

WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

Scholars in Action

ACADEMIC YEAR 2018-2019



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Our Vision: To be widely recognized as a premier public university with outstanding teachers and scholars who prepare students to contribute to the world in a meaningful way.



Dr. Missy Alexander

Provost and
Vice President of
Academic Affairs

Welcome to Western Connecticut State University's Scholars in Action program. Each fall and spring we bring together an interdisciplinary group of faculty to share research, conversation, and ideas. In a casual, moderated panel format, selected professors present their most recent scholarship to faculty, students, and the public. This exchange of ideas fosters dialogue about innovative pedagogies and creates a pathway to interdisciplinary research projects.

This program provides an opportunity to celebrate the diversity of scholarly endeavors pursued by our faculty. From new works of art, to grant funded research in the sciences, to the scholarship of teaching and learning, our faculty are deeply engaged in their disciplines. An annual report on scholarship is available on the Academic Affairs website, but this document features some of the highlights

I'm proud to introduce you to the 2018-2019 Scholars in Action and to recognize the 2017-2018 Connecticut State Colleges and Universities Board of Regents of Higher Education Award Winners from WCSU. For more information visit wcsu.edu/academics.


Missy



Dr. Jay Brower

Associate Professor
and Chair of the
Department of
Communication &
Media Arts

Dr. Brower's scholarship is clustered around rhetoric, phenomenology, and ethnography, and has appeared in *Listening: Journal of Communication Ethics, Religion, and Culture, Cultural Studies* ↔ *Critical Methodologies*, and, most recently, in his co-edited monograph *Communication, Culture, and Making Meaning in the City: Ethnographic Engagements in Urban Environments* (Lexington, 2017). His Scholars in Action presentation *Watching Death on Screen* explains how violence saturates our media, and scenes of death, in particular, form an everyday experience. Dr. Brower joined WCSU in 2010. His degrees include: B.A., Communication Studies, California State University, Chico; M.S. and Ph.D., Speech Communication, Southern Illinois University Carbondale.



Dr. Brian Clements

Professor of Writing,
Linguistics and
Creative Process, and
Founding Coordinator
of the Master of Fine
Arts in Creative and
Professional Writing
program

Dr. Clements is the author or editor of over a dozen collections of poetry, including the anthologies *Bullets into Bells: Poets & Citizens Respond to Gun Violence* (Beacon Press, 2017—a New York Times “New & Noteworthy” title) and *An Introduction to the Prose Poem* (Firewheel Editions, 2009). The *Bullets into Bells* project intends to raise awareness of gun violence in the country and to motivate audiences to action through the emotional impact of poetry and storytelling. His most recent collection of poems is *A Book of Common Rituals* (Quale Press, 2014). Dr. Clements joined WCSU in 2004. His degrees include: B.A., English, Southern Methodist University; M.A., English, State University of New York at Binghamton; and Ph.D., English, State University of New York at Binghamton.



Paul Echeverria
M.F.A., M.A., M.S.

Assistant Professor of
Communication and
Media Arts, and
Founding Director
Digital and Interactive
Media Arts program
(DIMA)

Echeverria's recent scholarship includes the presentation *Generative Pedagogy: Introducing Students to the Emerging Digital Landscape* which debuted at the 2017 University Film and Video Association national conference and discussed the connection between technology and the decentralization of traditional academia. In addition to teaching, Echeverria works as a filmmaker and digital artist. His creative practice explores the correlation between technological ubiquity and artistic expression. Most recently, his works have screened at the Experiments in Cinema film festival and the Made in NY Media Center by IFP (Independent Filmmaker Project). Echeverria joined WCSU in 2016. His degrees include: B.F.A., Film, Purchase College, State University of New York; M.S., Education, Mercy College; M.A., Media Studies, The New School; M.F.A., Studio Arts: Interdisciplinary Media Arts Practice, University of Colorado Boulder.



Dr. Bernard Gee
Associate Professor
of Psychology

Dr. Gee's recent scholarship includes his pedagogical research to evaluate various instructional methods. *Writing Exercises for Developing Scientific Literacy* based on his contributed chapter in the book, *Integrating Writing into the College Classroom: Strategies for Promoting Student Skills*, published by the Society for the Teaching of Psychology. This book chapter presents a set of focused exercises designed to improve scientific writing proficiency. They are small, incremental assignments aimed to develop necessary skills in preparation towards various types of scholarly term papers, such as literature reviews, critiques, and research projects. Dr. Gee joined WCSU in 2012. His degrees include: B.A., Psychology, San Jose State University; B.S., Biology, San Jose State University; M.S., Neuroscience, University of Rochester; Ph.D., Neuroscience, University of Rochester.



Dr. Deneen M. Harris

Assistant Professor
and Chair of the
Department of
Social Work

Dr. Harris' research agenda is directly linked to her work as a child welfare practitioner and a social work educator. She is the co-author of a *Cultural Diversity, Preliminary Edition*, published by Cognella Academic Publishing. Dr. Harris has published in the area of child welfare. Her publications focus on kinship care practice/policy and secondary trauma stress among child welfare workers. Dr. Harris is currently working collaboratively with colleagues and students on a project that examines social work students' knowledge of the consequences associated with empathic engagement of clients. Dr. Harris joined WCSU in 2008. Her degrees include: B.S., Social Work, Southern Illinois University, B.S., Administration of Justice, Southern Illinois University, a M.S., Social Work, Southern Illinois University, and a Ph.D., Social Work, University of Alabama.



Dr. Greg Haynes

Assistant Professor
of Music

Dr. Haynes is a Connecticut-based percussionist, educator, and composer. His recent scholarship includes "Peace Intermezzo," a short pedagogical vibraphone solo composed for publication through the Percussive Arts Society. As a performer, Dr. Haynes is active as both a soloist and an ensemble player, having performed concertos, solo recitals, chamber works, and orchestral pieces throughout the world. Dr. Haynes's research and creative output primarily involves the intersection between mathematics and musical composition for percussion, and composition/production for film and media, including scoring the documentary *Mountain Folsom* broadcast on Rocky Mountain public television. Dr. Haynes joined WCSU in 2017. His degrees include: B.A., Cognitive Science, University of Georgia; M.M., Percussion Performance, University of Georgia, and a D.M.A., Percussion Performance, University of Kansas.



Dr. George F. Kain

Professor and
Chairman of Division
of Justice and Law
Administration
Program

Dr. Kain is a police commissioner in Ridgefield, Connecticut. His latest publication is a book chapter entitled, "Retribution and Capital Punishment: It's in the Bible, isn't it?" which appears in *The Routledge Handbook on Capital Punishment* (2017). He most recently authored a paper entitled, *Revolution or Evolution: The Pope's Renewed Call to end the Death Penalty* published by The Fairfield County Catholic. He has been actively involved in the anti-death penalty movement for more than 20 years, and has lectured around the world, including Japan, the Philippines, Italy, and Norway. Dr. Kain joined WCSU in 1994. His degrees include: B.S., Justice and Law Administration, Western Connecticut State University; M.S., Counseling, Western Connecticut State University; and a Ph.D., Criminal Justice, City University of New York.



Dr. Karen McLean

Assistant Professor of
Social Work

Dr. McLean brings more than 26 years of social welfare experience, both as a social worker and a fair hearings officer. Dr. McLean's current research projects include examining secondary traumatic stress (STS) on college social work students, the mentoring experiences of African American social work students at predominantly white institutions (PWI) and assessing housing issues in urban communities. She is co-authoring a book with Dr. Harris on cultural diversity with an emphasis on social work practice. Dr. McLean joined WCSU in 2015. Her degrees include: B.S., Psychology, University of Connecticut; M.S., Social Work, University of Connecticut; and Ph.D., Philosophy, School of Social Work, University of Connecticut.



Dr. Sean Murthy

Assistant Professor of
Computer Science
Founder and Director
of the Data Science &
Systems Lab (DASSL)

Dr. Murthy's recent scholarship includes his presentation *DASSL, a Hands-on Co-curricular Lab to Prepare the Software Engineers Employers Want*. Testimonials show that the methods used, the experience gained, and the portfolio built at DASSL have all helped students distinguish themselves from other computer science graduates, and that the combination continues to help them in their professional life. Dr. Murthy has designed and developed applications for several large companies including Federal Express, and Citibank and was the executive director and principal researcher at The Else Institute. His current research interests include data analytics and software-and-data engineering for cloud-based high-performance systems. Dr. Murthy joined WCSU in 2016. His degrees include: B.E., Computer Science and Engineering, Bangalore University; M.S., Computer Science, Oregon Health & Science University; and a Ph.D., Computer Science, Portland State University.



Dr. Monica Sousa

Associate Professor
of Nursing

Dr. Sousa is enthusiastic about nursing, education, and the use of simulation to help students learn simple to complex concepts in nursing. She facilitates maintenance of the nursing simulation and skills labs and organizes educational sessions for faculty to learn how to utilize simulation in their courses. She has a certification as a Clinical Nurse Specialist in Adult Health, attended nursing simulation conferences, and utilized simulation education in her course. She co-wrote a chapter with Dr. Linda Warren, called "Acute Management of Respiratory Distress in the Adult Patient" in the book *Simulation Scenarios for Nursing Educators: Making it Real*, which is now in its third edition. Dr. Sousa joined WCSU in 2010. Her degrees include: B.S., M.S., and Ed.D., Nursing Education, Western Connecticut State University.



Dr. Linda Warren

Associate Professor
of Nursing and
Masters' Program
Coordinator for the
Nursing Department

Dr. Warren has more than 45 years of critical care experience and holds certifications in critical care and trauma nursing. She is an instructor for the American Heart Association and teaches classes in basic life support and advanced cardiac life support. Dr. Warren uses simulation to support student learning in a non-threatening environment incorporating various complex nursing concepts. She authored the article "And I Want to Teach?" and co-wrote the chapter, "Acute Management of Respiratory Distress in the Adult Patient" with Dr. Monica Sousa, in *Simulation Scenarios for Nursing Educators: Making it Real*; 3rd ed. Dr. Warren joined WCSU in 2009. Her degrees include: B.S., Nursing, Southern Connecticut State University; M.S., Nursing Education, University of Hartford; and Ed. D., Educational Leadership, University of Hartford.



**2017-2018 CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF REGENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AWARD WINNERS**

**WESTERN
CONNECTICUT
STATE UNIVERSITY**

**Board of Regents System-Wide
Adjunct Faculty Teaching Awards**

Two system-wide Adjunct Faculty Teaching Awards are given to recognize part-time faculty throughout the CSCU system who have distinguished themselves as outstanding teachers.

WINNER
Marilyn Kain
Adjunct Faculty
Justice and Law
Administration

Board of Regents Faculty Research Award

A single campus-wide research award is given to the individual who best exemplifies high quality research among the four universities.

WINNER
Dr. Rachel Prunier
Associate Professor
Biological and
Environmental
Sciences



Office of the Provost
University Hall, Suite 322
