HIGHLIGHTS OF CSP FALL 2009 TERM

Infrastructure restored (2-year plan, communication system(s), grading policy, coordination with the SAGES support staff, etc.). The 2 classes and staff came together for committee meetings (subdivided into committees on Speakers, Cake and Coffee, Recruitment, Joint Classes, Technology).

1st-year class: Designed and taught thought-provoking unit on BORDERS (geographical, artistic, medical, personal). Starting to develop a group documentary-making project for the Winter term. Already brainstorming about Final Project topics.

2nd-year class: Discussed, taught, and refined a series of Final Projects, covering a wide range (music, autism, dance performance, quality control, cross-cultural approaches to humor, photography). A mini-unit related to sexuality (sexualities), drawing on the writings of Camille Paglia and Michel Foucault. Some discussion of readings for the Winter term.

As a program, the students chose a CSP Speaker for the Spring: Jeff Lieberman of the Discovery Channel. Extensive arrangements with the Jodi Solomon Speakers Bureau (his agency) are in process. We have started discussion of an NPR interview with him the day of his talk (April 5). The students and faculty jointly composed an engaging welcome letter to send to Lieberman.

CSP hosted a 90-minute breakfast discussion with Andrew Light, key speaker for Humanities Week at Case. In preparation, readings by Light were discussed in a joint class (with examples put on reserve, as an e-book, and posted on Blackboard).

As a program, the students proposed books to read as joint readings. The final list (after considerable discussion and investigation of availability) were: AS I LAY DYING (Wm. Faulkner), GODEL, ESCHER, BACH (Douglas Hofstadter), and THE FLIGHT OF THE WILD GANDER (Joseph Campbell). In conjunction with the Faulkner reading, we watched Kurosawa’s film RASHOMON (followed by a discussion). In conjunction with the Hofstadter reading, we tried to arrange a virtual meeting with the author, but he declined our invitation. (A student initiated and composed that correspondence.)

To take advantage of the rich offerings in University Circle, and to show the 1st-year students the possible range of options for the classes, we held a class in the new East Wing of the Cleveland Museum of Art, and viewed a documentary MANUFACTURED LANDSCAPES at the Cleveland Cinematheque.

In general, the emphasis was on three main areas: scholarship, student initiative, and community.