

Sarah Anderegg

From: Jonathan Eldridge
Sent: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 11:15 AM
To: Jonathan Eldridge
Subject: Fall 2022 Faculty Information & Updates, Volume XI
Attachments: More Vexing Than the Impostor Syndrome.pdf; What These Walls Wont Hold Screening Flier.png

Dear College of Marin Faculty:

This week I've attached a great article about classroom practices that unintentionally can make students question their intelligence and belonging in higher education. Some are quite counter-intuitive and should spur good discussion. I hope you enjoy it.

I've also attached a flier for an upcoming on-campus film screening of 'What These Walls Won't Hold' by filmmaker Adamu Chan. The screening is sponsored by Students for Social Justice, Umoja, and Performing Arts. I encourage you to invite your students and consider how to incorporate the film into upcoming class discussions, as it is a good corollary to our reading of The 1619 Project.

Finally, two items for you to be aware of:

1. **Midterm Grades**
2. **Book Adoptions for Spring 2023**

Midterm Grades

Midterm grades are a critical indicator of student progress. Faculty are strongly encouraged to submit these grades as they provide students with information about their progress and give Counselors opportunities to make targeted interventions in support of student success.

The Midterm Grade Entry period closes on Thursday, October 20 at 12 p.m. (NOON). Midterm grades will be available to students the following day. [Fall 2022 Quick Reference Guide for Faculty](#)

Book Adoptions for Spring 2023

Did you know students start looking for their next terms materials before Finals Week of their current term? Please assist student by submitting Spring 2023 Adoptions to the Campus Store by the deadline, before Finals Week (responses requested for all courses)

- Full Time Faculty by October 15, 2022
- Adjunct Faculty by October 31, 2022
- [Adoption Google Form](#)
- Students utilizing Grants and Scholarships (COMPASS, EOPS, CARE, Summer Bridge, VA, and more) can use their funds in the COM Campus Store for their required course materials -- provided we have the adoptions.
- supports College of Marin's [HEOA legislation](#) compliance
- [OpenStax Title List](#) for OER titles (also available in print)
- Follett Discover allows you to discover, research, and adopt course materials all in one place. In addition to adopting traditional print materials, search and adopt other materials like Open Education Resources.
 - View the [Follett Faculty Discover User's Guide](#), under Ordering Textbooks, in your Faculty Handbook for detailed instructions

- ZTC, LTP or No required materials? Go to the Course Management page and select “There are no items to adopt for this course” to complete the adoption.

Questions? Please contact **Karen Cresci**, Manager, College of Marin Bookstore.

Phone: 415.485.9394 **Website:** CollegeofMarinshop.com **Email:** bookstore@marin.edu



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More Vexing Than the Impostor Syndrome

Certain classroom practices that faculty unconsciously engage in can make students question their intelligence, competence and sense of belonging, writes Angelica S. Gutierrez.

Angelica S. Gutierrez

October 5, 2022

As they've entered the new academic year, colleges and universities across the nation have welcomed students and prepared to deliver on higher education's promise to be help give students of all socioeconomic backgrounds the opportunity to advance and succeed in life—to serve, as Horace Mann put it, as “the great equalizer.”

To accomplish that lofty goal, institutions must work to ensure that every student, whatever their circumstances, feels accepted and welcome. Unfortunately, however, many students continue to come to college feeling like impostors and that they don't, and won't ever, fit it. Such sentiments of unintelligence, incompetence and the fear of being discovered as a fraud have long been considered symptoms of impostor syndrome and acknowledged in higher education. In fact, some colleges and universities have recently incorporated impostor syndrome discussions on their blogs or websites.

But while we've often heard about impostor syndrome, impostorization is not often discussed. I've coined the term to refer to the policies, practices and seemingly innocuous interactions in the college environment that can make students question their intelligence, competence and sense of belonging. And even less discussed than the concept of impostorization is the possibility that we faculty members may unknowingly engage in it.

As professors, we may forget that students are impressionable and that our words and actions can influence how they view themselves and their abilities. So unconsciously, we may either exacerbate or ameliorate students' impostor feelings. Seemingly

innocuous comments like the following can trigger them among students: “Perhaps you should consider changing your major,” “Your name is difficult to pronounce. Do you have a nickname or something easier?” “This is basic. You should know this.” So can certain behaviors, including constantly looking at the time instead of being fully present and attuned to a student’s questions during office hours or using course content that does not reflect student demographics.

While those of us who are faculty members may have limited influence over the impostorizing policies and practices that our institutions may adopt, we can take certain measures to avoid impostorization in our classrooms. We can avoid making comments and engaging in behaviors that may inadvertently trigger impostor syndrome among students.

For example, suggesting that a student change their major after poor performance on an exam, rather than first encouraging them to seek tutoring or attend office hours for help, may lead the student to question their ability to do well and sense of belonging in that discipline. That can especially be the case among women in **STEM** fields and students of color in predominantly white institutions.

Similarly, telling a student that they should “simply know” something, or suggesting something is common sense, without providing advice on how they may develop the necessary skills or understanding, can trigger impostor feelings. While unintentional, such comments may suggest that knowledge is fixed, and students may believe they lack the intelligence and competence to do well. Not all students have benefited from the same preparation and resources that other students have. If higher education is to be truly inclusive and equitable, then we must promote a growth mind-set and help students develop the skills they need to be on equal footing.

Asking a student to shorten or anglicize their name for the sake of making it easier to pronounce can also trigger feelings of impostorism. As studies find, how individuals pronounce their name is often tied to their identity. It is not unusual for students to feel

like outsiders when they are asked to alter who they are and assume an identity that is not their own. As professors, simply taking the time to correctly pronounce a student's name may help avoid triggering impostor syndrome.

Constantly looking at the time or being preoccupied with a task while a student is asking course-related questions during office hours may also serve to impostorize them. The student may process such behaviors as indicators that neither they nor their questions or concerns are important or valued. Office hours are intended for students, and it is important for us to honor their time.

As a final example, having limited or no diversity in course curricula can also impostorize students, who may question their ability to excel in a major or field in which they do not see others who look like them. A student who is in the numeric minority on campus and/or a classroom may already feel like an impostor, and their underrepresentation in course content may exacerbate this feeling. As faculty members, we may increase a student's self-efficacy and sense of belonging by incorporating scholars and readings from authors who reflect students' identities.

We must always remember that even when students arrive at our colleges and universities feeling intelligent, capable and worthy of admission, they may experience impostor syndrome relatively soon after classes start. They may question whether they belong when they discover that they are either the only or one of the few people with their background sitting in the class. They may feel as if they are not as smart as their classmates who graduated from elite high schools and seem to easily grasp course content. They may feel overwhelmed trying to navigate college because they don't understand what amounts to a hidden curriculum in ways their counterparts whose parents attended college do—such as having an awareness of tutoring and academic support services they may access or an understanding that professors can answer questions or provide clarification.

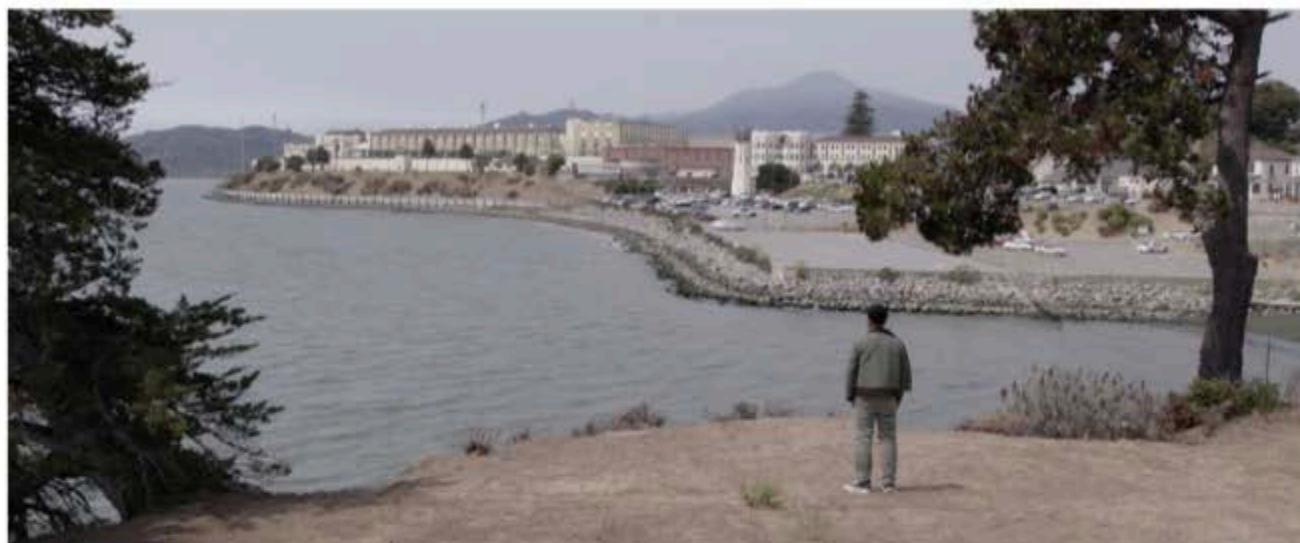
While we may have little control over the factors that make some students more susceptible to impostor syndrome than others, we can do a number of things in our classrooms to avoid triggering it or, at the very least, to ameliorate its symptoms.

Avoiding student impostorization requires faculty mindfulness, and we should all work to cultivate more of that during this academic year.

College of Marin, Students for Social Justice, Performing Arts Department, and Umoja proudly present a screening of the documentary film:

WHAT THESE WALLS WON'T HOLD

by Filmmaker,
Adamu Chan



THE STORY

Wednesday, November 2

6 PM

Q&A to follow with
filmmaker and cast members

Lefort Recital Hall/PA 72
Performing Arts Building
College of Marin
Kentfield Campus
Free Admission

The COVID-19 crisis inside California prisons has claimed the lives of over 200 incarcerated people and infected tens of thousands more. This film tracks the origins of COVID-19 inside the California state prison system and a newly formed coalition, led by currently and formerly incarcerated people, that brought forward an abolitionist framework to a life or death situation. Told through the lens and perspective of filmmaker Adamu Chan, who was incarcerated at San Quentin State Prison during the height of the COVID-19 outbreak, *What These Walls Won't Hold* explores how relationships, built on trust, shared liberatory struggle, and connections across broader abolitionist organizing work, can unfold into sites of resistance and radical change, across prison walls and beyond separations of power, essential to actualizing the world impacted communities are fighting to create.

All attendees must provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination at the door. Masks are strongly recommended in all indoor public spaces.

Individuals seeking access support or reasonable accommodations to attend this event may contact (415) 485-9460.

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