



Center for Teaching Excellence
Hampton University

Teaching Matters

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STEM

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AAC&U

Building Collaborations for the New Academy

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The January 2020 issue of *Publications of the Modern Language Association (PMLA)* followed up on the Association's most recent conference focus on digital humanities, addressing the growing pains that accompany any major paradigm shift in higher education, especially when such a shift is driven by a pervasive new technology. One such shift came with the printing press. However, if we go even more deeply into the past, we find Socrates complaining (according to his pupil, Plato, who preserved the dialogues of Socrates despite his teacher's mistrust of writing) about the ability of the written word to lie, since it cannot be questioned, and the laziness of students who rely on the crutch of a written text, rather than patiently working their way to knowledge through oral discussion. In the introduction to the *PMLA*, co-editors Alison Booth and Miriam Posner write about the current battleground: "For at least as long as there has been an MLA, there have been arrivals of new schools ... and tools ... and hence new purviews of research for its members. The ultimately successful arrivals were initially heralded as warmly as invasions of barbarians" (9).

Booth, a professor of English and director of the Scholars' Lab at the University of Virginia, collaborated with colleagues in the University's endowed school of data science, and characterizes the results "as a transdisciplinary experience worth pursuing" (10). Booth and her co-editor Posner, a professor of information studies and humanities at UVA, make the argument that, "[h]umanists should authorize themselves to join evolving interdisciplinary conversations about data, computation, and machine learning" (14). They report feedback from students in the STEM fields who "never set out to become specialists in one narrow discipline" (13), indicating that digital humanities plays an equally important role on both sides of the campus. At its best, this growing discipline creates new research pathways for humanists and encourages STEM majors to draw on the humanities for important questions dealing with ethics and human flourishing.

Hampton University, a research one institution, can become an important voice in the framing of these new interdisciplinary fields. As an HBCU, Hampton has the authority to articulate and move beyond the clear history of misuse of the sciences to define race, beyond the co-opting of African-American bodies for study without consent. As part of an ongoing focus on an “education for life” that emphasizes the building of sound character, Hampton University faculty members must reach across the disciplinary divide, overcoming the fear of the new in order to meet the practical and ethical challenges of the 21st century.

Work Cited

Booth, Alison, and Posner, Miriam. “Introduction: The Material at Hand.” *PMLA*, vol. 135, no. 1, 2020. pp. 9-22.

Announcements

Hampton University is a member of the American Association of Colleges and Universities, which offers the following information and opportunities for faculty members:

Analysis

The Power of Pathways: Lessons Learned from the GEMs Pathways Project
[\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](https://portal.criticalimpact.com)

By Dawn Michele Whitehead, AAC&U

Practice

Promoting Transfer Success through the AAC&U GEMs Pathways Project
[\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](https://portal.criticalimpact.com)

By Ann Hatch, Anna Mays, Doris Rousey, Mary Brumbach, and Monica Young, all of the Dallas County Community College District; Christine Hubbard, North Texas Community College Consortium; and Jean Keller, University of North Texas and North Texas Regional P-16 Council

General Education Transfer from Two-Year to Four-Year Institutions in Indiana

[\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](https://portal.criticalimpact.com) *By Heather King, Ivy Tech Community College–Central Indiana; and Jay Gladden, Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis* [\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](https://portal.criticalimpact.com)
[\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](https://portal.criticalimpact.com)

Building an Adaptive Transfer Culture in California

[\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](https://portal.criticalimpact.com) *By Joshua Ramirez, Santa Barbara City College* [\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](https://portal.criticalimpact.com)
[\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](https://portal.criticalimpact.com)

Campus Change Processes and Action Steps for Transferring Student Success

[\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](https://portal.criticalimpact.com)

Reality Check

It’s All about “Me,” but Does It Have to Be? [\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](https://portal.criticalimpact.com)

By Terrel Rhodes, AAC&U

Peer Review provides a quarterly briefing on emerging trends and key debates in undergraduate education. Each issue focuses on a specific topic, provides comprehensive analysis, and features campus perspectives.



Weekly Liberal Education News Watch

Week of February 10–14, 2020

[\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](http://portal.criticalimpact.com)

AAC&U is pleased to share news stories on liberal education and inclusive excellence each week, which are [archived on our website \[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](http://portal.criticalimpact.com). Please share with colleagues and all who care about liberal education and inclusive excellence.

[Sign up for AAC&U publications and resources \[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](http://portal.criticalimpact.com). If you have an AAC&U login, [manage your email preferences \[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](http://portal.criticalimpact.com).

Ignore the Hype. College Is Worth It [\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](http://portal.criticalimpact.com)

[Inside Higher Ed](#)

But the value of a college degree in the workplace is without question. Raising alarms about the value of college because graduates aren't able to accumulate wealth more quickly is like saying the graduation party was ruined because the champagne wasn't cold enough. The road to success starts with one step. That step is still going to college. [Read more \[portal.criticalimpact.com\] >>](http://portal.criticalimpact.com)

Are the Humanities Really in Crisis? [\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](http://portal.criticalimpact.com)

[The Chronicle of Higher Education](#)

Neal Lester thinks that's a cliché. The real question is, How do we communicate the value of the humanities without getting bogged down by defining it? [Read more \[portal.criticalimpact.com\] >>](http://portal.criticalimpact.com)

Community College Transfer: Everyone Benefits [\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](http://portal.criticalimpact.com)

[Inside Higher Ed](#)

Community college students are not just focused on vocational skills training but are also as committed to learning for its own sake as the students in selective liberal arts institutions, argues Michael Thurston. [Read more \[portal.criticalimpact.com\] >>](http://portal.criticalimpact.com)

How Dr. Hasan Jeffries is Rethinking the Way We Teach Black History [\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](http://portal.criticalimpact.com)

[Diverse: Issues In Higher Education](#)

In collaboration with the Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Tolerance project, Jeffries helped write a 2018 report titled, "Teaching Hard History," which offers free resources and guides on how to teach American slavery in classrooms for teachers who, he says, are "on the front lines." As part of the project, Jeffries also hosts his own podcast under the same name.

[Read more \[portal.criticalimpact.com\] >>](#)

Some Colleges Start to Confront a Surprising Reason Students Fail: Too Many Choices [\[portal.criticalimpact.com\]](#)

The Hechinger Report

For generations of young people, going off to college was a step toward independence. But for this generation, a surprising new problem is thwarting their success: too many choices.

[Read more \[portal.criticalimpact.com\] >>](#)



Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Student Success
March 19–21, 2020 • New Orleans, Louisiana • **REGISTER NOW!**

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