



The Periclean Newsletter

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Welcoming Mat Gendle as Director of the Periclean Scholars Program



Dr. Mat Gendle is the new director of Elon University's chapter of Project Pericles. He has been a professor of psychology at Elon for fourteen years, and teaches several classes: Behavioral Neuroscience, The Global Experience, Senior Seminar in Psychology, and a Capstone in Neuroscience. Gendle received his undergraduate degree from Hobart College and his doctorate from Cornell University. He has two sons and enjoys competitive running.

Dr. Gendle was appointed Director of the Periclean Scholars program in the Spring of 2017. He transitioned into this position over the summer and has already begun to fulfill his role, which he describes as

Periclean Countries of Focus:

Class of 2006 - Namibia
Class of 2007 - Honduras
Class of 2008 - Mexico
Class of 2009 - Zambia
Class of 2010 - Ghana
Class of 2011 - Sri Lanka
Class of 2012 - India
Class of 2013 - Mexico
Class of 2014 - Appalachia
Class of 2015 - Haiti
Class of 2016 - Honduras
Class of 2017 - Namibia
Class of 2018 - Zambia
Class of 2019 - Sri Lanka
Class of 2020 - Cuba
Class of 2021 - Sioux
Nation

supporting each faculty mentor and class while attempting to facilitate opportunities for the Periclean classes and the program as a whole. Dr. Gendle stated that the previous Periclean Director, Dr. Tom Arcaro, created a tremendous vision for the program and brought it to fruition; now, Dr. Gendle and the new Associate Director, Dr. April Post, will be taking that foundation and building the next level on it.

Dr. Gendle balances his role as director with his role as Mentor for the Periclean Class of 2019. He explained his perception of the role of Class Mentor as one in which he supports the work of the Class and attempts to generate as many positive opportunities as possible that the Scholars can choose to act on or move past. He is thoroughly impressed with the progress of the Class at this point in their journey -- the trip he made with seven Scholars over the summer was smooth and successful and the Class has selected a project. Dr. Gendle credits those achievements with the incredible planning and preparation of the Class as well as the cohesion amongst the Scholars.

As the Director, he has high hopes for the future of the program. One of his primary goals is to formalize the past and present successes of the program, such as increasing the rigor and intentionality of the academic component of the Periclean Scholars Program. He would also like to establish a stronger emphasis on the assessment and evaluation of projects that current and future Classes will implement. His favorite thing about the Periclean Scholars program is "watching the Scholars struggle with complicated, tough ideas and form nuanced understandings of those issues." When given the chance to offer advice to current and future Pericleans, Dr. Gendle said that over everything else, it is critically important to trust each other as classmates and Scholars. Each student in every Periclean Class has unique skill sets and good intentions, so remember that everyone will do his or her best to forward the Class objectives.

Welcoming April Post as Associate Director

A 2001 Elon graduate, April Post has been chosen as Associate Director of the Periclean Scholars Program. Post started teaching at Elon in 2004 after obtaining her master's degree from California State University in Sacramento. At Elon, she is a Spanish instructor, focusing on intermediate and advanced lower courses. In 2010, Post received the Periclean Award for civic engagement. This award is given to individuals whose service to the broader community exemplifies the Periclean ideals of civic engagement and service.

After receiving the Periclean Award, Post was asked to be the Periclean Class of 2016 Mentor. The Class of 2016's country of focus was Honduras, where they partnered with the organization, Hope for Honduran Children. With this organization, they led a seminar for young men on gender-based violence. In order to ensure sustainability, the Class of 2016 left seminar materials for the organization so that the seminars could be continued. Even though the class graduated from Elon, many members of the group still remain in contact with the men from Hope for Honduran Children. Another achievement the Class of 2016 had was hosting the "People, Planet, Profit Sustainable Business Summit." This summit done in collaboration with the Martha and Spencer Love School of Business along with the Office of Sustainability and was funded by the College of Arts and Sciences' Fund for Excellence Grant. The summit focused on how successful businesses, humanitarian ideals, and social/environmental consciousness are not mutually exclusive.

As Mat Gendle assumed the Director of Periclean Scholars, Post was asked to be the Associate Director of the Periclean Scholars Program. In this new role, Post works with Gendle to set program expectations, to maintain an open line of communication with all Mentors and Class members, and to advocate for each Class' success. Additional projects include updating the website and making decisions about the budget. As the new Associate Director, Post hopes that the program can become a national model for what civic engagement on the undergraduate level can look like. She believes the program has the ability to inspire students to live out the Periclean ideals far after graduation, incorporating the values and beliefs the Periclean Scholars program holds into any career path they choose.

As a professor that has been involved in the Periclean Scholars program since 2012, Post's favorite aspect of Periclean is to see what students are capable of when they are given the freedom to make decisions, as well as the resources to carry them out. She encourages the current and future Classes to maintain open lines of communication between their cohort, Mentor, and partners. Additionally she suggests setting realistic expectations for the Class, as well as being honest with the project partner. It is important to identify the Class' limitations, as well as what is able to reasonably be accomplished in the three years as a Periclean. Post explains that tenacity is an important quality for current and future Pericleans to possess. While there might not be tangible rewards, the process and journey as a Periclean will be beneficial and rewarding.

Class of 2018 Update

During Winter Term 2018, the Class of 2018 plans to travel to Chipulukusu, Zambia to host workshops for local youth on decision making, goal setting, and financial literacy. The three week trip will be divided up into three different sections. The first week will be spent teaching local community leaders the lessons in hopes that they can continue the workshops after the team leaves, if they wish to do so. The second week will be spent teaching the youth on the three topics in collaboration with the community leaders that were previously taught the lessons. The final week will be spent visiting Victoria Falls and going on a safari. Based on pre-existing written resources, the Periclean Class of 2018 has compiled lessons, information, and materials in order to be able to teach these lessons to the youth in Zambia. While only a third of the class is going to Zambia during Winter Term, many Scholars are staying on Elon's campus to take a Core Capstone class where they will be working on writing a Core Forum curriculum that the class will present in the Spring.

In addition to working on our plans for Winter Term, the Class of 2018 is working to wrap up fundraising by selling purses that were brought back from Zambia during the Class trip in the summer of 2016. The purses are being sold on Etsy with the ability to ship anywhere in the United States. The Class is also working to plan their final celebration dinner that will be in the spring. The purpose of the dinner is to discuss the Class's accomplishments and the lessons learned along the way. Finally the Class is working on creating graduation stoles that the Class of 2018 will wear during commencement. The Class is hoping to incorporate fabric from Zambia into the design. The Class is working diligently to prepare for their trip to Zambia during Winter Term 2018 as the semester is coming to a close.

Class of 2019 Updates

The Periclean Class of 2019 has made tremendous progress this semester. Dr. Gendle and ten scholars traveled to Sri Lanka over the summer to research potential projects and develop relationships with the class partner, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement. Sarvodaya is an established non-governmental organization focusing on community-based development throughout Sri Lanka. While the Scholars were abroad, they developed relationships with many instrumental staff members of the organization and traveled to local Sarvodaya district centers across the country. The Scholars brought back many ideas for potential projects and collaborations generated from the ideas of various communities and individuals who are directly affected by and work with the issues of focus.

This semester, the members of the Class that are not studying abroad, have narrowed down that list of ideas and collaborations, and with the input of the class members currently abroad, selected a final project and several collaborations to enact during the rest of their time in the Periclean program. The Class will partner with Sarvodaya and local Sri Lankan communities to assist those communities in the development of economic opportunities and information dissemination, thus encouraging local women to remain in their communities and addressing the lack of economic opportunities, worker migration, child abuse, and other community issues. The Class is also planning the implementation of their successful Fund for Excellence grant, which includes several cultural events: a panel of firsthand witnesses to the Sri Lankan civil war; a panel on the relationship between ethnic tension, othering, and conflict; and a screening of the film *No Fire Zone: The Killing Fields of Sri Lanka*.





Periclean Class of 2020 Update

The Periclean Class of 2020 is in the midst of their first semester Periclean class together. According to one Scholar from the Class, the Scholars are currently learning a lot about themselves and each other while establishing a general level of comfort and classroom atmosphere. They express input and actively participate in the class, but look to their mentor, Dr. Brian Nienhaus, for general guidance in their intellectual journey. The broad curiosity and passion for learning that Dr. Nienhaus displays allows the class the freedom in their academic and intellectual exploration of Cuba. The Class is spending most of its time researching Cuba and has already built its organizational structure, written its mission statement, and created committees. A Scholar also touched on the process of developing the Class dynamic, explaining that everyone came in with his or her own definition of what it means to be a Periclean Scholar and an individual vision. Over the course of the first month, all of those individualistic expectations and assumptions were shattered. Now, they are taking a step back, refocusing on the bigger picture of the Periclean Scholars program and redefining what it means to be a Periclean Scholar and a Periclean Class. The Scholar elaborated on the shared foundation of the Class, stating that, while there was not a coherent Class vision yet, the comfort of the class atmosphere and the mutual trust in each other's best intentions were a strong beginning.

Dr. Bud Warner and the Upcoming Periclean Class of 2021

Dr. Bud Warner, the chair of Elon's department of Human Service Studies and Periclean Mentor for the Class of 2015, is also the Periclean Mentor for the Class of 2021. Dr. Warner received his undergraduate from Malone University and his master's and Ph.D. from Case Western Reserve University. At Elon, Dr. Warner mentors students in undergraduate research and teaches the Global Experience along with multiple Human Service Studies courses.

Dr. Warner reflected on his experience as the Periclean Mentor for the Class of 2015, whose country of focus was Haiti. He described his Class as being full of amazing students and said that his favorite part of Mentoring them was having the opportunity to develop long-term relationships with them, watch their intellectual transformations and expansion of perspectives, and see them go out into the world and do incredible things.

The Class of 2015 encountered several major obstacles on the path to enacting their project. They partnered with the Restavek Freedom Foundation (RFF), which combats the cultural practice of restavek in which poor families send their children to live with wealthier families in order to receive better opportunities, but often results in child exploitation and slave labor. The Class had initially planned to travel to Haiti but was ultimately prevented from doing so. Instead, the Class hosted several RFF staff at Elon, put on a weeklong event series consisting of documentaries and testimonies, and worked with RFF electronically.

Dr. Warner anticipates applying his past mentoring experience to his time with the Periclean Class of 2021. They will be working domestically with the United Sioux Nation in the Dakotas. Dr. Warner is especially excited to work with this population because he lived in that region during his childhood and still vividly remembers the discrimination, stereotypes, and stigmas associated with the Sioux. This childhood experience coupled with the domestic nature of our country's institutionalized discrimination against Native Americans and with our society's ignorance of that problem drew Dr. Warner to the United Sioux Nation. The foundational principles of Project Pericles are as easily applied domestically as they are globally. He is eager to demonstrate the importance of a critical reflective perspective turned not only globally, but also to our own country. He is looking forward to the process of the Class wrestling with and selecting a partner and project and wants the "complete Periclean experience" for the Class of 2021 -- one that includes interactions with the people and organizations that the Class will be working with.

To Dr. Warner, being a Class Mentor means providing guidance in the most general sense. He will guide the Class according to principles of the Periclean Pledge and Core Humanitarian Standard, but he views making small mistakes as critical to the learning process. His main vision is twofold: to help the Class move forward in their commitment to their goal and to help them find previously undiscovered strengths and resources within themselves. Students should feel a sense of ownership of their Class, while it is the Mentor's job to foster that sense of ownership while walking the line between facilitator and guide.

Dr. Warner described the ideal Periclean Class as one with "shared leadership where different Class members step forward with different skills, abilities, and talents." Rather than simply waiting for instructions and guidance from himself, Dr. Warner wants to see his Class wrestle with ideas, learn from their mistakes, and succeed. Pericleans should persevere; the nature of the program is not structured and simple, but a nature that demands resilience and flexibility in the face of obstacles that arise. He views the Periclean Scholars program as an opportunity to become involved in an incredible learning opportunity about social change, civic engagement, and the roles you want them to play in the rest of your life.



Are you interested in joining the Periclean Scholars Program as a member of the Class of 2021?

Periclean Scholars Website: <https://www.elon.edu/u/academics/project-pericles/>