Interdisciplinary Collaboration in the Creative Arts: Possibilities for Student Learning from a Faculty Learning Community

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In 2014-15, the authors and other faculty participated in a Creative Arts Faculty Learning Community in which each of them collaborated with at least one other individual outside of their discipline to generate a creative work of writing, image, music, three-dimensional piece, or combination thereof. Their goal was to complete the work during the fall and early spring semesters in time for an exhibition and performance in late March and early April. Following a review of literature addressing interdisciplinary collaboration, two of the faculty teams describe their projects and reflect on possible applications for teaching generated by their experiences. Observations about interdisciplinary artistic collaboration, as well as broader conclusions are offered.

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The creation of a Creative Arts Faculty Learning Community (CAFLC) that consisted of twelve faculty from six disciplines at a two-year access campus of the University of Cincinnati provides evidence for the value of interdisciplinary work among faculty when individual faculty members are capable of setting aside the rigid formulas and expectations of their disciplines. This "case study" is considered informal because the CAFLC did not set out to explore a specific pedagogical question; interdisciplinary collaboration in the making of multi-genre creative work was its goal. The FLC model provided a mechanism for carving out the institutional time and space needed to do this work. However, during the months of creating work and reflecting on the specific processes faculty developed, the implications for teaching became evident. Following an overview of the 2014-15 CAFLC, and a literature review focused on interdisciplinary collaboration, four CAFLC participants discuss their projects and suggest ways that their learning experiences might transfer into student learning.

Overview of CAFLC Activities in 2014-15

Influenced by the Ohio Teaching Enhancement Program established by Milton Cox, faculty learning communities have existed on the UCBA campus for more than a decade. They often consisted of faculty from different disciplines, but none of them had focused on the creative arts or the pedagogy of teaching creative writing and/or visual arts. When the CAFLC was established in 2012, it consisted of five faculty from two disciplines. By the fall of 2014 it had expanded to twelve faculty from six disciplines (Art, Electronic Media, English, Foreign Language, Mathematics, and Music). At the beginning of the 2014-15 academic year,

participants accepted the challenge of producing interdisciplinary collaborative works for a spring 2015 exhibition at the UCBA Art Gallery.

The combination of institutional support, committed faculty, and a tight deadline proved to be productive. After sharing general and specific interests and skill sets over the course of two meetings, project groups and pairs formed organically and outside the setting of a CAFLC meeting, based on interests, ideas, or curiosities. Some CAFLC members worked with more than one group or pair. The CAFLC group overall continued to meet monthly to provide project updates and share results, but otherwise the smaller groups and pairs worked individually. The process of creation varied: some projects required careful planning while others emphasized spontaneous compositions; some projects generated new texts and images while others used previously created ones; some applied cutting-edge technology while others used scissors and glue. Brains were taxed and genres crossed. The result was an array of works using a broad range of forms or combinations of forms: sculpture, installation, written and musical compositions, audio, video, performance, photography, collage, and other works on paper. These projects would invite the viewer, as their construction had invited the artists, to experience the synergy of artistic collaboration across disciplinary fields.

At one of the CAFLC's spring meetings, the group discussed what to name the exhibition, finally choosing *Gaps and Overlaps*. The reason: CAFLC members had brought to their projects various gaps in knowledge about disciplines not their own, as well as the shared purpose of creating something new. During the exhibition's opening reception, members read poems and performed texts that had been captured in cabinets, ticket stubs, recordings, photographs, and triptychs. In addition to the exhibition, which was open to the campus, individual classes, and the public, the projects were documented in a print and online catalog.

Three artist/writer panel discussions about not only the created works, but the experience of collaboration, shared aesthetics, and varying approaches and processes, were conducted and recorded at the UCBA Art Gallery.

Before the close of the academic year, it became apparent that months of intense, collaborative creative work would not only generate an exhibition, but questions and possibilities for teaching. How did our experience line up with the scholarship about collaboration in the academy? How might the experiences of working with others outside of disciplinary comfort zones affect teaching? How might both inspirational and coping strategies be shared with students who work collaboratively? What kind of assignments might mirror the individual and collective collaborative experience, or enable students to better think about theirs?

Literature Review of Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Although FLC's are often discussed in the literature, there appears to be little or no scholarship addressing the specific subject of a creative arts faculty learning community. However, studies addressing interdisciplinary collaboration provide observations relevant to the CAFLC experience. The concept of interdisciplinary collaboration and its impact on research and pedagogical approaches has been explored by teachers and researchers such as Klein (1990); Hord (1997); Rosenholtz (1989); Loveless et al.(2013); and Pierce, Diamond & Beam, (2003). Klein's (1990) work offered a synthesis of the expansive range of thoughts on what interdisciplinary thinking has to offer. Rosenholtz's (1989) research summarized by Hord demonstrates that when teachers collaborated and supported each other through teacher networks, they enhanced their professional roles and were more likely to meet student needs as teacher effectiveness increased (Hord, p.1). Loveless and his colleagues suggested higher

education institutions as a model for interdisciplinary collaborations based on the experiences of six university faculty members participating in a collaboration across disciplines. The value of interdisciplinary collaboration is demonstrated by Pierce, Diamond and Beam who report how the Bridges Consortium was found "to create a collaborative forum for the study and development of interdisciplinary collaboration as practice" (p.123).

Though interdisciplinary collaboration is not new and its value is well recognized, it also raises some questions as pointed out in the work of McNair et al (2015). They explained that even as the popularity of interdisciplinary collaborations has grown, faculty and researchers are still limited by the standards driven by their own disciplines. Communication can frequently breakdown in interdisciplinary endeavors due to varying epistemologies, knowledge base and the way scholarship is rewarded across disciplines. They assert that in the absence of clear criteria for assessment needed by those who review funding proposals, publications and the career trajectory, interdisciplinary collaboration and research can become a risky undertaking. Literature demonstrates that additionally the term interdisciplinary is problematic and frequently confused with the term multidisciplinary. Klein (1990) pointed out that "multidisciplinarity signifies the juxtaposition of disciplines. It is essentially *additive*, not *integrative*" (p. 56). She explains that because the participating disciplines neither change nor are enriched, the term interdisciplinary cannot be truly applied to collaborative projects where there is "no apparent connection" (p. 56).

In the context of such perceived obstacles and confusion regarding the term interdisciplinary**,** can collaboration even be possible? This question has been asked before as researchers and classroom practitioners alike have wrestled with the concept of interdisciplinary collaboration across disciplines. Other non-creative interdisciplinary groups claim experiences

similar to the individual and group observations within the CAFLC. As described by Loveless et al., (2013) the Madison Research Fellows (MRF) at the center for Faculty Innovation (CFI) is designed to create a small intentional community of diverse faculty for the purpose of intellectual discussion and exchange of ideas stemming from different disciplines and points of view. The experience of the MRF program participants reflects the success of collaborative endeavors. The group states that one of the early steps in the collaborative process was balancing individual knowledge and experience with group process and was accompanied by "a genuine desire to just let go and see what happened" (p.16). Peer leadership and willingness to work collaboratively were other important contributions to the success of the effort. Participants found that each fellow experienced empowerment and the opportunity to share their perspectives. In the CAFLC collaborative process participants found the same attributes helpful in addition to finding inspiration for individual projects. One of the distinctly guiding principles of the MRF program is to help faculty engage ideas with peers and consequently get them more excited and invested in their classroom experiences. Participating faculty found that the MRF program encouraged them to reevaluate their teaching strategies to include collaborative ways of learning. The CAFLC members also found this to be true.

Examples of the benefits of interdisciplinary collaboration in the creative arts involving students appear in the literature. Valora Renicker's (2011) description of the "Traveling Stanzas" project at Kent State affirmed the benefits of interdisciplinary collaboration for students. In this program, design and poetry were combined with the intention of making unique imagery and inspired writing available to the community. The students benefitted from the experience significantly. They learned that the unique nature of the collaboration allowed for exposure to poetic expression, and the interaction with other creative individuals facilitated left-brain/right-

brain crossover thinking resulting in improved creative problem –solving skills (p.84). Beahan et al., (2009) described how a similar creative collaborative partnership – interaction and dialogue among uncommon partners such as faculty, artists, students and library and museum staff at Dartmouth College – enlivened the arts on campus. The CAFLC experience with interdisciplinary collaboration reported here supports how previously considered non-negotiable boundaries between genres and disciplines can not only be crossed but can serve as invigorating stimulants to innovation.

In her discussion of a 2007 Honors project in Australia, Lorelei Clark's (2010) description of the transformative potential of collaboration resonates with the CAFLC experience. She stated that in "collaborative artwork *the making is the common language* and we develop and find meaning through the process of dialogue and connection which is producing the work" (p. 23). During the CAFLC collaborations, participants found themselves evolving as writers, artists, and learners. They engaged in dialogue and conceptual exchange in the making of their creative projects. Two projects, and their potential transfer to student learning, are described below.

Spontaneous Collaborations in Poetry and Art

Two faculty members, one a poet and scholar from the Department of English and Communication, and the other an electronic media artist, poet, and chair of the Department of Electronic Communications, decided to work together. Their initial plan was to collaborate on collages and collage/poetry combinations using an aesthetic of spontaneity to examine collisions of modern and traditional values. As the work continued and the variety of projects expanded, they began to identify characteristics of their collaborative experience that could apply to student

collaborations as well. For example, they learned early that interdisciplinary collaboration does not necessarily mean that participants have little to nothing in common. Both of them had similar artistic, literary, and philosophical interests, including early twentieth century modernism (surrealism and Dadaism in particular), film noir, jazz, blues, Beat literature, Taoism, and Zen Buddhism. Spontaneity is the thread running through most of these interests, and thus was a familiar starting point.

College students might be somewhat familiar with spontaneous composing from previous experiences. They may have used it as an exercise in high school; its relevance, however, might be lost due to the number of goal-directed tasks they must perform to graduate from high school and enter college. They also may have experienced spontaneity through free-writing assignments in their high school or college English composition courses as a prelude to formal writing assignments. While productive, this type of spontaneous work may yield results that would not go into a goal-directed assignment, and thus never be fully free from a pre-set goal. There is a larger sense of the unknown when spontaneity is used for creative writing and art, where the creator is trying to get to what hasn't been said or seen, or can't be said or seen, rather than clarifying what is discovered empirically or already known. You can't predict what might be created.

Another important aspect of their collaboration was learning that they shared additional interests. Both of them were collectors of *objet trouvé*, strange or ugly items that held poetic resonance – rusted fence wire wrapped around a nail, an old porcelain wheel rusted to stillness in its caster, an eroded shell, the partially bald head of a doll. In their initial session together, they photographed these objects in various combinations; one of these became a photographic

triptych, while other items, such as the doll head, echoed in their collage work through the use of doll head prints collected from old catalogs.

This suggests two strategies relevant to collaborative creative projects by students. Early in the process students need time and one or more structured assignments to determine their common interests, as well as how these interests might serve as common ground for innovative, rather than reiterative, projects. They could conduct in-class formal interviews using questions generated by a classroom brainstorming session; they might also use role-play in their interview to free up responses. A second strategy, and optional depending on whether students are using artifacts or found objects in their collaborative project, is to introduce them to the non-nostalgic meaning-potential of odd items and other artifacts. In a time when student learning is dominated by virtual texts, some institutions are building material culture into their curriculum. Berea College, for example, has an Appalachian artifact collection and laboratory through which it is "emphasizing encounters with objects as a mode of learning." Their student laboratory emphasizes interpretation, history, and utility of items, requiring students to describe its appearance, identify its materials of construction, and determine its function and the individuals who might have used it. Students working on a collaborative project can use this kind of information regarding each other's objects as a baseline from which to build a metaphorical framework for their creative purposes.

Differences in skill-level and approach also are important factors in collaborative work, and can by advantageous or detrimental where student work is concerned, depending on how the differences are utilized. For example, within this faculty collaboration, one participant generated most of the collage media from digital sources, while the other used only print items for both individual and shared work. Thus there was room within the collaboration for material,

procedural and product differences, as well as for the creation of individual work that collaboration had inspired. As a form of freedom within the collaborative construct, it prevented the collaborative process from becoming confining, dictatorial, or devolving into a power struggle. Faculty who have used group projects in the classroom know that these kinds of tensions can threaten the productivity of a group or partnership. Cooperation to "get the grade" is not a bad motivation, but cooperation out of mutual respect facilitated by the room to breathe – think of the Taoist concept of not fencing in the cattle to keep them close – is the better learning outcome, one that more likely feeds a genuine desire for continued collaborative experiences.

Another difference for these two collaborators surfaced with regard to poetry writing. Though both participants used free verse forms, one was more firmly grounded in the aesthetics of spontaneity, drawing substantially on abstract language in his investigations of human absurdities. In contrast, the other participant explored private and public experiences using more concrete language. With spontaneity as the chosen aesthetic, it was clear that the latter participant would make the larger adjustment in writing, providing a degree of freedom from her usual approach to writing poems. This kind of give-and-take can be difficult for students to accomplish, especially with a creative project where their hidden priority could be the expression of their own voice or aesthetic. Collaborative assignments that involve this kind of shift from one of the partners require students to be open to new roles and new ways of thinking, a valuable outcome of collaboration, especially across majors or disciplines. It is also part of the excitement – some might call it anxiety – of collaborative projects that remove participants from their comfort zone. The use of different approaches (e.g., abstract and concrete) can lead to interesting combinations that play to both participants' strengths. This in turn can lead to either further individual work, or another collaboration, especially if spontaneity is the operating aesthetic. A

discussion about these benefits as experienced by faculty who have collaborated on a project might help students make a successful adjustment. Faculty can remind students that they can always return to their previous form of work after the collaborative project is completed.

The element of give-and-take, however, does not mean that collaboration leads to conformity, especially if an aesthetic of spontaneity is used. Students might find this aesthetic more approachable once they understand that spontaneity derives from a mix of previous experiences and exposures, rather than "out of thin air." The late poet C. D. Wright (Magee 2015) spoke about the role of spontaneity in her work: "That's the real deal: when something unexpected looms up. You were half aware that you had actually prepared, or that you had so tuned your eyes and ears. It is an ultra-sweet moment. For spontaneity, much preparation. You have to be there . . . . and for adults it does not show up often enough" (p.26). In other words, spontaneity is achieved by way of attentive living, one of education's essential, if intangible, outcomes.

This kind of "preparation" can be enhanced in the classroom. Brief, in-class writing assignments where students reflect on defining moments (public or private) in their lives, describe in detail a physical location (on or off campus), or record in language a soundscape they experience during a walk (individually or as a class, on or off campus) might stir their subconscious for future tapping. Group work using a timed writing assignment – such as the Exquisite Corpse exercise where individuals have a minute or less to write a line in a group-constructed poem – can help students turn off their inner editor and write what comes to mind. With all of these exercises, discussing the results is essential. What in their writing surprises them and/or their collaborators? What kind of sense is beneath the surface of the nonsense they may have written? What is the connotative power or metaphorical potential of the language they

have generated? The point of these exercises is not to generate material for collaborative projects, though this is possible, but rather to generate the *means* of collaborative spontaneity.

Whatever the specific project or methods, the products of spontaneous collaboration should be surprising and provocative, moving the reader or viewer to thoughtful interpretation. The twentieth-century poet Muriel Rukeyser once wrote, “The work that a poem does is a transfer of human energy” (p. xi). The same could be said of collaborative projects. The point of spontaneous collaboration is to create an item or series of items that one individual alone would not have otherwise accomplished. This experience in and of itself can inspire future work, both individual and collaborative.

Creating Across Disciplines – Mathematics and Art

Each member of this collaborative pair brought a distinct yet overlapping set of skills with which to participate in the 2014-15 CAFLC. One arrived as a practicing mathematician with a hope of revitalizing his distant background of training in the fine arts. The other approached the CAFLC as a practicing artist with a desire to collaborate and expand his creative horizons. During one of the early meetings of the CAFLC, as participants each shared ideas for creative projects, this particular collaborative pair formed out of a shared interest in mathematical and geometric descriptions of the concept of infinity. As time went on, this shared interest led to dialogue about the idea of “approximating” infinite or idealized objects, with specific reference to the fact that the concept of approximation spans both disciplines of math and art. In the realm of math, there are many objects that can only be represented by a sort of “limiting” process in which finite models approximate an intrinsically infinite or idealized concept. In much the same way, artists approximate abstract notions of infinity, time, and space through the use of color, shapes, marks,

proximity, repetition, variation, visual representations, and metaphors. As a result, the collaboratively produced artworks were titled, *Approximation 1*, *Approximation 2*, etc. in chronological order.

After working through a variety of artistic ideas, the decision was made to work with representations of certain hypotrochoid and epitrochoid curves in order to comment on the practice of approximation. The geometry of such a curve is completely determined by a single ratio of two integers. Such ratios can be used in turn to approximate irrational numbers in the sense described above. More specifically, irrational numbers are (by definition) those that cannot be exactly represented by a single ratio of integers – they can only be indirectly described by an infinite sequence of approximating ratios.

Spirograph® drawing sets were used to mechanically render a series of curves on paper. This method allowed for a fair amount of geometric precision while preserving a sense of the artist's hand in the final product. This method also resulted in the delightfully ironic use of a "child's toy" as a tool in the creative process. These curves were rendered and embellished using a variety of media, including ink, pastel, watercolor, and colored pencil.

The physical process of creating the finished works began when one member of the collaborative pair rendered various curves on six-inch square sheets of paper. He then handed them over to the other member of the pair, who then enhanced these algorithmically-guided mathematical/geometric approximations with a layer of intuitively-guided illustrative/aesthetic approximation. Using a larger Spirograph®-type device, one member of the collaborative pair then rendered various curves on forty-two-inch square sheets of paper, handing them over to the other member to complete. Finally, this same process was repeated using the format of fourteen-inch square sheets of paper. Further revisions to the works thus produced were discussed but

quickly dismissed as unnecessary. The member who initiated each work determined the scale. Passing between significantly different scales became one of the most interesting and challenging aspects of the collaboration.

Four key descriptors spring to mind when reflecting upon this collaborative experience. It was *painless, symbiotic, influential,* and *fortunate.* It was painless in the sense that it did not take long to produce finished works with which both collaborators were satisfied. There were no difficult decisions or aesthetic compromises, nor were there were any conflicts of artistic ego. Each collaborator accepted what the other had contributed to the works.

The collaboration was symbiotic in the sense that each collaborator benefited from the other's skill set. One relied upon the artistic training and experience of the other in order to set the aesthetic tone for the finished compositions. Conversely, the latter relied on the mathematical background of the former in order to construct a conceptual and mathematical framework for the images being produced.

The collaboration was influential in the sense that each collaborator went on to create independent work that was heavily influenced by the collaboration. The artist produced a series of 22-inch square drawings that incorporated the use of the large epitrochoid curves juxtaposed with totem animals. Viewers have commented that they bear a strong resemblance to Buddhist mandalas. The mathematician went on to further explore the number-theoretic ideas behind the use of epitrochoid curves to represent given ratios of integers, producing two papers as a result. In one paper, the relationship between certain patterns in continued fractions and transcendental numbers is explored. The second paper studies the visualization of the above mathematical concepts via epitrochoid curves.

Finally, the collaboration was fortunate in the sense that not all collaborations are painless, symbiotic, and influential as described above. In particular, a second collaboration attempted during the 2015-16 CAFLC met with quite limited success. The missing ingredient seemed to be the symbiosis achieved during the 2014-15 collaboration. In other words, it proved difficult to identify a creative project to which both collaborators could simultaneously and meaningfully contribute from the vantage points of their respective disciplines.

These descriptors (painless, symbiotic, influential, fortunate) not only apply to the collaborative experience described above, but can also be used to describe desirable aspects of collaboration between students.

Students can pursue painless collaborations by learning to be responsive, versatile, and generally effective communicators. This could occur as students from an arts or humanities class interact with students from a math class in order to create a mathematically informed work of art (a poem, an image, a short story, etc.). Such cross-disciplinary collaborations would provide an opportunity for students to learn how to be "easy to work with," even while overcoming potential communication barriers inherent in the crossing of two disciplines.

Students could pursue symbiotic collaborations by taking responsibility for their own academic welfare and for the academic welfare of their collaborators. This could occur as students bring discipline-specific skills and knowledge to the table. Too often small-group members rely on one or two hard-working students to bear the brunt of the workload, but these tendencies would be suppressed in the context of cross-disciplinary student collaboration. One set of students would necessarily rely upon the other to fill in knowledge gaps.

Students could pursue influential collaboration as they gain new skills and knowledge that will be useful in (and perhaps even shape) future endeavors. The potential for such influence

is very high in the context of cross-disciplinary work. Interaction with a humanities student may open entirely new vistas of knowledge to the mind of a STEM student, and vice-versa. Furthermore, interdisciplinary collaboration can play a very important role in producing autonomous learners as defined by G. T. Betts and J. K. Kercher (1999). An autonomous learner is "one who solves problems or develops new ideas through a combination of divergent and convergent thinking and functions with minimal external guidance in selected areas of endeavor" (p. xi). Such exposure to different ways of thinking and communicating could help students learn to integrate different perspectives into their own problem solving.

Students could pursue fortunate collaboration while expecting that some collaborative efforts will fall short of initial expectations. Amidst such uncertainty, students can learn to persevere through difficult interactions, realizing that difficulties will appear throughout future professional and personal collaborations. Students who pursue painless, symbiotic, and influential collaboration may find value in the collaborative experience even if the collaborative product is less-than-satisfying.

The CAFLC brought together a mathematician and a visual artist to collaborate on a series of works that neither would have created working independently within their respective disciplines. Through these collaborations, both collaborators developed new ways of working that not only expanded beyond the traditional boundaries of their disciplines but also inspired new pedagogical goals and methods. Thus the CAFLC provided a platform for significant professional development.

Conclusions

All 2014-15 CAFLC participants offered initial observations about their interdisciplinary collaborations (Pettit 2015). These should be considered when developing collaborative assignments for students, and include the following.

- Collaboration is a *skill* that takes time to develop. It requires letting go of individual control, trusting your collaborators, and can involve different processes based on the personalities and expertise of the collaborators.
- Collaborative groups (three or more participants) can employ different approaches, ranging from careful planning and consideration of options, to diving right in spontaneously.
- Collaborative behaviors, processes, and projects can evolve, changing from previous conceptions about what work would be attempted, or how it would be created. Participants can learn something new artistically, creating work that they had never thought of doing before; and/or learn something new about themselves as writers, artists, and learners.
- Collaboration does not mean that partners never work individually; in fact, collaboration can sometimes serve as an influence that leads to individual works that are related – echoing, answering, questioning, or otherwise responding to – the collaborative pieces.
- Interdisciplinary collaboration can break down institutional barriers between artists, writers, musicians, and genres.

In light of the literature review and further reflection on the interdisciplinary collaborative experience, the authors conclude the following.

- The participants' experienced-based observations about the value of interdisciplinary collaboration are consistent with those found in the literature, and include 1) evolving positively as partners and as individual artists; 2) transcending institutional, disciplinary, and genre boundaries; 3) creating new work that would not exist without collaboration; and 4) transforming faculty experience into possible classroom relevance. At the same time, collaborative experience is not always easy or successful, and such challenges or failures can become points of reflection from which students can critique their own performance.
- The success of a creative arts FLC can depend on not only the talents of individual members, but on the available campus resources and leadership, and the willingness of all members to risk failure. In this case, a campus art gallery combined with financial support and resources from the college and university meant that the participants generated far more work than they otherwise might have. The existence of a campus literary magazine and gallery catalogs meant that on-site (and online) publishing venues were available for the products of CAFLC collaborations.
- In light of the CAFLC experience and a consideration of the scholarship that clarifies the difference between the terms multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary, the work produced by collaboration should be approached not as a conglomeration, but as a unique project achieved by an interactive process, where every contribution is seamless and essential to creating something new.

- Interdisciplinary, collaborative, creative arts FLCs may need time to grow into their mission due to the time availability of faculty, an issue of particular relevance to two-year colleges and other campuses where the teaching load is heavy amid other professional and service responsibilities.
- The energy generated by a creative arts FLC can be tremendously productive; can continue even after the formal, institutional existence of the FLC comes to an end; and can influence teaching as well. The CAFLC work using an aesthetic of spontaneity inspired the creation of a journal (*MetaDada: An International Journal of Dada Mining*), a web site in support of the journal (https://metadadajournal.wordpress.com/) and an exhibition (*Dada Lives!*) to celebrate the centennial of the Dada in 2015-16. These resources combined with the Dadaist writing collaboration that continued during 2015-16 led to a poetry writing assignment for students: an automatic writing response to a video of Marie Osmond reading a sound poem by Hugo Ball, cofounder and early expatriate of Dada. While no student will pursue a "degree in Dada," and critics may dismiss it as nihilistic, it provides an aesthetic from which students can creatively question given assumptions about reality and what is considered "normal."
- For economic, procedural, or programmatic reasons, colleges and universities may be unable or unwilling to make actual interdisciplinary collaboration available for students within conventional classroom settings. One possible solution might be an Honors seminar focused on interdisciplinary projects. A second, more inclusive option could be the creation of an extra-curricular Student Collaborative Learning Community, established and credited as an experiential learning component, and charged with producing a creative project across disciplines. Such a group might shadow or be an

extension of a creative arts faculty learning community, balancing faculty guidance with student responsibility and initiative.

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