thereby, it is hoped, improving time-to-degree and retention—and these are some of the potential benefits cited by proponents. But scant data yet exists on how online education affects learning outcomes, outside of fields in which learning can be easily and objectively measured, such as statistics, mathematics, and computer science. Can an online class achieve the charged experience of a lively debate in a real classroom, the kind that leads to analytical and critical thinking? Also uncertain is the long-term impact on faculty. The learning curve, pedagogical adjustments, technology and support requirements, and preparation time for teaching in an online environment are significant, not to mention problematic legal questions of intellectual property ownership of course content.

“2U invests $10 million into its partner institutions’ technical infrastructures, including skilled “production teams” on campus to help design and implement an online course. There are also pedagogical challenges: how to include interactivity and group work, and how to address different learning styles. An additional challenge is deciding when and how to incorporate the ever-proliferating new technologies. It has now been 12 years (and 24 courses) since I first entered the online environment. While I once wondered what I was getting myself into, I now embrace the unknowns as opportunities to strengthen my own skills as an educator.” —A.O.A.
Through the Digital and Physical Gateway

Perspectives from a new librarian

For the past seven years, I’ve been serving as the Vice President of Information Technology at Emory. This past summer, I took on the additional role of interim vice provost and director of the Emory Libraries. Some might see these as radically different jobs; others might see great convergence in the two disciplines. From my own vantage point, I’ve tried to keep an open mind as I’ve moved from being a customer and spectator of our libraries to an insider. Over the last few months I’ve enjoyed climbing the learning curve of understanding all that goes on in the day-to-day operations of a modern university library. Although only a few months into the role, I thought I would use this as an opportunity to share my observations on what the future of our library may hold and how I believe we can position ourselves for that future in spite of what might seem to be a very resource-constrained environment.

First, a little more context on my perspectives. I started my academic career as a faculty member in a school of medicine, where I taught, did research, and provided clinical care. In association with those academic pursuits, I also ran a consulting business focused on biostatistics and information technology. Eventually I decided to concentrate on the application of information technology in higher education. Moving between these pursuits left me with a high degree of comfort about change and an appreciation of the many different perspectives that one is likely to encounter in a large, complex university such as Emory.

Imagining the future while staying grounded in the present

I’m thankful for that background as I consider all the vectors of change in higher education. There is much to be said for constantly imagining the future, as long as you don’t lose sight of present realities—and as long as you don’t become overconfident in your ability to prognosticate. It is hard these days not to get caught up in the optimism associated with the migration to all things digital. In our contemporary academic library this change may be most evident in our move to online journals. Since 2005, the percentage of journals that we provide in electronic form in our health sciences library has gone from under 20 percent to 99 percent. The change is less dramatic when you factor in all of the libraries at Emory, but the trend is clear.

In the rush to imagine all that might be possible in the digital future of libraries, however, it is all too easy to overshadow what still isn’t.

The Woodruff Health Sciences Center Library Renovation

In 2011, the Woodruff Health Sciences Center Library completed a space renovation, aligning the library with the educational and research missions of the Woodruff Health Sciences Center and the university and promoting flexibility, ease of use, and barrier-free interaction.

The objective? To allow library users to experience a unique, vigorous hybrid of both physical and virtual elements: social and study spaces; data, information- and knowledge-rich environments; and advanced information management tools.

The Woodruff Health Sciences Center (WHSC) Library opened its doors in January 1987 in the Dental School Building. Established in 1923 as the A.W. Calhoun Medical Library and located in the Woodruff Memorial Building, the library had outgrown its space as Health Sciences Center schools and programs expanded. Those days, every student came to the library to retrieve course reserve readings, view assigned slide presentations, photocopy journals articles, check out books, and study. Professor of Medicine H. Kenneth Walker required each medical student enrolled in Clinical Methods to have a session with the medical librarians on developing search strategies in the National Library of Medicine’s Medline database. Professor of Epidemiology John Boring III held small group classes in the library’s first Mac computer lab for the Analytic Medicine course.

Jump forward twenty years to a very different landscape. Blackboard and Reserves Direct provided an entirely new space for students to access and interact with assigned course materials. Electronic books, journals, bibliographic and imaging databases, and search tools rendered print collections much less important than ever before. And even more recently, most students today use multiple personal devices including laptops, iPads, and smart phones to link to library information resources any time and from any place, as confirmed by the 2012 UTS student survey.

While these changes produced an overall positive effect on academia, they also introduced many challenges, ranging from understanding the provenance and ownership of data and information to appreciating the library’s role in information management, to an awareness of the variety of services the WHSC Library currently provides. With faculty and graduate and undergraduate students in the sciences becoming more aware of the issues at hand and expressing the desire for a face-lift for the library, the Woodruff Health Sciences Center Library embarked on a complex project to rethink its space—and to create a more contemporary environment that emphasizes student and faculty learning and teaching needs.

Balancing print and electronic collections with open study spaces equipped with technology, we thought, would highlight relationships in the complex world of information science. The creative thinking of the architect, the prior experiences of University Library facilities staff, the expertise of campus planners, and the vision of WHSC Library administration and staff combined to result in a powerfully reinvented space—but one that tested the flexibility of a 1960s building for a second renovation.

The first phase of this project required removing large quantities of print volumes, already available online. After some thorough analysis and recycling, we remodeled the space most visible and accessible to users to accommodate the new settings and enable a technologically current, well-wired and wireless environment for interdisciplinary interaction involving electronic data. This included large-screen Macs, café booths for groups and individuals, screened areas for on-demand group discussions, smart boards, and all-in-one printing stations. We also established videoconferencing space, large collaborative conference space equipped with smart boards, and small-group study spaces.

Our guiding principle for the renovation was to create an open, flexible, technology-enhanced learning environment with a variety of ergonomic seating options for optimal collaboration and study. It led to a repurposing of library space to become centered on learning, with collections distributed throughout the building, and books placed within reach of where the learning happens. The entrance to the library was moved to the lower level, which created an entirely new entry into the library and produced much greater visibility. What used to be book stacks that a passerby saw through the library windows, now are open spaces and workstations, equipped with PCs and Macs, as well as a variety of seating to suit any style and preference: booth, bar-height stool, traditional workstation. The book collection was moved from the lower to the upper level, intended as the more quiet study space. An untraditional area was added to the upper level, too, featuring a lounge with vending machines and lockers. Altogether, these changes allowed for a much

continued on next page
more efficient deployment of library space: some simply discovered the library, some discovered the books in the library, others learned about technologies and spaces they could use, and still more discovered library services and possibilities of which they were not aware before.

The renovated WHSC Library now incorporates a blend of technologies to accommodate the variety of pedagogical approaches. Faculty groups reserve the Collaboration Room to brainstorm and collectively work on proposals/grants; departments use the Classroom to hold seminars and training; students engaged in group projects use whiteboards; and various groups making connections with remote locations use newly available audio and videoconferencing capabilities. The next step is to establish productivity workstations to enable high-end computing in the library. Already, there are two computers on the upper level devoted to high capacity processing for gene and protein analysis software.

Today, the remodeled library space provides unique opportunities for diverse library user groups and individuals to connect and collaborate, conduct research in a neutral space, and interact with one another, librarians, data, information, and print collections in a technologically advanced environment. Efforts to combine a welcoming collaborative environment with technology-enabled spaces resulted in an increase in daily activities. The renovated space is visible to those traveling across the pedestrian bridge to and from our major customer base: the medical school, the nursing school, the school of public health, the life sciences, and the Rollins and Whithead research buildings. As a result, the library as a place still proves to be an important concept for learners and teachers alike in academia.

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The Research Commons
Placemaking for learning in a twenty-first-century library

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un-drenched reading rooms, dark wood tables, and cozy chairs are as evocative of great libraries as stack towers and full bookshelves. This is because libraries have always been more than their collections; they are inspiring places where scholars learn, think, and create. It does not get as much attention as activities like collection development and archive curation, but placemaking is an important responsibility for any research library.

Traditionally, the research library has been designed for scholars to do work that is separate from teaching and for students to work on assignments. Task chairs and study carrels offer quiet seclusion close to the library’s resources. The lines between research and pedagogy, however, have never been very thick, and the line between classwork and homework is becoming more porous as well. New strategies, such as blended learning and flipping the classroom, are challenging the image of the scholar pouring knowledge into students from the front of the class. Additionally, the idea of the scholar retreating into solitary study is getting stale as emerging technology facilitates—even demands—partnerships with other scholars and technical experts.

In order to meet these emerging needs, Emory has established The Research Commons in the Robert W. Woodruff Library. Prominently located on the third floor, the Research Commons was designed as an open workspace with graduate students and faculty in mind. Additionally, the space serves as a public-facing front door to a wide variety of resources and services located in the library. The Research Commons is a truly neutral space, where interdisciplinary groups of scholars can meet and work collaboratively.

The space itself was designed to be as flexible as possible. The team, which included architects, designers, scholars, and librarians, resisted the temptation to build small offices in favor of an open space. Most of the furniture can be easily moved, and large marker boards can also be used to create temporary, semi-private spaces. This open design also allows scholars to get a peek at what others are working on and to be inspired by what they see. These unplanned and serendipitous encounters, along with more formal events such as workshops and guest speakers, enable the Research Commons to establish and nurture an interdisciplinary community of scholars interested in digital scholarship.

This flexibility is made possible by ubiquitous wireless internet connectivity and the widespread adoption of laptops and tablet devices. Instead of a computer lab with rows and rows of desktop machines, the Research Commons offers multiple large monitors that can be used as secondary displays for laptops. Scholars who do not bring their own computers can check one out from the library.

For projects that require more than a laptop can provide, there are two iMacs equipped for creative design work with images and videos. There are also three dual-monitor performance PC workstations with animation, 3-D modeling, database, and geospatial capability.

Currently, the only full-time resident of the Research Commons is the Digital Scholarship Commons. DiSC, as it is generally known, seeks to facilitate experimental, collaborative work. In DiSC, scholars partner with library staff who can recommend tools and processes that minimize redundancies and prepare for long-term maintenance and preservation. Emory’s Library has a long history of partnering with faculty who use emerging technology in their research, but the recent increase of interest in such projects demanded proactive action to coordinate demand and capacity.

Of the seven projects currently in development in DiSC, three of these projects—Views of Rome, Tracking Samothrace, and the Atlanta Geocoder—rely heavily on the geospatial technology available in the Research Commons. Each of these projects has teams comprising library staff, faculty, and students who work in the Research Commons. Their efforts blur the lines between pedagogy and research, classwork and homework. For example, the Views of Rome project used the workstations to create a single “Deep Zoom” interactive image map out of the twelve plates that make up Pirro Ligorio’s 1561 map of ancient Rome. For Bonna Wescoat’s Tracking Samothrace project, an online database platform was designed in the Research Commons so that the research team could upload content from the archaeological site in Greece. More recently, the Re-mapping Segregated Atlanta project is using the workstations to create a geocoding tool that rapidly transforms historic Atlanta address data, circa 1930, into point data on digital maps.

Students engaged in coursework are also using these technologies. For example, in the course Maps and Modeling: 21st Century Ways of Seeing ancient Greece and Baroque Rome, students used Google Earth, Google Sketchup, and other graphic programs in project work. In both introductory and advanced Geographic Information Systems (GIS), students have used the applications to address a need in a community, connect with content they are learning in another course, or add a map component to their master’s thesis. For example, in the undergraduate course, students have produced maps and data for Newton County’s The Center, an organization for community preservation and planning, and The South Fork Conservancy, a local organization working on repairing the damage to local streams caused by urbanization and neglect. In one of the graduate courses, a student explored the probable movements of contaminated water and its potential impact to the neighborhoods surrounding the Union Carbide Plant in Bhopal, India.

The specialized workstations also provide access to more geospatial programs that may not be available elsewhere on campus. In the course Public Health Applications of Remote Sensing, taught by Michael Page and Yang Liu, students used remote sensing applications to examine phenomena such as coral reef damage, the impact of atmospheric pollution on a human settlement, and significant loss of tree canopy. Whether it is access to specialized computing resources or finding a flexible space to work and collaborate, the Research Commons seeks to provide the Emory community a place where learning can coincide with research. While libraries have long histories as repositories of knowledge and information, they have also served their patrons as venues for communication, discovery, and productivity. Traditional library space is being transformed into flexible spaces that accommodate presentations, group learning, digital production, or even social events. Through a conscious and careful process of placemaking, Woodruff Library’s Research Commons has become a destination for these activities.
You’ll see learning become more of a continuum between the dorm space, the common living space, and the classrooms. There will be a growing emphasis on human interaction. Otherwise, why be on campus?

Michael J. Mandl
Executive Vice President, Finance and Administration

The Academic Exchange: What is your role regarding the infrastructure of learning spaces at Emory?

Michael Mandl: I see my role as helping put in place what the faculty, deans, and provost need to respond to the evolution of the learning environment. If there are significant physical needs, resource allocations, or investments that are needed to prepare us for that, then I’m generally involved in those discussions. I try to be respectful in the division of responsibilities for education versus administrative, financial, and facilities planning. When you talk about the future of education, it’s impossible to separate them completely. The discussions include faculty and people with my kind of background and skills, such as planning, aligning resources to get things to happen, and thinking about it in the context of local interest and of the larger community.

AE: How are changes in teaching and learning reflected in the physical structure of campus buildings?

MM: You want to design buildings that encourage interaction, whether it’s a classroom, a residence hall, or how a lab is laid out. A good example is the Cox Hall computing lab, which has evolved in such a way as to encourage interaction with other people rather than interaction with just the computer. The Woodruff Library is another example. A decade ago you’d go there to be by yourself and not mingle with other people—not hear other people. The library is no longer about creating space that exclusively supports quietness and solitude. Some people seek this at the library, but now you have the Research Commons and other spaces that foster collaborative work.

AE: How has this type of thinking affected the residence halls?

MM: The residence halls are another example of facilities that exemplify the changing nature of the learning experience. Look at what’s included in the new halls versus what was in those they replaced. There are classrooms in there, which never was the case before. There are full kitchens designed for sustainable cooking. There are study rooms for people to interact and that get students out of their rooms. The living environment itself becomes a learning environment.

The Academic Exchange: What do you envision the relationship between campus life and the academic mission of the university?

Ajay Nair: It’s a passion of mine, but it’s challenging work. What I’m happy about is that there already seem to be strong connections between the academic side and Campus Life. There’s wonderful integration, and it’s a great opportunity to build further.

One of the key areas for us in Residence Life and Housing is building strong living and learning communities, but I wouldn’t want the work to stop there. There are all sorts of opportunities for us when we think about how to connect the academic with the co-curricular. There are lots of spaces where we can create laboratories for students to extend what they learn in the classroom outside of the classroom, whether it’s through leadership opportunities, service and civic engagement, fraternity and sorority life, career exploration. You name it, we’re doing it right now. It’s just a matter of making it the very best in the country. That’s what I came here to do.

AE: What do you perceive as the most critical aspect of Campus Life, with respect to the university’s academic mission?

AN: It’s really about helping students reach their fullest potential. That can mean a lot of things—and it should—because every student is unique and has a particular set of goals and aspirations. It’s our job to guide
AE: Is it necessary to technologically update all campus buildings?

MM: It’s important that every room that needs to have new technology have it, and we’ve been doing that. I don’t mean to suggest that you don’t need any traditional spaces and that all the old spaces need to change. I think about it as a portfolio of spaces, and that portfolio represents a broader set of options than it used to. There’s still room and still a need for people to be off by themselves, and there’s undoubtedly still some room for traditional lecture classrooms, but it is evolving.

AE: What are some of your thoughts about distance learning?

MM: Distance learning is becoming more important at Emory. However, I believe there will also be value in the on-campus experience, because a lot of learning and development occurs outside of the classroom—it’s the chance encounter, the social and intellectual interaction that comes through exchanges with other people and which aren’t planned.

AE: What’s your vision of the campus, spatially, five or ten years from now?

MM: I think there will be more space designed for receiving information from elsewhere and fewer large lecture halls, because a higher portion of information will be received outside of the classroom. You’ll see learning become more of a continuum between the dorm space, the common living space, and the classrooms. There will be a growing emphasis on human interaction. Otherwise, why be on campus? The key is intellectual and social vibrancy. Try to think about what can happen here that can’t happen elsewhere, and make sure the space is dedicated to that. The mindset will be different. There will be a more conscious attitude toward the utilization of the space and making sure that it matters and can add value to what happens here.

AE: What are the greatest challenges and opportunities in reaching these goals?

We’re an incredibly complex university, so we must work to make this institution easy for students to navigate. We have a wealth of resources and opportunities for students, but how do we make them easily accessible to every student? That’s one of the important things we are doing in Campus Life, along with every person at this institution. I’m referring not just to undergraduate students but graduate and professional students as well. All our students need to know about the many programs and services available at Emory, because if students are able to successfully navigate this institution, they will be able to navigate the world around them. The complexity of the place is a challenge, but it’s also an opportunity.

Communication also presents a challenge because students receive information in many different ways. Through social media alone, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, LinkedIn, Instagram—the list goes on, and they are using multiple forms, plus text and email. What does that mean for us? How are we communicating with our students? We need to meet them where they are. That’s tied to fundamental philosophy in student affairs. It’s important we provide the appropriate level of challenge and the appropriate level of support. How we communicate with our students is the very foundation of all of this. If we do it right, the opportunity to build community, connect other students to faculty and staff, and disseminate knowledge beyond the classroom is something Campus Life can be engaged in.

AE: Considering social media, technology, and the concept of the “flipped classroom,” how do you think students’ experience of Campus Life might change?

AN: I’m working on it right now, in terms of how I will engage with students. I’ll have traditional face-to-face office hours, but I’m going to have virtual office hours as well. Every other Wednesday night from 9 to 10pm, I’ll be available on Twitter, so students can bounce ideas and questions. This supplements face-to-face—it won’t replace it. I heard a quote that in student affairs, we’re not the “sage on the stage” but we “guide on the side.” That’s exactly where I’m headed, and where I hope we’re headed in Campus Life. We have platforms—we could stand on a stage and let everyone know what we’re thinking—but that’s not how students learn. They have access to so much information any time they want, so how do we guide them through that maze? That’s what Campus Life is trying to do.

AE: What goals have you brought with you to Emory?

AN: My first goal is to listen carefully to faculty, staff, and students, to hear what works at Emory and build on that, making everything we do excellent. I’m interested in building living-learning communities and a learning community generally, bridging the academic and the co-curricular with a couple goals in mind. One is to help students make academic progress. That’s something Campus Life must support. The second goal is to help students feel a sense of belonging and connectedness in their community, which we can achieve through a learning community. These are our primary focus as we build an academic living and learning community.
Teaching with iPads
Expanding the classroom one tablet at a time

I t’s the moment that professors dream about: the “aha moment.” When everything you have been teaching finally comes together for your students. You can almost see a light bulb go off over their heads, and suddenly, they get it.

I (Donna Troka) had my own a-ha moment in the second week of my class From Archives to iPads: Investigating the Discourse of Sexuality at Emory. In this fall 2012 course, my students and I spend half our time in a classroom in Emory’s Center for Interactive Teaching (ECIT) and half our time doing archival research in the Manuscript and Rare Book Library (MARBL). The ECIT classroom is equipped with all the technology a teacher could ever need; the MARBL classroom is a meeting room at best: heavy wooden furniture, overstuffed leather chairs, and a breathtaking view of the greater Atlanta area. It is an ideal room for a wine and cheese reception but less so for impromptu lectures or internet searches during class.

Enter the iPad. When I first approached Chris Fearrington and Wayne Morse at ECIT about collaborating with me on this class, I explained that it was important to me that the students spend class time using the university archives in MARBL. I wanted them to engage the archives and capture what they found photographically, so that it could be part of the larger database of artifacts on sexuality that I hope to present in an exhibit. They suggested the students use iPads as a way to meet that course objective. Students could photograph what they found, upload the images to Dropbox, and then also download them to our class blog. I was sold on the use of iPads as a way to accomplish my goals for the class.

My a-ha moment happened when we actually put our hands on archival material. As a class, we were looking at the diaries of South Korean theology student Yun Chi-ho. In these diaries from the 1880s, Yun talked about traveling through the southeastern United States to lecture about the Methodist Church and Korea, and his relationship to the Emory community. Students were fascinated by the ornate handwriting and the stories he told of his attraction to the white women he met on Emory’s campus. As students read more, they began to encounter terms or abbreviations they were unfamiliar with. They raised their hands and asked me what these terms meant. I didn’t have an answer for them, so I took to my iPad and began to research it. Together, using information we extrapolated elsewhere in the entry, we were able to decipher the terms. I moved from student to student, iPad tablet in hand, and for a moment I stopped and thought, “I can only teach this class, in this space, the way I want to because of this iPad.” I looked around at students using the magnifying function to better read their entries, and I realized this technology was integral to achieving the outcomes I set forth in my course.

Several faculty are experiencing a-ha moments around campus using the iPad in and outside the classroom. The device is allowing faculty to extend learning beyond the classroom walls and help students learn visually, orally, and kinesthetically. Students are learning visually by creating video projects and taking pictures, learning orally by recording speeches and audio interviews, and learning kinesthetically by building music in GarageBand and editing video with iMovie.

Sissel McCarthy of journalism recently implemented iPads as part of her curriculum. Students were given the assignment of recording video...
A CASE FOR LARGER POCKETS  J Richard Pittman, Assistant Professor of General Medicine

outside Ms. Smith's room, my internal medicine ward team crowds around to discuss her admission to the hospital for abdominal swelling and evidence of worsening kidney function. This is my usual classroom: a space in the hall of Grady Memorial Hospital. Most of my inpatient teaching of medical students and residents takes place here, in brief conversations during rounds. An early adopter of technology, I have been carrying an iPad for more than a year and have found it exceedingly useful. My iPad enables me to demonstrate concepts and present current data on the spot, instead of having to track down a computer or photocopy articles later.

In the hallway, a medical student concludes her case summary: “Ms. Smith is a fifty-year-old woman presenting with advanced cirrhosis and acute kidney injury, most consistent with hepatorenal syndrome.” I think through questions to begin our discussion on cirrhosis and kidney injury as I reach for my iPad. I know the facts about hepatorenal syndrome, but I also know that monologues can lead to glazed eyes and interns with suddenly urgent pages.

“Tell me what you know about kidney problems in patients with cirrhosis,” I say. The student makes a rudimentary but correct answer, as I open an application called Papers containing a repository of articles I've found useful—a veritable trunk-load of journals.

“What happens to make the liver and kidneys stop playing nicely?” I ask, flipping through an article on the screen to a figure depicting the pathophysiological cascade of liver dysfunction leading to inadequate blood flow to the kidneys. We discuss the student's answer using the diagram for illustration.

“How do you know this is not another kind of kidney injury or a separate kidney problem altogether?” I ask, flipping to another article with the diagnostic criteria for hepatorenal syndrome. The student pulls out her pocket manual, and we compare information. “Good,” I say. “I think you're right.”

The session is almost over, and I come back to our patient, whose liver problems are quite advanced. "Given that Ms. Smith may actually have hepatorenal syndrome, what would you say if she asked how much time she had?" The group mumbles audibly, and I point to an enlarged graph on the screen from a third article that depicts the decline in months for patients with hepatorenal syndrome.

Realizing I have covered a lot of information in just a few minutes, I assign homework with the tap of my finger, emailing articles from my iPad. “You all take a look at the articles I just emailed you tonight. Let's go talk with Ms. Smith,” I say as we knock on her door and enter.

Tablet technology has become an essential tool in medical pedagogy. By engaging more of the learners' senses, the concepts I teach stick more consistently. My simple, quick access to primary literature increases the caliber and efficiency of these hallway discussions. In addition, I'm using a medium increasingly familiar to my learners. My only complaint: lab coat pockets are too small to hold an iPad.
Classrooms in Unexpected Places

Community engaged learning

Parla italiano?” was the question—in perfect Italian—from an elderly Ethiopian immigrant man during an event in the “Somali Mall” in Clarkston. Emory students in anthropology professor Debra Vidali’s class were presenting a series of ethnographic research findings that had resulted from their collaborative work with the Somali and Ethiopian communities in Atlanta as part of an anthropology course.

Professor Vidali answered in fluent Italian—not the subject of her course but a serendipitously and appropriately applied skill that accompanied her “back story” knowledge of a particular corner of the world. But the fact that Ethiopian men of a certain generation in Atlanta wished to communicate in Italian was completely out of the blue for all the students in the room. Why had he spoken in Italian? There is a historical reason that has to do with Italian colonization in East Africa and resulting education at the highest levels in the language of the colonizers that continued for decades even after independence. In fact, for the group of men to whom the students were presenting their work, speaking Italian is a social marker of belonging to the educated class in their home country.

None of this was going to come up in the traditional classroom, and it would certainly not have been so vividly evident to the Emory students that Atlanta is now a world stage—a place where immigrants from all over the world now find their life paths and a place that has been fundamentally changed by these new community members. Nor did the student in the class who is himself a third-generation East African immigrant have any inkling of this aspect of his grandparents’ context until that day.

This is the kind of teaching/learning moment that is possible when the classroom is engaged with the community, when community engaged learning is one of the organizing principles of a course, and when the classroom is, at least occasionally, constructed in the community.

Emory University has been transformed over the last half century from a small liberal arts institution attended by mostly white men to a major research university with an international presence, ties to the Carter Center and the Centers for Disease Control, and a vibrantly diverse student body. The intentional expansion of the notion of where the classroom is located—is where learning happens—is part of this transformation. Community-based learning is an important part of this picture, especially in the last decade. The university’s current strategic plan includes “Creating Engaged Scholars,” and “Creating Community-Engaging Society,” which led to the Strategic Initiative “Preparing Engaged Scholars.” Emory was one of 62 institutions classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in the new category of Curricular Engagement and Outreach & Partnerships (2008), and has received the Presidential Award for General Community Service from the Corporation for National and Community Service (2009).

With the Community Engaged Learning Initiative in the Center for Community Partnerships, there has been a blossoming of opportunities for students to engage with local communities. These include:

- “Beyond the Office Visit” and the Physical Therapy service-learning, School of Medicine
- the Urban Health Initiative, a collaboration among Emory University’s School of Medicine, the Center for Community Partnership (CFCP), the City of Atlanta, the State of Georgia, and community partners;
- community-based research and community-benefiting learning in the Sustainability Minor, internships, and a whole range of community engaged learning courses, Emory College
- the Leadership and Community-Engaged Learning program, Rollins School of Public Health
- enhanced opportunities for students in the Theory Practice Service-Learning Program and the Pierce Institute, Oxford College

This is a small sampling—the list could go on.

Community engagement provides many “learnable moments,” but more importantly, it provides what we might more accurately call “learnable moments.” In each instance of community engagement, students are challenged to understand that learning and knowledge creation are not the result of physical location in a classroom. Rather, not only does learning often take place outside the classroom and the bounds of the university, it actually must take place in those places if one is to emerge from a university education with the tools to meet the challenges of our increasingly complex and globalized world.

In other words, an essential life skill is to know how to learn and how to continue to learn. An excellent avenue for figuring this out is a “classroom” that is a community center, a church basement, an “editable schoolyard,” a small cultural center in an suburban office complex, the headquarters of an international NGO in downtown Atlanta, a community clinic, a hospital, or a local government office.

Key to this learning process, though, is the careful and thoughtful creation of articulation points between these unconventional learning spaces and the academic framework of the university. For example, a single, uncontextualized visit to a local middle school might be interesting (or bewildering). Let’s say, however, that you are in educational studies professor Mei Lin Chang’s course at Emory about the psychology of learning, and you are tutoring two students at Coan Middle School in the nearby Edgewood community over a semester. Observing their study habits through the lens of the academic theories you were learning became a teachable moment.

A woman incarcerated in Emanuel Women’s Facility in Swainsboro told me she used to think outdoor toilets were called “oddhous”... Linguists call this an “eggcorn,” a mishearing that is both in one of the prison's most salient features. The space demands a pedagogy designed to maximize opportunities for participation. Because the two groups have no access to each other outside of our controlled class time, and because engaging each other individually is key to the impact of the experience, group work takes precedence over lecture. For example, I plan consecutive timed small-group activities in which equal numbers of Oxford and incarcerated students explore questions about the texts. The students record their insights then share them in whole-group discussion. A stopwatch is essential.

Teaching in prison also taught me to appreciate the fluidity and freedom of movement that Oxford teachers and students enjoy in the physical, economic, and intellectual spaces of campus. I confronted the disparities between my two groups of students: they didn’t inhabit the same social, psychic, or physical space. At Oxford, I see fine and sometimes obvious distinctions between our most affluent students and the students of modest means. But those distinctions usually fade in the context of membership in an elite community of learners. In prison I encounter people who live outside...
Living and Learning Green

Do students in sustainability-themed dorms stay environmentally responsible?

For both professors and students, learning happens in a variety of “places,” literally and figuratively. In summer 2008, the two of us embarked on a learning odyssey. Trained as experimental social psychologists, we took steps out of the laboratory when we agreed to examine how encouragement and support of environmentally responsible behaviors from higher administration and peers impact students’ environmental behaviors and identities over time. The confluence of two events—our participation in the Piedmont Project and the opening of two new “Gold” certified L.E.E.D. (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) residence halls—stimulated this foray into survey and qualitative research.

Given the nature of the research, we recruited undergraduate and graduate collaborators and sought advice from other university units, including the Office of Sustainability Initiatives and Residence Life. We pursued non-traditional learning activities—touring unfinished buildings, talking with undergraduates, and serving on a building committee—to grasp topics for our project. Likewise, our surveys and interviews with members of the class of 2012 show that our university can help “teach” students to be environmentally responsible citizens outside of the classroom, without reliance on traditional tools of pedagogy.

Existing literature shows that developmental changes occur in the way college students think, what they do, and how they see themselves (see Pascarella and Terenzini 2005). Studies document that extracurricular activities and programs influence students’ attitudes, values, behaviors, and sense of community (see Hollway 2005; McDonald et al. 2002; McFarland and Thomas 2006). And, specific to our endeavor, research indicates that dorm and campus environmental awareness programs favorably affect undergraduate behaviors (see Marcel et al. 2004; Peterson et al. 2007).

While these studies provide evidence of how specific factors affect behaviors, they largely do not conceptualize why sustainability efforts work and whether their effects endure over time. We argue that the more students perceive university sustainability efforts to be legitimate, the more likely they are to behave in environmentally responsible ways, even taking into account other relevant influences such as perceptions of peers’ behaviors or their own attitudes. Theoretically, such behaviors, in turn, may shape how individuals see themselves, and their “environmental identities” then propel subsequent behaviors.

Perceptions of university sustainability efforts, however, depend in part on what students glean from various information sources, both those they seek out and others brought to them by peers, professors, and university staff. Our study examines these sources of information, tapping into ways that students gain knowledge through avenues other than the traditional professor-centered learning.

We asked study participants—both those living in the new “green dorms” and those living in more conventional residence halls—about the amount and sources of their environmental knowledge. We posed these questions at the end of their first year on campus (T1, with N=300, a 48 percent response rate) and then again prior to graduation (T2, with N=264, a 51 percent response rate). We also interviewed 40 Ti respondents (equally split between “green” and conventional dorms) during their sophomore year to gauge their thinking about sustainability and related behaviors.

While there is some overlap in respondents for each survey period, our analysis looks at differences by dorm and gender at each time rather than individual changes over time.

Generally, at the conclusion of both their freshman and senior years, our students indicate that they receive neither too little nor too much, but the “right amount” of information about environmental issues. The sources varied over the years. Clearly, “living green” mattered in terms of accessing different sources of information during the freshman year. Results show that first-year students living in “green dorms” were more likely to rely on orientation packets, web sources, print media, emails, dorm flyers, and campus flyers, posters, or banners than their counterparts in conventional dorms. And, not surprisingly, “living green” participants attended more dorm and campus programs focused on sustainability.

First-year women, regardless of residence hall, also relied more on Emory print media, dorm flyers, campus flyers, and email communications than did first-year men. And these women attended more campus-wide sustainability events. Other analyses show that regardless of residence hall, to the extent that students get their information from dorm flyers or print media, they are more likely to think Emory legitimately supports sustainability. And perceived legitimacy bolsters environmentally responsible behaviors, above and beyond the effect of peers on such behaviors.

From our interviews, another source of non-traditional learning became quite apparent: the energy competition. Many students commented on the impact of the annual October competition designed to reduce consumption of BTUs/square foot of building space. Students especially remember the day they all turned out the lights at the same time. The uniqueness of such an hour-long event clings in their memories, providing a basis for “thinking twice” about their own energy use. The activity may serve as an “a-ha” moment in their sustainability education, akin to the moments faculty try to produce in the classroom.

The effects of residing in a green dorm as a freshman, however, waned by the students’ senior year. Reliance on all Emory sources of information decreased, and attention to most sources of information was similar to those of traditional college students. Access, opportunities, and plentiful resources in prison, I don’t know who will show up for class, if there will be a lockdown, or whether the warden has decided, suddenly, to cancel my program. I have learned to inhabit my teaching spaces intentionally. The classroom in the oddhouse has taught me that teaching happens in the moment, not in the final exam.

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Professor of Sociology

Cathryn Johnson
Professor of Sociology

The margins, who have no concept of the life most Oxford students live. The demarcation is not etched solely by class or race. Incarcerated women bring true tales of hardship—and complex psychological profiles—unlike any I have ever encountered at Oxford, where a struggling student has access to multiple therapeutic spaces.

I hoped the experience of learning in a classroom with incarcerated women would make my Oxford students reexamine their privilege. I do not yet know the long-term impact of this experience on them. The egalitarian ideal is pervasive in higher education, but it is problematic. At Oxford, students’ understanding of freedom and meritocracy is circumscribed by their narrow socioeconomic horizons. They meet the socioeconomic “other” through service learning, but rarely do they get to engage more meaningfully as academic peers in unrestricted space. Some call the experience transformative while still “othering” their incarcerated classmates. I have observed a tendency to simplify the complexities of social class differences by declaring the incarcerated students “just like us.” A few will describe incarcerated people as “criminals” who have made “bad choices,” which suggests that these students are not able yet to reflect on their own privilege. But I believe such reflection will come in time with experience.

Teaching in prison has made me a more effective, more flexible teacher. I have surrendered the illusion of control over “outcomes” to focus instead on the miracle in the moment. I appreciate the support structure, the relative emotional health and stability of traditional college students, access, opportunities, and plentiful resources. In prison, I don’t know who will show up for class, if there will be a lockdown, or whether the warden has decided, suddenly, to cancel my program.
One of the hallmarks of Emory that I admired before interviewing for the job of president was the willingness, even eagerness, of this community to seize on “learning moments.” Those are the usually unbidden, sometimes unpleasant episodes in our life together that force us to take stock of ourselves. Whether it was debating investments in South Africa back in the 1980s or the use of chapels for same-sex commitment ceremonies at this Methodist university in the 1990s, word travels about Emory’s willingness to confront issues that come its way. More than just confront, Emory often uses these moments as opportunities to learn and change and even lead.

In my nine years at Emory our community has been—I dare say—blessed with several more such moments. Frankly, in the flush of controversy they usually have not appeared as blessings. But the hard work they require has made them so.

When a regrettable racial incident nine years ago forced us to examine personal and institutional commitments to nondiscrimination, that moment of introspection led to the inception of the Transforming Community Project, which in turn had broad personal and institutional impact. Two events—the first conference on slavery and universities and Emory’s statement of regret over its early entanglement with slavery, initiated by the President’s Commission on Race and Ethnicity—stand as intellectual and moral legacies of the TCP.

Similarly, two years ago, student protests over contract labor on campus led to wide-ranging, thoughtful, and extended conversations that have grown to involve faculty, students, and staff members from every corner of the university. Through the Committee on Class and Labor and the Task Force on Dissent, Protest, and Community, we are learning a lot about how we perceive and behave toward each other. We are also learning about our community’s capacity to absorb and grow from profound disagreements while continuing to respect human rights and dignity.

What is the blind spot that makes us vulnerable to human error or misguided intentions?

This past spring some faculty members objected to the choice of Dr. Ben Carson as our commencement speaker, fearing that his faith-based questioning of Darwinian theory and some comments taken out of context represented opposition to Emory’s principles of inquiry and ethical commitment. One result of that questioning is an ongoing exploration led by Professors Jaap de Roode and Arri Eisen into the nature of knowledge, truth, and belief systems—a conversation that I would suggest is essential in our time of ideological entrenchment. This exploration began in October with a lecture from Joel W. Martin titled “God or Darwin? A Marine Biologist’s Take on the Compatibility of Faith and Evolution.”

I expect that we will gain from all of these conversations a deeper sense of community as well as a stronger commitment to what makes a university excellent.

Other learning moments—also unbidden and unwelcome—sometimes come from beyond our campus. All of us were riveted last year by two quite different dramas playing out on the campuses of two great universities—Penn State and Virginia. No one involved directly or watching at a distance could possibly have found either situation welcome. But we can learn from them, even from afar.

It is the first situation, at Penn State, that seems to me vitally important for us at Emory right now. That campus is struggling through the blow to its reputation because of inattentiveness to the actions of a football coach.

Its football program has been among the bright spots of that university, touted as proof that a research university can maintain institutional integrity while balancing academic excellence with athletic prowess. But when incidents and circumstances threaten an institution’s professed ethos, a blind spot can develop, and that university is now paying a huge price for its blindness. Our aspiration toward virtue can often be our undoing, unless we ask a critical, self-reflective question: what is the blind spot that makes us vulnerable to human error or misguided intentions?

We know that Emory will never be blinded by its football program or its football boosters. But there are other facets of our university life in which we invest heavily, and from which we earn the justifiable right to be proud. Our very-high-profile and far-reaching healthcare network is among the best in the country. We believe our commitment to diversity to be second to no one else’s. Our achievements in drug discovery have outpaced those of any other single university over the past four decades. Some of our academic programs are very highly ranked, among the best of their kind. We have put in place a national model in enterprise risk management that aims to safeguard our institution.

I am not suggesting that anyone believes that any part of Emory is too valuable, too big, too important to be held accountable, or that we are not at risk for failures of integrity. Quite the opposite. An institution like Emory is especially vulnerable. Emory traditionally has prided itself on education of the heart as well as the mind, on ethical engagement, on wrestling with the hard questions. The aspiration for goodness is continually a work in progress. What hurts most is when aspiration for one kind of good—say, the good of desiring to make the strongest claims about the excellence of our students—undermines a better kind of good—say, the recognition that the institution operates always out of a commitment to integrity and transparency.

To preserve integrity, we need reason, systems, careful discipline, and watchfulness. But these can carry us only so far toward fulfillment of “the good life.” Some degree of moral luck is also necessary. Our 2011 honor degree recipient Martha Nussbaum reminds us of what she has called “the fragility of goodness.” Goodness continually stands vulnerable to the “slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.” The integrity of an institution is equally fragile. It can be broken without warning, and once it is broken the repair work carries an enormous cost in terms of morale, pride, momentum, and trust.

We have been reminded of the fragility of our institutional reputation for integrity by the discovery that persons responsible for speaking on behalf of Emory had been misreporting admissions data for more than a decade. (The details of this story are not the point of this article, but those who may have missed the full narrative can find it here: http://news.emory.edu/special/data_review/index.html.)

Importantly, though, once our new dean of admissions learned of the problem in data reporting, he did everything to get to the bottom of it and make things right. That in itself is a valuable lesson—the reminder that the only way through bad news is to recognize and acknowledge it and deal with it. When our integrity is damaged, we must respond with renewed commitment.

I have no doubt that we have learned from this latest episode three other valuable lessons that will change us for the better. The first is that we must have a process of data review that offers checks against misreporting. “That process we have put in place.”

The second lesson is that our vulnerability to fortune makes humility all the more imperative. We do not need to give up our aspiration for excellence; we should recognize, though, how much it depends on vigilance and good fortune as well as talent.

Finally, we can learn to continue imbuing our community with the soundest ethical principles lived out through good practices, making the habit of integrity a daily part of our individual and communal life. The human condition might make the betrayal of trust inevitable, or at least unsurprising. But our regard for each other and our accountability to each other make it more difficult. The habit of caring about our own integrity and each other’s can make the goodness of this place less fragile. That seems to me a lesson worth keeping, even if unasked for. 

possible or may not be desirable. Many faculty and students do not pre-
fer to read in a digital form, and some forms of scholarship simply aren't
possible with digital surrogates. If these realities are ignored, conflict
is certain. Even if they are appreciated, zero-sum thinking can lead to
antagonisms, positioning the spending on digital initiatives as money
not spent on enhancing or extending the physical.

In my view, digitization can be an end in itself, but it can also be a pow-
erful gateway to our holdings and special collections. The Emory libraries
contain amazing treasures, yet a relatively small percentage of scholars are
able to access our material. Even within Emory, how many students
and scholars are aware of the breadth of our holdings? The numbers in both
cases may be arguable, but I’m confident we can increase them by doing a
better job of highlighting what we have. And there is no doubt in my mind
that more digital representations of our holdings can increase usage and
the value we provide to the academic community.

Online learning and open access

The past year has brought much new activity as Emory seeks to better
understand its position in the world of online learning. With the recent
announcement of our participation in Coursera, Emory is now dipping
its toes into the waters of what is likely to be a transformative shift in
how the world thinks about higher education. As we consider what this
means for the library, we are presented with a bit of a quandary. At this
point, the library has little to offer the hundreds of thousands of students
who have signed up for one of our Coursera offerings. Quite simply, our
licensing agreements with publishers don’t allow us to offer most of
what is in our library to students with no formal affiliation with Emory.
Although our faculty will be able to put together courses without this
access, there will be limits to what they can do, limits that do not
exist with our residential students.

Fortunately, we do have a project underway that might help in the

Creating synergies

As we think about ways to fund more digitization and open access, we
must consider options beyond simply asking for more budget dollars.
There are clear paths to greater efficiencies in our services. For example,
consider a certain amount of collaboration has existed between Emory’s libraries
and information technology organization for many years. The Emory
Center for Interactive Teaching (ECIT) has been physically located in
the library since its inception, and many of the academic technology
staff in the Office of Information Technology have offices in the li-
brary for many years. Despite these structures, we still segregate services
based on physical location or the entity providing them. For example,
why is it that a faculty member or student can’t walk into Cox Hall, the
Woodruff Library’s Learning Commons, or Research Commons, the
Woodruff Health Sciences Library, or Emory’s Center for Interactive
Teaching, and access a seamless set of services that cross the library and
IT organizations? Shouldn’t a social scientist be able to enter any one of
these locations for assistance with a new research project and connect
with the multiple academic and administrative resources available? It
reminds me of the fractured landscape of IT services that we have been
working to bring together over the past seven years. From my new van-
tage point, that landscape has just become a bit wider, and I’m confident
that the challenges ahead can provide great motivation towards building
a more seamless set of library and IT services—and a campus infrastruc-
ture that engenders learning and discovery in all its forms.

Classrooms in Unexpected Places

the lens of your course, you are more likely to understand the relevance of
what you are learning in the course. Further, you are able to make recom-
mendations about changes in study habits for those two middle school kids
that are actually helpful. This is the key to community-engaged learning: it
should be a mutually beneficial experience. As Barry Fenstermacher put it in
Combining Service and Learning (NSEE 1990), “the goal is to blend ser-
vice and learning goals and activities in such a way that the two reinforce
each other and produce a greater impact than either could produce alone.”

Community engaged learning fosters habits of active listening, careful
observation, and thoughtful linking of different kinds of learning. It shows
students how knowledge can be leveraged to make significant changes in
the world, and it can reveal the remarkable connectedness of our twenty-
first-century world. The Laney Graduate School’s Masters of Development
Practice program, which primarily focuses on work in “developing” coun-
tries, intentionally links that work to local circumstances in the Atlanta
area. While on the Emory campus, students work with local non-profit
organizations and government agencies on projects focused on community
development. Summers are spent abroad in similar organizations in the
developing world. The synergy of these multiple “classrooms” makes for a
unique and more nuanced understanding of development practice.

Creating spaces for learning while acting in a beneficial way for
community requires excellent community-university partnerships that
are sustained over time. Emory is a member of The Research University
Community Engagement Network, an invitation-only group of approxi-
mately 35 institutions hosted by Campus Compact. Among these peers,
Emory is a leader in creating and nurturing long-term partnerships that
allow students from across the university to fully participate in local
communities while advancing their own learning.

Living and Learning Green

regardless of where respondents had lived their freshman year. The one
exception is word-of-mouth information—which having lived in conven-
tional dorms are more likely to use that source than those having “lived
green” during their first year. Female compared to male seniors indicated
that the amount of information they get about environmental issues is a bit
less than “the right amount,” but those senior women attended more cam-
pus wide sustainability programs than their male counterparts (perhaps
seeking to enhance their knowledge).

What do we learn from these data patterns? First, individuals in
themed living communities attend more to relevant information. Given
Emory’s investment in first-year living communities, these data lend sup-
port to the wisdom of that investment in shaping individuals’ knowledge.
Second, simply making information readily available—plastering the walls
of residence halls—reinforces the perception that Emory strongly supports
sustainability efforts. And those perceptions can inspire behavior consis-
tent with those messages. Perceiving that their peers behave similarly also
helps. Thus leveraging peer interests and activities toward sustainability—
effectively signaling generational social norms—may augment learning
beyond the classroom.

And third, the impact of university communication is strongest when
students are a captive audience on campus. Once they are living off cam-
pus and adjusting their outlooks beyond their college years, that impact,
not surprisingly, diminishes. With regard to university sustainability ef-
forts, the question becomes, what can Emory do to ensure the graduation
of environmentally responsible citizens? Going forward, a challenge for
the university will be to explore how to cultivate environmentally respon-
sible values and actions among students living independently. Just as
the faculty-led Piedmont Project affected our thinking about sustainability
and provided the seeds for this research project, student-led initiatives to
enhance sustainability may be central to continuing the commitments
and behaviors initiated in themed living. Those initiatives may capitalize
on digital resources and new ways of thinking about the college learning
experience. Indeed, multiple ways “to teach” and multiple teachers may
epitomize twenty-first century learning.
Endnotes

Faculty in the Public Eye

Michael Leo Owens
Associate Professor of Political Science, “Public Scholarship as Professional Capital,” September 17, 2012, sponsored by the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence

Vulnerability and Humanity

Martha Fineman
Robert W. Woodruff Professor of Law, Emory, “The Rights of the Needy,” September 13, 2012, sponsored by the Center for the Study of Law and Religion

Freud in China

Elise Snyder
Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, Yale University School of Medicine, “Freud Returns to China,” September 19, 2012, sponsored by the Psychoanalytic Studies Program and the Emory University Psychoanalytic Institute

When I think about public scholarship, just reflecting on my own experiences, the first thing that comes to my mind is that public scholarship may actually share knowledge, and that’s really important. But it also has the effect of enhancing professional reputations as well. I think that many people have read my work, but in fact far more people have either read an op-ed that I’ve written, have listened to some comments I’ve made on the radio, or paid attention to my face being on television. . . . I had an op-ed in the New York Times about a decade ago on vouchers, which suddenly got lots of attention, and people began to not only recognize my work but also to interact with me in all kinds of ways, primarily good, but actually some bad. . . . I guess I also assumed that most people are going to agree with my scholarship, but we have to be mindful that, no, plenty of people will disagree with your scholarship, often times very stridently, and in language or through examples that we may find offensive.

Vulnerability theory places human dependency and vulnerability at the center of the inquiry of what it means to be human. It also rejects the division of the world into public versus private spheres and the designation of the private family as the repository for dependency. . . . This challenge that the vulnerability approach poses to academic and political paradigms can be summed up in an additional question: If bodily needs, desires, and yearnings—and the messy dependency they often carry with them—cannot be ignored in life, how can they be marginalized, sequestered, or absent in our theories about societies, economics, justice, politics, and law? . . . Vulnerability is a universal and constant aspect of the human condition. It arises from our embodiment and from our subsequent location within society and institutions. On the individual level, vulnerability refers to the ever-present possibility of harm, injury, or biological impairment or limitation. But the concept of vulnerability applies beyond the biological. As human creations, our institutions are also vulnerable. They are prone to capture, cooptation, and corruption.

There seems to be something congenial for people who are involved in Buddhist practice, in Buddhist study, and some of the notions of psychoanalysis. Once I saw, in a Buddhist temple in Chengdu, way up on the side of a little room, a little sign that said, “Psychotherapy.” I went into the room and there was this noble gentleman sitting there, and I said, “Are you a Buddhist monk? Do you do psychotherapy for the visitors?” Through our translator he said, “Oh no, no, I do psychotherapy for the monks. They really need it.” . . . On television [in China], there are many, many programs with psychologists, counselors. People need to come on television: “My daughter’s not doing well in school, she’s hanging out with the boys, I don’t like the way she dresses, how can we deal with my daughter?” And the television psychologist advises them. For a country and a group of people where it’s said no one talks much about how they feel or what’s going on, certainly something is changing in China now.