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Annual Report, 2014-2015

Ammerman Center, Connecticut College

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Annual Report 2014-15

Introduction

I am honored to take the helm as the new director of the Ammerman Center. I have been engaged in the Center since 1993 when I began my tenure-track position at the College. My three-year appointment began on July 1st and I plan to carry forward all the hard work in programming that our inspiring past directors began. I also plan, with the collaborative efforts of faculty fellows, to move the Center forward with new initiatives in curriculum, community/partners, and resources. Our community is broadening with new fellows whose interdisciplinary interests intersect with the goals of the Center.

We are so fortunate to have received a Mellon Officer's Grant this year in the amount of $100,000. The grant *Reimagining Arts and Technology at Connecticut College* will support artists and consultants to visit campus to meet with faculty fellows and give lectures and workshops. It will fund us to travel to other institutions to see their programs and facilities. It will also provide funds for a visiting fellow to teach a course related to art and technology next semester. The visiting fellow will be part of the group of faculty fellows developing in new initiatives. Building a rich, vibrant Center community and curricular program is at the core of *Reimaging Arts and Technology at Connecticut College*. Details of the grant progress can be found at the end of this report.

Left to right: Associate Directors Steve Luber, James Lee; Assistant Director Libby Friedman, student scholars, Colin Forsyth, Annie Rusk; and Director Andrea Wollensak

Students

We admitted 14 students and graduated 2 seniors this year. The total number of students in the Ammerman Center Certificate Program is 18. We have 14 in our rising class of seniors and it is our largest class in the Center's history! These upcoming seniors are from a wide

range of majors and include Studio Art, Architectural Studies, Music and Technology, Gender and Women's Studies, Computer Science, and Film Studies.

The senior year is an intensive year-long capstone learning experience culminating in a rich interdisciplinary project. It builds upon coursework, independent study, a junior summer internship, meetings with and presentations by visiting artists through colloquia and symposia, group critiques and the senior seminar.

Our seniors have an important opportunity to be part of an interdisciplinary community to share and support one another. We are designing scaffolding in our program where our seniors will work with and mentor our sophomores and juniors. Our students are working artists, and as such, it is important for our students to take risks, to experiment and to fail, to be critical of technology in order to redefine tools and techniques. We believe that the capstone experience is an excellent preparation for the post-college professional experience since it requires a follow-through from concept to implementation and presentation. The process continually engages the students by requiring them to clearly articulate the design and communication of the project. This experience is often found at the graduate level and we are committed to working with students who are willing to engage at this level.

This year, our seniors completed their projects and presented them in talks, demonstrations, a gallery exhibition, and interactive site-based installations. Both students created projects that focused on place and included an augmented site-based campus walking tour and site-specific interactive installations. With the Shain library re-opened and renovated, we had our seniors present their final projects to our AT 201 gateway students at the new visualization wall on the lower level of the library on May 5th. On May 16, our seniors presented their projects at the visualization wall (again) for friends and family, just before the Certificate Ceremony. As in previous years, the certificate ceremony took place in the Charles Chu Asian Art Reading Room. President Bergeron attended the ceremony, gave advice to the graduating seniors and read a short statement to the students from Judith Ammerman.

Colin Forsyth completed his (honors) major in Studio Art and his minor in Computer Science. In his summer between his sophomore and junior year, he received a ConnSSHARP grant to be a research assistant to Andrea Wollensak (Art) on digital fabrication studio work. During his junior summer, Colin interned at NYC New Frontiers in Learning as a graphic and web developer. His senior integrative project was advised by Andrea Wollensak and titled "Mapping History of CCreative Place" which was an augmented reality experience map of Connecticut College. Colin worked with a new digital tool that is an image recognition

Colin's campus sites for augumented information (left to right) the Barn, Cro, and Cummings

technology and available on mobile devices. It allows the designer to create an augmented world, where every image, object and place has it's own Aura. Colin's tour featured visual and audio media related to specific locations on campus: the Barn, Cro, Palmer and Cummings; all selected to represent creative places on campus that were personally meaningful to him. Colin's augmented reality program recognized a trigger image at each site and overlaid rich media on top of them: 3D models (created by Colin in MAYA), archival materials such as blue prints, videos and still images. Colin combined his Ammerman Center senior integrative project with his art major honors senior thesis work, culminating in a multimedia exhibit documenting the combined year-long project.

Colin's experiential campus mapping project successfully integrated elements of storytelling with contemporary design thinking and communication. Colin demonstrated sensitivity to social practices of design and making as well as a passion for his work. He was able to engage his audience with innovative ways of thinking and experiencing maps. Colin has moved to NYC to join a design start-up company.

Annie Rusk majored in English with a creative writing concentration and minored in Computer Science. During her junior summer, Annie received a ConnSSHARP grant to be a research assistant to Andrea Wollensak where she worked with 3D Rhino/Grasshopper software. Annie's senior project titled "Interactive Poetics: Creativity Through Passing Mediums" included two site-specific multi-media installations that, through moving poetry and interaction with the human body, highlight the physicality of artistic creation. Annie composed the site-specific poetry. She chose two locations on campus as sites and inspiration for the projects and included the front staircase of Blaustein and the main floor of the gallery in Cummings. The interactive poetic phrases were projected on the floor and their movement was triggered by users moving through the space. Kinect, a motion sensing input device, picked up the movement of the user within the space. Annie designed and coded several types of movement of the text for both locations. Annie's advisors were James Lee (CS) and Andrea Wollensak (Art).

Annie Rusk's integrative senior project installation in the front balcony entrance of Blaustein on April 16

Annie thoughtfully described her work: *"..the poetry focuses on the physical creation of the various arts (writing, music, ceramics, painting, drawing, etc.) and the process of making creative works with technology and our bodies. Words are drawn towards the participant in the space. This reflects on the everlasting nature of creativity, but also, the physical and fleeting nature of artistic materials."*

Annie's project was rich and thoughtful and engaged the public in a physical method through a creative and innovative interface. Her work makes the user think differently about poetry and place, and how we engage with information.

Annie received the Ammerman Center's Smalley/Zahler Prize which is given to the certificate student who has demonstrated excellence in the integrated fields of Arts and Technology, and who has successfully incorporated the highest degree of creativity, innovation, aesthetic and technological understanding and appreciation into her senior integrative project. Annie has been accepted into the Simmons College Graduate program in Library Science (Boston) in the fall.

Curricular Activities/New Initiatives

We have begun changes to our curriculum to build a richer experience for our students in the sophomore and junior year and align with the reVision curricular changes on campus. We have also instituted a two-faculty advisor program for our certificate students.

Selected collaborative student projects from the lab component (taught by Steve Luber and Andrea Wollensak),
Ammerman gateway course.

One of our new curricular initiatives was to build a more complete series of courses to better prepare students for the certificate program. This past semester we introduced a new gateway course, designed and taught by Steve Luber, AT201 *Topics on the History of Arts and Technology*. This course examined the intimate connection between the desire for artistic expression and the technologies that amplify, distribute, duplicate, and collaborate in the creation, reception, and interpretation of that expression. In this course, students studied the history of expressive technologies; the use of early theatrical stagecraft to the use of holograms; the progression of the written and printed word from scroll to codex to hypertext; audio instrumentation and recording from wax to digital; the still, motion, film and digital camera; the persistent use of screens for shadow play, magic lanterns, cinema, television and computer interaction; finishing with an examination of how the technologies of augmented reality and embodied media are used for artistic expression. Utilizing both theory and practice, students explored the relationship between the narrative imagination and how it is shaped by and expanded through the use of many different technological mediums for expression. Questions that students explored include:

What constitutes "technology"?
What are the relationships among technology, art, and narrative?
How do various technologies affect the creative process and its reception?
How do the arts mobilize/adopt technologies, how does this affect their "being"?
What problems and/or solutions arise with tools of mass reproduction?
What are the tensions between commercialism and aesthetics?
What are the differences among mass media, new media, and multimedia?
How do new technologies redefine cultural meanings and perspectives?

Selected collaborative student projects from the lab component (taught by Steve Luber and Art Krieger), Ammerman gateway course.
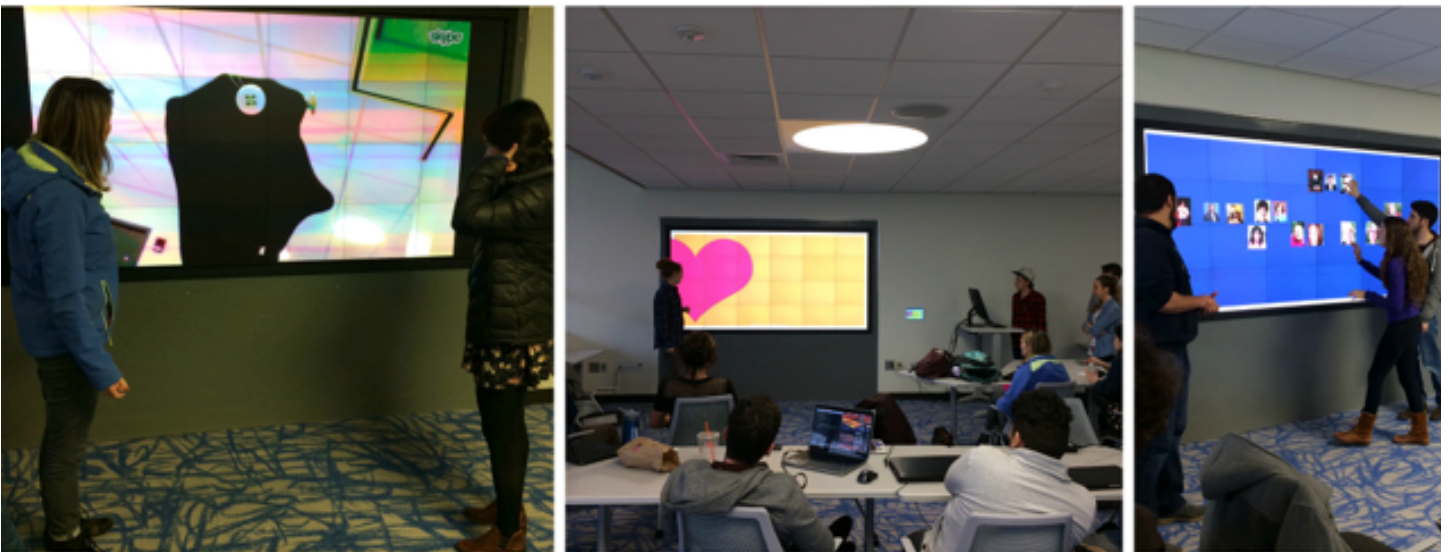
Selected collaborative student projects from the lab component (taught by Steve Luber and James Lee and Lyndsay Bratton), Ammerman gateway course.

Above are a series of images from the lab section of the gateway course. Students worked on 3-week collaborative projects and made final presentations of their groups work. Steve Luber coordinated with faculty fellows, Andrea Wollensak, Art Kreiger, James Lee, Lyndsay Bratton, and Nadav Assor to teach the lab component of the course.

Below is a list of our cross-listed courses with departments:
Fall semester—
AT104/ART104 Time-Based digital art – Nadav Assor (Art)
AT203/MUS 203 ElectroAcoustic I – Art Kreiger (Music)
AT209/ART 213 Sound Art – Nadav Assor (Art)
AT/302ART 302 Designing Visual Information – Andrea Wollensak (Art)
AT308/ART 308 Techne/Technology: Investigations in 3D – Denise Pelletier (Art)
AT401 Senior Seminar in Arts & Technology – Steve Luber (Theater)
AT 491 Individual Study

Spring semester—

AT104/ART104 Time-Based digital art – Nadav Assor (Art)

AT201 Topics on the History of Arts & Technology – Steve Luber

AT214/ART214 Video Installation – Nadav Assor (Art)

AT217/CS217 Entertainment Software Design – James Lee (Computer Science)

AT244/THE244 Exploring Light and Shadow – Masha Tsimring (Theater)

AT304/MUS304 ElectroAcoustic Music II – Art Kreiger (Music)

AT305/ART 305 Experimental 3D – Nadav Assor (Art)

AT312/CS 312 Digital Sound Processing – Ozgur Izmirli (Computer Science)

AT 402 Senior Seminar in Arts & Technology – Steve Luber (Theater)

AT 492 Individual Study

AT499 Individual Study

Another new curricular initiative that we recently completed and implemented is the *Internship Reflection Document* which includes an internship reflection paper, a daily journal during the internship, and a senior year planning document. This documentation project formalizes our students' internship experience through thoughtful reflection in the context of their work in the Ammerman Center. The internship journal component is designed to help students record, reflect and analyze their internship experience. In the final section of this reflection project students revisit and revise their proposal for their senior year integrative project. We asked students to research, write, sketch, prototype, and learn new tools over the summer. We expect students, after thinking and writing about their summer experience, will be better prepared for their senior year.

Internships – Summer 2015 The following internships are scheduled for this summer:

Andre, Drew	O'Neill Theater Center, New London, CT	Sound assistant
Atwater, Teagan	Moove-it, Uruguay	
Bukvich, Alem	Interior Remodeling/Design, Exploration Program Wellesley College	
Coti, Ray	CC Research with Prof. Rotramel	Research
Flores, Juan	Artist Daniel Canogar, Madrid, Spain	Studio assistant
Juster, Grace	MakerBot, Brooklyn, NY	Product Management
Klein, Alyssa	Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge, MA	Design/marketing
Martiney, Marialyse	The Walt Disney Company, Burbank, CA	Technology Production Team
Mercado, Joey	Safe Futures, New London, CT	Web Development
Palattella, Hope	Thirst Juice Co. Boston, MA	Social Media and Branding
Preston, Chelsea	Invisible North, Brooklyn, NY	Marketing Interactive Design
Proft, Julia	REU – Texas A&M	Computing for Disasters undergraduate research
Slade, Marley	Peabody Museum, New Haven, CT	Design/signage, installation
Webber, Ben	WEX Inc., Portland, ME	Software Developer Intern Management Solutions

Posters for the 2014-15 New Media Colloquia Series

New Media Colloquia Series

Every other year the Center organizes a Colloquia Series. This year we sponsored four visiting artists to come to campus and meet with our student scholars, present a public lecture and gather with fellows and students for dinner.

On September 22nd, our fist colloquia artist was The Builders Association, a NYC theater group that synthesizes rich, poetic video and sound performances. As part of this event, a group of faculty and students traveled to Wesleyan University on October 22nd for dinner to attend "Sontag: Reborn" a performance by The Builders Association. This event was co-sponsored by Theater and Studio Art.

On November 17th, we hosted an artist and curator from Tel Aviv, Maayan Sheleff who presented her interactive robot. "Frankie" is a robot that Maayan built which interviews people and documents them, attempting to learn what it means to be human. Center and community members participated in interviews with Frankie and are on Maayan's web site.

Between the snowstorms, on February 9th, Sarah Oppenheimer joined us from New York City for studio visits, a public lecture and dinner. Sarah is a visual artist who works at the intersections of architecture and visual art. This event was co-sponsored by the departments of Architectural Studies, Studio Art, and Psychology.

Our final visiting artist in the colloquia series, on April 13th, was Heather Dewey-Hagborg. Heather is a trans-disciplinary artist and educator whose work focuses on how we read DNA, interpretation, identity and new forms of surveillance. This event was co-sponsored by the Studio Art, and Biology departments.

Extra-curricular activities

Every year the Center offers a January Technology Workshop. This intensive week-long workshop is open to Certificate students. Workshop themes may include motion capture, physical computing, rapid prototyping, animation, wearable electronics, bio-hacking, flying robots (aka drones) and their uses, locative media/augmented reality media, and hack-athon-style challenges.

Students working in the January Technology Workshop with Kate Sicchio (Cummings room 301).

This year we hired Kate Sicchio to teach our January Technology Workshop. Ms. Sicchio, a choreographer and media artist, also teaches at the MFA Design and Technology at Parsons The New School for Design. The January Technology Workshop took place on January 12-16 (the week before Spring semester began). Several faculty and nine Center students attended the workshop. The intensive five-day program focused on physical computing and soft structures. Students explored interactive projects building objects with Arduino programmable microcontroller boards and an assortment of sensors and switches including pressure, light, or motion sensors, buttons, dials, and sliders. The microcontrollers were also used for creating sound, light and mechanical output. Throughout the week, the students tested, built, brainstormed ideas, revised prototypes and, by the end of the week, they presented their projects to the public in a showing and reception. It was an intensive and exciting experience for our students. Students enjoyed being introduced to new areas of creative making in arts and technology and have expressed interest in more workshops next year with Ms. Sicchio.

Community Outreach

Community outreach is a critical component of the Center's infrastructure connecting to the students, the campus community and the larger public. Below are the events that the Center participated in and are categorized by the group that planned the event:

Organized by Ammerman Center

Center lunch talks (every Wednesday in Cro noon-1pm) This weekly informal lunch gathering helped to connect our community. Students and faculty came together to share ideas and a meal. We plan to continue this gathering next year.

Midwinter Banquet. This was our inaugural midwinter banquet for our student scholars. We introduced the faculty to our students and talked about our research. We also announced the Mellon grant award. It was a fun, light-hearted evening with Mexican food, drawbots and a collaborative mind-mapping project for each table.

Midwinter Banquet collaborative mind-mapping project, February 27 in Cros Nest.

Center Scholars Lunch and Conversation w/C3 post-doc Reginold Royston. On January 30th we held an Ammerman Center Scholars Lunch and Conversation with the Williams College C3 post-doc Reginold Royston. Reginold presented his research to a group of fellows and invited faculty and administration. We plan to keep in touch with Reginold and include him, and the other C3 fellows in our upcoming events.

Organized by the College:

Fall Weekend Alumni Panel on October 11th was our first alumni panel for this weekend event. It was a great success. Students connected with alumni, listened to stories and received professional advice. Our alums on the panel included Andrew Nathanson '13 (Social Media Strategist at Connecticut College), Owen Stowe '11 (UX User Experience Developer at Alley Interactive), Amy Barrett '12 (Boston Museum Science), and Chris Eramo '01 (Office of Digital Strategy at Harvard University).

AmmermanCenter
@AmmermanCenter

🐦 Follow

Welcome back @AmmermanCenter Alums - Chris Eramo '01, Amy Barrett '12, Owen Stowe '11 and Andrew Nathanson '13!

8:26 PM - 11 Oct 2014

Tweet posted about the Fall Weekend Ammerman Alumni Panel on October 11.

Fall Open House lunch on October 13th was a well-attended event for high school students to meet and learn about the Center.

Behind Enemy Lines: From Slavery to Mass Imprisonment was a lecture on by Bonnie Kerness held on March 23rd. It was sponsored by Anthropology, Sociology and the Ammerman Center.

Academic Fair for Admitted Students held on April 13th and 20th was a well attended event with many admitted students (and their parents) talking with Ammerman Center faculty, staff and Scholars about the program.

Honors Symposium featured students pursuing year-long independent projects. Annie Rusk presented her Ammerman senior integrative project "Interactive Poetics: Creativity through Passing Mediums" on April 20th in the Charles Chu Room in Shain Library.

Organized by the 4 Centers:

Getting Centered: Academic Center Fair on September 13th was an enjoyable fall afternoon on Temple Green where all certificate centers set up tables and handed out material about their respective programs. This was an opportunity to introduce the Center to first year and second year students in an informal setting.

_*Center Certificate Programs Integrative Project Research Fair* on April 22th was held in Ernst for students from all 4 certificate programs. It was an opportunity for students to present their year-long integrative projects in poster sessions and demonstrations. This was an exciting moment for students to present their center-related research to the public and is an example of how the senior year "floralia-of-the-mind" could work.

New Technology and Tools

Form 1+
High-Resolution 3D printer
(temporary home in Hood Lab)

Occipital Structure Sensor
3D scanning, augmented reality and
instant measurements fit for iPad

Equipment Purchases

The Center purchased a 3D printer and a 3D scanner this year for use by Center student scholars and fellows teaching cross-listed courses. Form Labs Form 1+ High Resolution 3D Printer and the Structure Sensor 3D Sensor for Mobile Devices were temporarily housed in the Hood Lab in Cummings. We are looking for a more permanent location for our digital fabrication tools.

Professional Sponsorship

The Center supported '17 Elissa Webb (Center student scholar) to attend the United States Institute for Theater Technology (USITT) conference in Cincinnatti, March 18th-21st.

Bridget Baird and Andrea Wollensak traveled to Rome, Italy to present a paper and exhibit work at the Generative Art conference *Ph(r)ase Transition*, December 15th-20th.

Staff, Associates Directors and Fellows

This year was an important moment to invite new fellows into the program and begin a broader conversation about the arts, humanities, sciences and technology. We are so pleased to have the following new fellows in the Center:

David Kim, Religious Studies
Emily Morash, Architectural Studies/Art History
Joe Alchermes, Architectural Studies/Art History
Anthony Graesch, Anthropology
Joe Schroeder, Psychology
Ari Rotamel, Gender and Womens Studies
Priya Kohli, Mathematics
Lyndsay Bratton, Information Services
Michele Neely, English

Faculty Associate Directors
We have a strong core of Associate Fellows that have been meeting regularly to discuss our Center's goals and students' progress.

Nadav Assor, Assistant Professor Studio Art was appointed Associate Director of Events. Nadav coordinated our visiting artists workshops, colloquia and initiated the planning of the 2016 symposium.

James Lee, Assistant Professor of Computer Science was appointed Associate Director of Technology. James worked on overseeing, coordinating with associated faculty, and maintaining (with IT) hardware and software in the labs used by student scholars. James also worked closely on the technical components of our student's integrative projects.

Steve Luber, Visiting Assistant Professor of Theater was appointed Associate Director of Curriculum. Steve was instrumental in overseeing curricular programming, heading up the senior seminar and coordinating with faculty advisors for seniors on their projects. Steve also taught our new gateway course AT201 *Topics on the History of Arts and Technology*.

Assistant Director
Libby Friedman is our backbone to the Center. Her dedication, energy, and motivation keep the program moving forward. She is the Center's Assistant Director and runs the daily operations with an incredible attention to detail, refined planning skills and a great sense of responsibility. Her long list of responsibilities show the range of work she completes and includes: student recruitment, advising, internships; meeting with students individually to assist in organizing their project-related events and project presentations; organizing the logistics of all center related events including student installations, ceremonies, awards, etc.; coordinating all events of the colloquia series, maintaining center related communication with other academic departments, Advancement, College Relations, Admissions, CELS and other centers; maintaining budgets; and coordinating the center's publicity. Libby completed her involvement in Staff Council after serving for seven years. In 2014 -15 she served as past

chair, and chaired the Presidential Staff Awards Subcommittee and Selection Committee. Under the new directorship, we determined that Libby's job description did not accurately reflect the work she had been completing on an annual basis. In the fall, we completed a comprehensive review of her job description to better reflect her responsibilities. Human resources reviewed it and it is now inline with the other center similar positions and the salary was increased accordingly. We plan on defining a part time office assistant position to assist Libby in the Ammerman office in the upcoming year.

Summary: Public Events, Presentations and Media Placements

Below is a chronological list of Center events with media coverage. This list demonstrates work completed at the Center including engaging interested parties at the College, advertising our program and making connections with students who are interested in pursuing study with the Ammerman Center.

AUG 20
Ammerman Faculty/Staff retreat
SEP 13
Getting Centered: Academic Centers Fair
SEP 17
Weekly Academic Center Lunch Talks in Cro (held every week)
SEP 22
New Media Colloquia Series: The Builders Association
OCT 2
Builders Association Fieldtrip to Wesleyan University
OCT 11
Fall weekend Ammerman Center Alumni Panel
OCT 13
Certification Program Information Session
OCT 13
Fall Open House
NOV 1
"Art, Authors, dance and Discussions on campus: November 2014
https://www.conncoll.edu/news/event-releases/art-authors-dance-and-discussions-on-campus-this-month.html#.VXW99mTBzRY
NOV 17
New Media Colloquia Series: Maayan Sheleff
DEC 15-20
Generative Art conference in Rome, Italy: Wollensak/Baird project
DEC 22
Mellon Officer's Grant submitted

JAN 12-16

Physical Computing Workshop with Kate Sicchio

JAN 26

Awarded the $100,000 Mellon Grant

FEB 3

"Creativity Comes Alice: Center for Arts and Technology Hosts Physical Computing Workshop" http://thecollegevoice.org/2015/02/03/creativity-comes-alive-center-for-arts-technology-hosts-physical-computing-workshop/

JAN 20

AT 201 History of Arts & Technology (new center gateway course)

JAN 30

Ammerman Center Scholars Lunch: Reginold Royston C3 Fellow from Williams College

FEB 9

New Media Colloquia Series: Sarah Oppenheimer

FEB 27

Ammerman Center Inaugural Midwinter Banquet

MAR 10

"College receives over $1.7 million in grants" (SOURCE article)

MAR 18-21

Center student Elissa Webb attended USITT Annual Conference (Technical Theater Conference) in Cincinnati, Ohio

MAR 23

Co-sponsored "Prison Watch" Project lecture with Anthropology and Sociology

APR 13

Ammerman Center New Media Colloquia Series: Heather Dewey-Hagborg

APR 13

"Why are Centers Selective?" (The College Voice)
http://thecollegevoice.org/2015/04/15/why-are-centers-selective-understanding-the-limit-of-admissions-to-academic-centers/

APR 13

Admitted students open house and academic fair

APR 16

Senior Scholars Project: Annie Rusk Installation (Blaustein)

APR 17

Site visit to Brown University, MEME program (Mellon)

APR 20

Honors symposium: Annie Rusk presented

APR 22

Center Certificate Programs Inaugural Integrative Project Research Fair

APR 23
Ammerman Senior Scholars Project: Group Installations
APR 28
Honors & Awards Ceremony
MAY 8
Site visit to Yale University, CEID (Mellon)
MAY 10, 11, 12
Site visit to Concordia/UQAM, Hexagram (Mellon)
MAY 15
Faculty Focus Group retreat
MAY 16
Ammerman Senior Scholars: presentations, lunch and certificate ceremony

Funding
We received $6,000 from private donations that include $5,000 from Steele Blackall, $500 from the family of Sara Lesko '09, supplemented by a matching donation of $500 from Johnson & Johnson.

On January 26, we received $100,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for curricular renewal.

We have reached out to Sonalysts and requested a renewal of our corporate sponsorship. We have also reached out to Sennhieser in Old Lyme and will contact them again with news about our new initiatives.

Social Media
In conjunction with the Office of Communications, we redesigned the Center's website in the fall, and transitioned a second time to the new college-wide website format in the spring. As we are re-imagining the Center, the website reflects our new direction through current interaction design. It serves as an active communications space with social media strategies, college wide publicity and current trends in digital communication. The website gathers the Center's Facebook and Twitter postings in real time, keeping our publicity up to the minute and current.

The Office of Communications produced a informational video highlighting the Center and senior students - this video sits in a prominent place on our home page.

The website serves as an accurate reflection of the Center, and has drawn potential students to inquire about the Certificate Program. It presents a revitalized direction for the next generation in the context of contemporary practices in digital media.

Concluding Remarks

It has been an exciting and very busy year! The Center has momentum and positive energy as we move forward in planning a new curriculum. Our timing with this initiative is perfect with the new campus-wide *Connections* program. We look forward to building this program with departments and other centers as well as exploring inter-institution connections.

Next year is a symposium year and we have already begun its planning. The symposium theme is *Open All Ports* and scheduled for February 25, 26 and 27, 2016. Ports, as physical places, demarcate points of passage such as arrival and departure, entry and exit. New London, the host city for the symposium, is a prime example of such a port. Virtual ports (such as network and computer ports) undergird our digital connectivity. Though both physical and virtual ports have been relatively open and unrestricted to the traffic that moves through them, we now exist in an era in which we attempt to balance access, information, security, privacy and freedom.

Next year will be busy with events and meetings for the Mellon grant and the planning of the symposium. We are mindful of the fact that the organization of the symposium, the selection of submitted work and working with commissioned artists and technologists requires a lot of work on the Center and its faculty fellows. To better coordinate and plan for next year, we are connecting parts of the Mellon Foundation grant with the symposium. Our keynote speaker for the symposium, Natalie Jeremijenko, is also one of our visiting artists/consultants for the grant. Natalie Jeremijenko (Associate Professor of Art, New York University, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, director of xdesign Environmental Health Clinic) will also exhibit her work in the Cummings Galleries from January-March 2016. This exhibition is connected with our symposium and is curated by Nadav Assor. We will also curate an exhibition at the Hygienic Gallery in New London as part of the symposium.

We have also scheduled Paul Kaiser and Marc Downie of the OpenEnded Group to teach the January Technology Workshop focusing on the theme of Open All Ports and introducing 3-D projection technologies. They are also part of our Mellon grant.

Alongside the exciting programming sponsored by the Mellon grant and the symposium next year, the Center will conduct its regular programs including research, student projects, curricular and extracurricular activities. Center fellow, Steve Luber (Theater) will be teaching the senior seminar and the gateway course. We look forward to a great symposium and a transformative year of discussions and planning as we reimagine the Ammerman Center.

Mellon Grant Activities

I am so pleased to report that The Ammerman Center received a Mellon Foundation Officer's Grant of $100,000 for use over 17 months titled *Reimagining Arts & Technology at Connecticut College*. We have begun in earnest this past semester. The grant officially began in May 2015 and we initiated activities beginning in January 2015.

The focus of the grant is to develop a new certificate program for student scholars, create a new interdisciplinary cluster for reVision curriculum, and to seek out inter-institutional collaborations that will strengthen the reach and relevance of the Center's programs.

This grant supports programmatic reform and sustained collaboration both within and beyond our campus community through the following activities:

1) Establish an interdisciplinary faculty focus group
2) Invite consultants/visiting artists to visit Ammerman Center
3) Travel for site visits to other institutions
4) Hire a visiting fellow to teach an AT course

This year-long grant will provide critical support for a 'pilot year' in which the Center develops a more broadly engaging multi-year interdisciplinary curriculum. At the end of the grant period, we will compile a report articulating a long-term vision for the Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology—one that places its work at the center of a responsive, engaged, and creative liberal education at Connecticut College.

The timing of the grant dovetails perfectly with the newly approved campus-wide *Connections* curricular framework. During the academic year, Center fellows and staff were active participants in the reVision planning process bringing to the table the perspective of the Ammerman Center. Through the Mellon grant, the Ammerman Center will develop a robust curriculum that aligns with *Connections* and includes goals of fostering an integrative and intentional approach to learning as well as broaden our approach to applications in digital technologies.

1) Interdisciplinary faculty focus group. This group is charged with designing a new curriculum for the Center.

In the late summer and through the fall semester, we organized meetings with faculty fellows, staff, and administration to gather input on the Center's goals and vision. On August 20, we held a 25+faculty/staff retreat about the future of the Center. This input and energy moved us forward in determining the future goals of the Center. Based on this wide-ranging input, the grant was written, revised and submitted in December 2015.

In the fall semester we established the Faculty Focus Group, a smaller and committed group of faculty representing a wide range of disciplines—including Psychology, Gender and Women's Studies, Anthropology, Art History, Architectural Studies, Computer Science, Studio Art, Theater, Dance, Music, and Film Studies—and includes professional staff from Information Services and the Center. This core group is working together to plan the new aspects of the Center's programming and curricular offerings.

The Faculty Focus Group determined the first step in redesigning the curriculum was to introduce a gateway course for students in their second semester of their sophomore year. During the fall semester we designed and refined the new AT201 gateway course *Topics on the History of Arts and Technology* and taught by Professor Steve Luber. This new course was offered for the first time in the spring semester giving all newly admitted center students a gateway course experience for the first time. Evaluations from the students reflected a greater context for arts & technology and the cohesive spirit.

The Faculty Focus Group met a number of times during the fall and spring semester culminating in a longer four hour retreat on May 1st. The fall retreat provided time together to review the proposed grant and consider new directions for the Center.

The May 1st meeting was time for the group to review the reports from the site visits and establish sub-committees that will work over the summer:

      _Technology/Space planning, headed up by James Lee
      _Curriculum planning, headed up by Steve Luber
      _Community Outreach planning, headed up by Nadav Assor

We will reconvene in June and again in August to review the work of the sub-committees.

2) Consultants/Visiting Artists. We have seven consultants and visiting artists scheduled to visit campus next year. These visitors will meet with the focus group, give workshops, participate in exhibitions and present public lectures on campus.

Chris Salter, Artist, Director of Hexagram Concordia and Associate Professor for Design + Computation Arts will visit campus on October 26-27, 2015. As a visiting artist and consultant, he will meet with the Focus Group, give a public talk and meet with center student scholars. We look forward to his visit and input.

Natalie Jeremijenko, Associate Professor of Art, New York University, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, director of xdesign Environmental Health Clinic, is another Mellon consultant/center director. Natalie has agreed to be our keynote speaker for the upcoming Ammerman biennial symposium (February 25-27) and exhibit her work in the symposium exhibition. We will meet with Natalie before the symposium on campus to introduce our program and facilities.

Paul Kaiser and Marc Downie of the OpenEndedGroup will be heading up our January Technology Workshop (January 18-22, 2016) with students. Their work spans a wide range of forms and disciplinaes, including dance, music, installation, film, and public art. They have worked with Merce Cunningham, Bill T. Jones and Trish Brown. Recently they have created new approaches to 3D projection, which has resulted in works of digital cinema. The January Technology Workshop will be a weeklong study of 3D projection based on narratives from New London.

In addition to these consultant/artists, we are in the process of scheduling campus visits for Butch Rovan and Todd Winkler, Professors and Co-Directors, (MEME) at Brown University, and Lev Manovich, Professor at The Graduate Center, CUNY.

3) Travel for site visits to other institutions. Our site visits were insightful and gave the group an inspiring and broader view of what similar insititutions offer through curriculum, space, technology and technical support. Our site visits were completed in May 2015.

On April 17th, a group of focus group fellows (Andrea Wollensak, Ozgur Izmirli, Nadav Assor, James Lee, Lyndsay Bratton, David Kim, Steve Luber, Ari Rotamel, and Libby Friedman) met Butch Rovan at the MEME program at Brown University. We met in the Orwig Music Building with Butch where he gave us an introduction to the program. We were introduced to the program through impressive undergraduate and graduate student presentations. We then visited the Grant Recital Hall (venue for MEME concerts), had a tour of the Steinert Building and met with Studio director Jim Moses. We then went to the Granoff Center for the Creative Arts to tour the facility including the Physical Media Lab. We then had lunch and ended with a visit to the Digital Scholarship Lab with Patrich Rashleigh. http://www.brown.edu/academics/music/graduate/computer-music-multimedia-meme

On May 8th, a group of focus group fellows (Andrea Wollensak, Ozgur Izmirli, James Lee, Lyndsay Bratton, Art Krieger, Joe Alchermes, Steve Luber, Emily Morash, and Libby Friedman) took a trip to Yale University to the Center for Engineering Innovation and Design (CEID). Our host Vincent Wilczynski (James S. Tyler Director of the Center and Deputy Dean of the Yale School of Engineering and Applied Science) gave us a slide presentation and introduced us to the Center's staff—Dr. Larry Wilen, Senior Research Scientist, and Dr. Joe Zinter, Associate Research Scientist, as well as student design fellows. Vince then gave us a tour of the facilities and we were able to talk with undergraduates who were working on independent projects. http://ceid.yale.edu/

May 10th-12th, the assistant, associates and director (Andrea Wollensak, Nadav Assor, James Lee, Steve Luber and Libby Friedman) took a trip to Montreal to Hexagram at Concordia and Universitie of Quebec at Montreal (UQÁM). http://hexagram.concordia.ca/about/

The Hexagram-Concordia Center for Research-Creation in Media Arts and Technologies is a leading center for new media research and located within Concordia University's Faculty of Fine Arts. Its state-of-the-arts labs and equipment, funded by provincial and federal grants, provide a rich collaborative environment for the interdisciplinary work of faculty members and graduate students in new media, design, and interactive performance and technologies.

Our visit to Hexagram consisted of two full days of meetings, and tours and demonstrations on both campuses. The detailed schedule included a tour of Concordia Research Labs/Spaces: Black Box, FOFA Gallery, MatraLab, Topological Media Lab, and a visit to the Jacquard Loom. We then met with Chris Salter, Director of Hexagram Concordia, Anne Whitelaw, Associate Dean of Research at the Faculty of Fine Arts. In the afternoon, we met with Hexagram students, visited Professor of Fiber Arts, Barbara Layne at Studio SubTela. We then met with Bart Simon at Technoculture, Art and Games lab. At the end of the day we met with Joanna Berzowksa, the Chair of Design and Computation Arts.

On Tuesday, May 11th we visited UQÁM Research labs and facilities with Martin Pelletier and Natalie Lafortune. We then met with Jean Décarie, Director of Hexagram UQÁM Antenna. We had lunch with Jean Dubois, Vice Dean of Research and Creation, then, at the end of the day, we met with Hexagram members: Paul Landon, Michel Boulanger, and Robert Saucier to view their creative work and community projects.

4) Visiting Fellow to teach AT course. Visiting Fellow, Caroline Park, from Multimedia and Electronic Music Experiments (MEME) at Brown University, will teach a new course, advise student scholars, and participate in the faculty focus group.

During the late spring semester we conducted interviews for the Mellon Visiting Fellow position. After reviewing three candidates, we interviewed two and hired Caroline Park. We are absolutely thrilled to have Caroline on board! She will bring a fresh perspective to our planning group and be an inspiring educator for our student scholars.

This fall, Caroline will be teaching AT222 *Special Topics Post-Digital: New Sonic Futures and the Activist Imaginary.* Caroline will teach on Tuesdays and Thursdays and the course will include an evening lab component. So far we have five students enrolled and we plan to promote the course early in the fall semester. Caroline has already connected with Gender and Women's Studies and the Music Department. Her course is now cross-listed with these areas. We look forward to working with Caroline next academic year.

Respectfully submitted by
Andrea Wollensak
Judith Ammerman '60 Director, Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology
Professor, Studio Art Department