Leading a Common Read Program
New roles for academic librarians

David Drexler, Cal State Fresno
Susanna Eng-Ziskin, Cal State Northridge
Michele Van Hoeck, Cal State Maritime

April 13, 2019
Reading About Water
Tell us about your Common Read experience
What are some key strategies for expanding curriculum integration of a common reading program?
New Student Convocation 2018

Nicole Mancias and her father Wayne Mancias were the keynote speakers at this year’s New Student Convocation. Read about their visit at CSUN Today.

Who chose BECOMING NICOLE?

Becoming Nicole was chosen by this year’s members of the Freshman Common Reading Selection Committee. The committee is open to all interested members of the CSUN community, students, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni. If you’d like to join us next year, read about the Nominating Process and select the book you’d like to help curate. You can email susana1@csun.edu to indicate your interest.

Names preceded by an asterisk * indicate CSUN students.

Karen Abromavits
Christopher Aston
Sooja Chamber
Elizabeth Chiu
Hannah Chmiel
Sara Cole
Catherine Coutino
冒出与刘
eva Gaitz
Kim Hefer
James Johnson
Alame Mance
Deidra Mercado
Michael Neubauer
Isabell Ramirez
Julia Salcido
Hilary Schachter

Becoming Nicole: Faculty and Staff Resources

Becoming Nicole by Amy Ellis Nutt will be CSUN’s Freshman Common Reading for 2018-2019. Faculty and staff invited to join the conversation through a workshop-style book discussion of ways to teach and discuss the book. Workshop handouts, note-taking, and assignment ideas are available below.

Free copies of the book for CSUN faculty and staff, on request: we’ve got a deal for you.

CSUN faculty and staff who would like a free copy of the book are welcome to request one by email to Susana1@csun.edu. Book orders will be placed through the usual process. Special order copies will be placed through Amazon, and we will send CSUN faculty and staff a copy.

Nominating Titles

Tities nominated for 2019-2020

Nomination Process

Selection Criteria

Student Art for Becoming Nicole

The winning poster design for 2018-2019 was created by CSUN student Zuray Reynejiri for Professor Lance Long’s ART 122

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How have you assessed your common read program?

What were the challenges or successes?

What changes were made based on that assessment?
Has leading this campus-wide program raised the profile of the library, helped you develop relationships with faculty, or lead to development of new skills?
Bad plan!

My idea first!

Let's invade the Ice Planet Hoth!

Darth won't approve

I love winter!
As hard as it is to believe, I have no idea what I'm doing.

I had to display leadership once. It was terrible.

http://icanhazcheezburger.com

http://www.quickmeme.com/Grumpy-Jean-Cat
Think/Pair/Share

Emerging better or best practices for Common Read programs
California State University Northridge
Freshman Common Reading Program

Basic information about program: www.csun.edu/common-reading
Contact: Susanna Eng-Ziskin, susanna.eng@csun.edu

Our Program’s Selection Criteria:
- Does this book engage freshmen, and draw them into reading and reflection?
- Does this book encourage freshmen to grow intellectually?
- Does this book encourage thought and discussion in a variety of courses and contexts?
- Does this book value diverse cultural perspectives?
- Does this book address significant issues?

Programming
- **Book giveaways:** We purchase between 300-400 books to give away to interested faculty and staff on campus in the Spring to get the community interested in and talking about the book. In exchange, they promise to engage first year students about the book in the subsequent year.
- **Spring Discussion Series:** We host 5-6 discussion sessions in the Spring prior to adoption in the Fall and invite any faculty and staff to come to them to learn about the book, to learn how they might teach the book, and to generally discuss it with campus colleagues. We recruit people on campus with expertise on the topic to lead these discussions. We make the notes available on our Faculty / Staff resources page: https://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/academic-first-year-experiences/becoming-nicole-faculty-and-staff-resources
- **Library lobby exhibit:** Prior to our library’s renovation, we created a lobby exhibit each year in conjunction with the Common Read selection. We created “READ” posters with students, staff, faculty, and administrators and used those in the exhibit as well.
- **University 100:** The book is adopted as a textbook for our U100 (freshman seminar) course.
- **New Student Orientation:** All our orientation leaders receive a copy of the book and talk about it with new students at New Student Orientation in August.
- **New Student Convocation:** We invite the author (or subject) of the Common Read to be the keynote speaker at our New Student Convocation, typically held the 2nd or 3rd week of Fall semester. Depending on the speaker, sometimes they spend the entire day on campus, meeting with and talking with different groups.
Leading a Campus Common Read Program
8:30 a.m. April 13, 2019

Miscellaneous information

- Members of the committee promise to nominate at least one book every two years.
- There are several student members on the committee, including first year students.
- We aim to reevaluate the selection criteria every few years.
- Committee member guidelines (needs to be updated because they way we now use “approval voting”): https://www.csun.edu/sites/default/files/Committee%20Guidelines.pdf

Student Engagement

Each year, we work with an illustration course to develop posters for the Common Read. We use these posters to market the program. Posters end up all over campus, and in the library we typically develop one of the posters into bookmarks. These are some examples of artwork created by CSUN students for recent books.
California State University, Fresno
Reading About Water

Current year information: [http://tinyurl.com/WaterReading18-19](http://tinyurl.com/WaterReading18-19)
Contact: David Drexler, ddrexler@csufresno.edu

**Selection Process**
Titles are chosen informally by program organizers, but there are some consistent concerns:

- It must be on a water-related topic, of course.
- Is the author available to visit campus and present?
- Does the book lend itself to examination from a variety of disciplinary views?
- Is the book organized in a way that allows use of individual sections or chapters?

**Curricular Integration**
Reading About Water is built around integrating the text into many courses to promote consideration of water issues from many perspectives. We recruit faculty by working through Fresno State’s Faculty Learning Community program. This program provides a means to publicize the program, administrative support for tracking faculty participation, and some funding, which sometimes provides a small stipend for participating faculty.

**Sample Classes from Spring 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Integration Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Geospatial Data</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Class discussion &amp; writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Business Ethics</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>Research paper comparing book story to Fresno story; water recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Intro Curriculum &amp; Instr</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>Integrated water lesson plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science Methods</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Investigation of water misconceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Geotechnical Design</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>In-class &amp; online discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Literacy Seminar</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Transformation of content into prose, visuals, and graphic novels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geology</td>
<td>Intro Earth &amp; Env Sciences</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Class &amp; online discussions, visual display creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nat Disasters &amp; Earth Res</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>ePortfolio, visual display creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Environmental Planning</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Recommended reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistics</td>
<td>Discourse Analysis</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Examine competing discourses of “recycled water”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Comm</td>
<td>Online Media Design</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Collaborative project on water in the valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>612</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Programming

- **Author visit:** We invite the author(s) to campus to present a public talk, meet with students in participating classes, and see the Student Water Showcase. The visit is scheduled to fall in the same week as other water-related events on campus such as Friends of the Library lecture and a water-wise plant exchange.

- **Student Water Showcase:** Faculty are invited to include an assignment that will produce a poster, display, or anything with visual/graphic element. These are exhibited in the library for a few weeks timed to include the author visit. An opening reception provides an opportunity for students to see and discuss each others’ work.

- **Book club:** A staff member who organizes the project started a discussion group, facilitated by campus water experts, to provide an opportunity for engaging campus staff. It has also attracted faculty who prefer a lower-barrier way to participate. The Spring 2018 book club went on a tour of Fresno’s new water treatment facility, and the Spring 2019 group will tour the Meyers Water Bank & Wildlife Project.

- **Student Water Symposium:** In Spring 2018 we invited student groups to give short presentations preceding the author’s public talk. Just one group volunteered, and gave a well-received presentation of their research project.

Assessment

In some years we have sent surveys to participating students, though response rates are a challenge since these are optional and sent at the end of the semester. Strongest responses are on increased awareness of personal water use habits. A large majority report that they carried discussions on water issues out of class to friends and family.

California State University Maritime Academy
New Student Common Reading Program

Website: https://library.csum.edu/commonreading
Contact: Michele Van Hoeck, mvanhoeck@csum.edu

Objectives of the Program
- To acquaint new students with Cal Maritime’s academic environment, including its mission and values
- To initiate relationships between students and the campus community
- To introduce students to academic discussion
- To inspire a lifelong love of learning

Book Selection Criteria
- Relevant to the Cal Maritime mission. The connection can be indirect, but it should be consistent throughout the book. Currently focusing on “Global Awareness” element of university mission.
- Multifaceted. Can the book’s themes be approached from most major fields (science, business, humanities, etc.)? Major themes must hold up under scrutiny.
- Non-didactic. The book's themes shouldn't be too obvious or heavy-handed.
- Artful, but not overwrought (prose style). It should be entertaining, but also thought provoking.
- Impressive. Rank the book for its "wow-factor."

Programming

Book giveaways: A copy of the book is mailed to every incoming student during the summer before their first semester (~350). Books are purchased from special Provost’s fund.

Orientation Week Book Discussions (August): all incoming students participate in small group discussions of the book, led by faculty and staff program volunteers. Most volunteers are long time participants, and experienced discussion leaders are paired with those less experienced. A few days before the student discussions, the Library hosts a professional development workshop for program volunteers, focused on leading effective book discussions.

Keynote Speaker: during the fall semester, all students attend a lecture by either the author or an expert on the subject of the book, as part of our FYE program.
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Selected books, 2011-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Leavers</td>
<td>Lisa Ko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spirit Catches You</td>
<td>Anne Fadiman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boys in the Boat</td>
<td>Daniel James Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>In the Heart of the Sea</td>
<td>Nathaniel Philbrick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outliers</td>
<td>Malcolm Gladwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longitude</td>
<td>Dava Sobel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Endurance</td>
<td>Caroline Alexander</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>