

Faculty Development Seminar Schedule

Building Expertise in Teaching Africa: Decolonizing, Infusing, & Reflecting

Thursday, October 16

9:00– 9:30 AM Meet & Greet

WWPH 5601

Meet & Greet

Coffee & Bagels

9:30 – 10 AM Welcome

WWPH 5601

Welcome & Opening Remarks

CAS Team

10 – 11 AM Morning Session I

WWPH 5601

Local Histories, African Dance: Shifting Scales Separated by an Ocean

Lauren Taylor & Dominique Brown

WWPH 5602

Women and the Senegambian Anti-Slavery Tradition: Notes from the Archives

Crystal Eddins

11– 11:15 PM Break

11:15 – 12:15 PM Morning Session II

WWPH 5602

Global TEACH: A Transnational Approach to Curriculum, Partnership, and Community Engagement

Abi Fapohunda

WWPH 5603

At Eye Level: Colonial and Post-Colonial Photography in West Africa

Randall Halle

12:15 – 1:00 PM Cultural Immersion Lunch

WWPH 4130

Cultural Immersion Lunch

West African Cuisine

1:00 – 2:30 PM Afternoon Sessions

WWPH 5602

Reimagining Acting Pedagogy: Integrating Senegalese West African Dance, Drumming and African Knowledge Systems into Teaching and Learning

Karen J. Gilmer & Kya Conner

WWPH 5603

Decolonizing the Classroom, Curriculum, and Research

Pernille Roge, Maureen Porter, Alveena Shah & Gamby Camara

2:30 – 3:00 PM Closing Session

WWPH 5602

Group Reflection: Building a Community of Practice

Anna-Maria Karnes

3:00 PM – END Special Feature

WWPH 4130

Film Screening: Selected Works

Daniel Abusuampeh

Abstracts

Crystal Eddins — Women and the Senegambian Anti-Slavery Tradition: Notes from the Archives

It is commonly accepted that captive African women helped to plot and orchestrate shipboard revolts because women and children were often unchained on slave ships, a curious yet consistent oversight, meaning women's and children's presence on slave ships had some impact on the frequency of slave ship insurrections. In addition to gender, the Senegambian anti-slavery tradition, which culminated in the 1785 Fuuta Tooro revolution, also provides an important context for understanding shipboard revolts. Thus, this presentation will explore archival and primary source material that aid in investigating the revolution, and the relationship between gender and shipboard insurrections from Senegambia — a region that had higher proportions of women captives on slaving voyages as well as a higher likelihood of revolt than voyages departing other regions.

Abi Fapohunda — Global TEACH: A Transnational Approach to Curriculum, Partnership, and Community Engagement

Global TEACH (Training, Education, and Awareness of Cancer Healthcare) provides a transnational approach to curriculum development that brings Nigerian perspectives, expertise, and community experiences directly into the classroom. Developed through the University of Pittsburgh's Global Academic Partnership Fellowship, the program connects students and faculty at the University of Pittsburgh and Babcock University through shared learning, collaborative research, and community engagement.

This workshop will reflect on how transnational partnerships can strengthen teaching and learning about Africa by creating opportunities for reciprocal exchange rather than one-directional instruction. It will highlight benefits for faculty through collaborative curriculum development and shared expertise; for students through cross-cultural teamwork and applied learning; for institutional partners through sustained collaboration; and for communities through research and health education that respond to local priorities. The workshop will also consider practical lessons from Global TEACH for building more inclusive, reciprocal, and context-informed approaches to teaching Africa.

Pernille Roge, Maureen Porter, Alveena Shah & Gamby Camara — Decolonizing the Classroom, Curriculum, and Research

This workshop explores strategies for decolonizing teaching and research. It begins by introducing participants to approaches for decolonizing the classroom and curriculum, drawing on concrete examples from the instructors' own teaching. Participants will then apply these strategies to their own curriculum or research. They are encouraged to bring a syllabus, teaching module, or research project they would like to work on during the session.

Randall Halle — At Eye Level: Colonial and Post-Colonial Photography in West Africa

In the 1930s the French colonial administration set up the Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noir with the purpose of documenting the history and culture of the people of West and Central Africa. As part of this project, they established a photography archive which grew to a catalogue of tens of thousands of images. It extends from the 1930s through to the period of decolonization. In this workshop session we will explore this archive, gain access to digitized images, and consider how to approach, view, teach, and learn from this collection. Located in Dakar, the archive is now a centerpiece of Senegalese and regional history and heritage. In the collection, we find images that belong to racializing practices of the period. However, close

investigation reveals a complexity to the images and the photographers that has inspired scholars and artists to recover and recontextualize the images so that we can see them in new ways.

Karen J. Gilmer & Kya Conner — Reimagining Acting Pedagogy: Integrating Senegalese West African Dance, Drumming and African Knowledge Systems into Teaching and Learning

This professional development workshop explores strategies for integrating African Studies into curriculum design and teaching practices through a redesigned acting course. Using Senegalese West African dance and drumming traditions as a case study, the session demonstrates how African performance practices can serve as pedagogical frameworks rather than supplemental cultural content. Participants will examine practical approaches to revising syllabi, learning outcomes, assignments, and classroom activities to promote African cultural literacy and expand understandings of race, religion, class, gender, community, and artistic expression beyond an American-centered perspective.

Drawing on a class session developed in collaboration with Dr. Kya Conner, the workshop highlights how West African Dance and Drumming (WADD) can be used in place of Michael Chekhov's psychological gesture approach to acting. Through embodied learning, rhythm, call-and-response, storytelling, and community-centered performance, participants will explore methods for deepening student engagement and learning. The workshop provides a practical model for infusing African knowledge systems and performance traditions into teaching practices across disciplines while demonstrating the value of collaborative, culturally grounded approaches to arts education.

Still needed: *abstract from Lauren Taylor & Dominique Brown.*

Lauren Taylor & Dominique Brown —Local Histories, African Dance: Shifting Scales Separated by an Ocean

In Fall 2025, Pitt Professors Dominique Brown (WSGS) and Lauren Taylor (HAA) invited Erin Perry, executive director of the Legacy Arts Project, to lead a workshop for undergraduates enrolled in Intro to Feminist Theory and Arts of Africa. Their workshop will share what they learned from this experience, and will provide actionable recommendations on local, embodied, and collaborative approaches to incorporating African Studies in the university classroom.