

## Dance (Larry Lavender)

It is highly rewarding to integrate one's research into the classroom; to guide students' pursuit of knowledge along tracks that mesh with one's own, and that interest and excite the students. Thanks to UNCG's *Office of Undergraduate Research*. I have twice been able to investigate with freshman and sophomore students the emergence, development, and implementation-through-performance of their ideas about (and struggles with) personal and social identity. These activities grew out of my Fall 2006 *Grogan Learning Community* course on Creativity in which I included a short unit on performance art, inviting first-semester freshmen to apply their emerging creativity skills to the collaborative creation of identity-based works for performance. The assignment resonated deeply with the students, and 7 of them approached me about continuing to develop performance art works under my guidance. A pilot course in *Performance Art* was created and offered during the Spring 2007 semester. This scenario repeated itself the following year when I included the performance art assignment both with freshmen in Grogan College and with students in my *Honors College* freshman seminar on Creativity and the Arts.

In working with students in the *Performance Art* courses I assist them in identifying and exploring aspects of their personal and social lives

to locate questions, issues, themes, and challenges about which they might develop performances. Through readings on performance and site-specific art, numerous exchanges of draft ideas and proposals, and in-class discussions the students are guided in the use of essential creativity skills to develop and present their works. Specifically, the students strengthen their ability to *break perceptual and cognitive set* so as to see things in new ways and to devise new solution paths in pursuit of their goals; to *keep response possibilities open as long as possible* —i.e., to work without too definite a plan so as to avoid premature closure; and to utilize *heuristics* rather than conventional rules and formulas for generating novel ideas and for solving the ambiguous and open-ended problems that arise routinely in conjunction with deeply personal artistic work. My writing and teaching (and art-making) is nourished by these pedagogical exchanges, and by all accounts the students are empowered by the opportunity to express I highly unique ways their ideas-of-self in a nurturing and supportive environment.



Clockwise from the top, Performance Art students Jonathan Johnson, Rikki Gibbs, Marie Henry, Matthew Palmer, and Josh Ortiz perform "Continuous Laughter/Hopefully Contagious" in UNCG's Elliot University Center on November 8, 2008. Photo by Larry Lavender.

## Interior Architecture (Patrick Lucas)

My leadership with the *Loewenstein Legacy* provides the most holistic example of my community-based approach to classroom teaching and the weaving in of scholarship to my classroom and studio. In November 2007, I directed an upper level design studio of sixteen undergraduates, two graduate students, and a fifth year student pursuing an honor's thesis to design and build a multi-sited exhibit centered on the mid-twentieth century Modern design work of Greensboro architect Edward Loewenstein. At the core of the exhibit design (and of my parallel research) stood two questions about the implications of bringing an International style to the local landscape: how did Loewenstein espouse the international tenets of Modernism through his design work in the local community? How did these very different buildings change people and the way they thought of themselves and Greensboro?

Not only did interior architecture students participate in the conversa-

tions and work to bring some resolution to these questions, the project brought students from several majors together with a community advisory board and design team, bringing the practical to the theoretical, thus engaging students to move beyond distinctions between practical and liberal education. Working with three Department of Art faculty (Chris Cassidy, Seth, Ellis, and Amy Lixl-Purcell), 60 art students brought digital skills and design acumen to the project. Graduate students in history engaged in a companion material culture seminar with a focus on the mid-century to help the exhibit with contextual frames. Finally, 80 students in my undergraduate history/theory of design course similarly experienced a focus on the 1960s and helped to develop the wall installation to represent Modernism in design that hung in the lobby of the Gatewood Building. Students from all these walks of life and all these disciplinary areas focused on a common goal of manifesting exhibitions for two major venues, as well as a dozen [mod] moments, small parts of the exhibit located in various community locations. The reach was big, the design work strong...but the greatest success of the fall semester was that students learned an intellectual framework and context for design grounded in a real world application and installation of the exhibition.

## Business (Joy Bhadury)

In the Bryan School, one important way in which undergraduate education is integrated with applied business research is through the use of experiential education courses. Faculty in these courses have students do an applied research project with an actual organization that shows student how to use their domain knowledge, analytical skills and communication abilities to solve a critical business problem for the organization. Student activities involve surveying background literature, collecting and analyzing data, drawing inferences, making recommendations and presenting them for feedback to the management of the organization sponsoring the project.

For example, in *Advanced Marketing Management*, Dr. Lew Brown, has student-teams work with a company to develop a strategic marketing plan for that company or for a new product or service the company wants to introduce. Students work with a mentor from the company on these projects. In yet another, *International Marketing*) Dr. Nicholas Williamson has students work with selected Small to Medium Sized Enterprise on a project titled "Export Odyssey" to develop export feasibility plans for their products. Students, as part of classes, have produced such plans for Duplin Winery (one of the largest wineries in NC) and the exciting new aviation venture in the Triad: Antilles Seaplanes. A third notable example of such

## Undergraduate Research Expo

Thursday,

April 23, 2009

EUC, 12-4 pm