



THREADS

March 25, 2024

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Message from Provost Usher

As I was sitting down to write this note, I had two recent conversations on mind- the development of curriculum as a valuable scholarly activity, and teaching our students (and ourselves) about thoughtfully using AI. So, I decided to ask ChatGPT to write a paragraph about college curriculum. After honing the prompt several times, it produced:

“In academia, the significance of curriculum development, particularly concerning college majors and general education, often goes unrecognized as a form of scholarship (Stark & Lattuca, 2020). However, it transcends mere administrative tasks; it constitutes a profound intellectual pursuit shaping the essence of education (Klein, 2018). From refining learning objectives within majors to designing innovative pedagogies for general education courses, curriculum development demands scholarly rigor and creativity. This perspective underscores its vital role in advancing knowledge, fostering critical thinking, and enhancing student engagement in both specialized fields and broader educational contexts. Embracing curriculum development not only enhances teaching practices but also enriches the academic experience for both faculty and students.

References:

- Stark, J. S., & Lattuca, L. R. (2020). *Shaping the College Curriculum: Academic Plans in Context* (3rd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
- Klein, J. T. (2018). The Future of Curriculum Studies in the Curriculum Field. In William H. Schubert & Heidi L. Hallman (Eds.), *Handbook of Curriculum Development* (pp. 3-20). Routledge.”

The content is spot on, but the prose has an unnatural, empty rhythm. Although ChatGPT confidently inserted citations, neither reference is valid. Refining the prompt and checking the references took about the same time as it would have taken me to write the paragraph. This

exercise reminds me that college matters- from framing relevant questions to critically evaluating resources. I hope that you will be exploring how it is influencing your disciplines and will be teaching your students how to use it productively. We'll be continuing the conversation, supported by recommendations from the AI Task Force (thanks to Charley Cosmato and Matt Dunleavy).

As for curriculum, I love how much our Radford community is deeply thoughtful about what we teach our students and how we teach it. As we continue discussions about the form of our REAL general education program and our majors and minors, I want you to know that I (and not just ChatGPT) recognize the time, effort, and scholarship you put into developing courses and academic programs.

Good luck as we approach the end of the semester! I'm thrilled to see the projects, performances, and ceremonies that mark the culmination of the year, and look forward to celebrating all our students with you across campus.

Bethany



The
New York
Times

Did you know that every student, faculty and staff member at Radford University has free and full online access to the New York Times? Radford University participates in the New York Times College Network, and so every Highlander can sign up for a free account and access all the benefits of the New York Times on a web browser or the NYT app.

To find out more and sign up for your free access account, use the LibGuide from McConnell Library, <https://radford.libanswers.com/faq/376738>. Questions? Contact Chapman Rackaway at crackaway@radford.edu



HIGHLANDERS
RISE TOGETHER

Do any of these thoughts resonate with you?

- If only I could get students to come to my class
- I would really like to see how other faculty are engaging with their students and I'd like to share my own ideas too.
- Am I reaching all of my students? Not everyone seems to be engaging with the class. (sad face emoji)

In the RISE Faculty Institute, we will share new ways of engaging your students, breaking down some learning barriers (that you may not even be aware of!), and engaging together to learn about diversity and difference. If you are a passionate educator who is ready to take the next step in advancing your professional development, please consider participating in the next Faculty Institute cohort.

The 2025 RISE Faculty Institute is currently accepting interested applicants; apply through the QR code below. The institute includes training in the spring 2025 semester, a summer course redesign studio, followed by a community of practice in the fall 2025 semester



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Research and Creative
Scholarship

Registration for the U.S. National Science Foundation's (NSF) Spring 2024 NSF Grants Conference is open! The hybrid conference will be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from June 3 to 5, 2024. The Grants Conference provides new faculty, researchers, and administrators with valuable insights into various current issues at NSF. Program officers from each NSF Directorate will be present to offer the latest information on specific funding opportunities and address attendees' questions.

[Register here](#)

Graduate College News

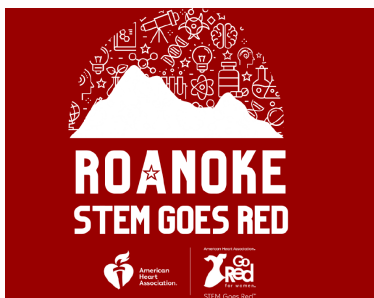
Graduate Student Appreciation Week [Events](#) – April 1- April 5, 2024

- **Pizza Party in the Game Room** Monday, April 1, 2024 Noon - 2pm Location: Game Room
- **Breaking Through the (Pay)wall** Tuesday, April 2, 2024 6pm - 7pm Location: Zoom
- **Mindfulness Meditation for Graduate Students** Wednesday, April 3, 2024 Noon- 12:30 pm Location: Zoom
- **Afternoon Coffee at the Highlander Hotel** Wednesday, April 3, 2024 2pm - 3pm Location: Highlander Hotel

- **Highlander Blitz Competition** Wednesday, April 3, 2024 5:00 pm - 7:30 pm Location: Kyle Hall 320 and Zoom
- **Finding Seminal Scholars** Thursday, April 4, 2024 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Location: Zoom
- **FREE Professional Headshots** Thursday, April 4, 2024 9 am - 11 am Location: RUC 401
- **FREE Professional Headshots** Friday, April 5, 2024 9:00 am - 11:00 am Location: Graduate Student Lounge Whitt Hall 139
- **Online Graduate Student Scavenger Hunt** Friday, April 5, 2024 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm Location: Online- Facebook RU Graduate Students' Events Page
- **Pink Floyd in the Planetarium** Friday, April 5, 2024; 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm Location: Center for the Sciences Planetarium

[Full calendar of events](#)

Women in STEM



The nomination form for the **Roanoke Women in STEM awards is OPEN!** So far, we haven't seen any nominations come through. Please share out the attached one pager and link to the nomination form, and please submit the women you know making a difference in the STEM community in Roanoke!

Nominations are open March 1, 2024 - April 1, 2024

[Nomination Form](#)



Save the Date for the Summer Institute on Research & Creativity

Save the date for the annual **Summer Institute in Research and Creativity (May 13-17)**. This institute (offered both in-person and via Zoom) will include sessions on how to make progress on your projects through the summer, how to get your work published and shared, campus resources for supporting your research and creative work, and how we can engage with each other as scholars. The Institute will also integrate dedicated research time into the session schedule so that you can launch your summer project. Mark your calendar and watch for registration information soon. In the meantime, please fill out this brief [form](#) to let us know what other kinds of sessions would be most helpful for you!

Congratulations Dr. Sincavage!



We are thrilled to pass along that our colleague Dr. Ryan Sincavage, Associate Professor of Geology, has been granted a Fullbright U.S. Scholar award. Ryan will conduct research and teach in Calabria, Italy. His research will entail “reconnaissance geologic mapping of the Pollino Massif in northern Calabria to infer tectonic stress regimes and mechanical stratigraphy of thrust sheets above the base of the massif.” Ryan will teach a course on the tectonics of oblique collisions at the University of Calabria.

Quest 2024

As we embark on another exciting journey with Quest 2024, we wanted to take a moment to express our deepest gratitude for your unwavering dedication and tireless efforts in welcoming our incoming students and families into the Highlander family.

Your commitment to providing the very best orientation experience for our new Highlanders has not gone unnoticed. Your hard work, passion, and enthusiasm shine through in every interaction, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere that sets the tone for their entire university experience.

We recognize the countless hours you've devoted to ensuring that every detail of Quest is meticulously planned and executed, and we truly appreciate all that you do. Your contributions are invaluable, and we are immensely grateful for the vital role you play in shaping the Highlander community.

As we prepare for Quest 2024, we are excited to announce this important partnership. Your involvement is crucial to the success of our orientation program, and we are confident that together, we will create an unforgettable experience for our new Highlanders.

We ask that you please mark your calendars for the following Quest dates:

Quest Session Date 8:00 am – 5:00 pm	Pre-Quest Session Date 5:00 pm – 10:00 pm (includes on-campus housing)	Session Description
Monday, June 10, 2024	Not Applicable	Carilion Campus Transfer Quest #1
Tuesday, June 11, 2024	Not Applicable	Carilion Campus Freshman Quest #1
Thursday, June 13, 2024	Wednesday, June 12, 2024	Radford Campus Transfer Quest #1
Saturday, June 15, 2024	Friday, June 14, 2024	Radford Campus Transfer Quest #2
Tuesday, June 18, 2024	Not Applicable	Virtual Radford and Carilion Campus Transfer Quest
<i>Friday, June 21, 2024</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>	<i>Please hold for Virtual Quest if needed</i>
Tuesday, June 25, 2024	Monday, June 24, 2024	Radford Campus Freshman Quest #1
Saturday, June 29, 2024	Friday, June 28, 2024	Radford Campus Freshman Quest #2
Tuesday, July 9, 2024	Monday, July 8, 2024	Radford Campus Freshman Quest #3
Wednesday, July 10, 2024	Not Applicable	Carilion Freshman Quest #2
Thursday, July 11, 2024	Not Applicable	Carilion Transfer Quest #2
Saturday, July 13, 2024	Friday, July 12, 2024	Radford Campus Freshman Quest #4
Tuesday, July 16, 2024	Not Applicable	Virtual Radford and Carilion Campus Freshman Quest
<i>Friday, July 26, 2024</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>	<i>Please hold for Virtual Quest if needed</i>
Friday, August 23, 2024	Not Applicable	Radford Campus Fall Quest

We look forward to working alongside you once again and making Quest 2024 a resounding success. Thank you for your continued dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment to our students and the Highlander community.

Find out more about Quest here!

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