

FROM: Rich Cameron
TO: Faculty@depauw.edu
CC: Lyn Gram
SUBJECT: DePauw Colloquium, Monday, Feb. 4th

1/30/2008 11:56 AM

Colleagues,

Please join us **Monday, February 4th** at The Prindle Institute for Ethics for **The 2008 DePauw Colloquium on Liberal Education**.

In brief:

- **Topic?** The Liberal Arts in a Time of Climate Crisis
- **Who?** Professor Michael Maniates, Professor of Political and Environmental Science at Allegheny College
- **Talk?** **"Boldness, Prudence, and Freedom: Tough Choices for the Liberal Arts in a Warming World"**
- **Where?** at The Prindle Institute for Ethics
- **How?** Car pool! (Gather after the faculty meeting to arrange rides.)
- **When?** from roughly 5:30 pm until 8:30 pm
- **What's for dinner?** Light vegetarian fare -- tasty, and with a small carbon footprint to boot! (Please RSVP to gram@depauw.edu)
- **Who should come?** interested faculty, staff and students -- please spread the word and encourage attendance as a way of building on DePauw's efforts during Focus the Nation (this week).
- **Advertising?** Please help! Announce in your classes, spread by word of mouth. Professor Maniates' work on this topic is substantive and he promises to be a dynamic speaker.
- **Want more?** Professor Maniates will be with us on Tuesday, February 5th as well and he still has openings in his afternoon schedule. If you'd like him to visit a class, would like to chat, or would like to join us for a smaller dinner on Tuesday please let Rich Cameron know. (Contact info in the next line.)
- **Questions?** contact Rich Cameron at rcameron@depauw.edu

In a bit more detail:

After Monday's faculty meeting, I hope many of you will join us for a light meal at The Prindle Institute, to begin around 5:30 pm or whenever the faculty meeting lets out, whichever is later. After 45 minutes or so of conversing and eating, we will adjourn to the auditorium for our guest speaker's talk.

Michael Maniates, Professor of Political Science and Environmental Science at Allegheny College, will be speaking on the topic: The Liberal Arts in a Time of Climate Crisis. If we take the climate science seriously (and that is plausibly one of our duties as an educational institution) then it seems we are indeed both living in and transitioning to a time of climate disruption that is (with a high degree of confidence) largely driven by human activities and which is all too likely to result in a changed and much less hospitable world. We cannot take it for granted that our current students will raise their own children in a world with the kind of stable climate the human race has taken for granted for the last 10,000 years, and this raises the question of what we, as leaders in a liberal arts institution, ought to be doing to educate our students for life in the 21st century and beyond. "Business as usual" economic activity is set to drive us past climatic tipping points that will be nothing sort of catastrophic in their human and nonhuman consequences -- what about business as usual liberal education? Is the liberal education we've been offering more adequate to our changed situation (e.g., are we a kind of timeless ivory tower?), are we doing enough curricularly and institutionally to be part of the solution (e.g., sustainability initiatives, focus the nation?), or are we (more radically) part of the problem (by educating yet another generation of students prepared in the main to live their lives as if 20th century American ways of life could go on forever)? Those, anyway, are the kinds of questions I raised for professor Maniates in asking him to speak with us.

Professor Maniates introduces his themes as follows: "'Reason,' wrote Winston Churchill, 'often produces prudence when boldness is called for.' In the face of climate-change threats to human well being and fundamental freedoms, how might the Liberal Arts move us from a comfortable prudence to an imaginative boldness that draws out the best in us?"

About our speaker: Michael Maniates is a Full Professor of Political Science and Environmental Science at Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania. In addition to teaching classes on the politics of Third World "development," the domestic and international politics of environmental governance, energy futures, and the dynamics of social change, Maniates studies and writes about global patterns of consumption, overconsumption, and consumerism; low consumption/high prosperity paths to development; underexplored routes of citizen involvement in contemporary environmental struggles; and joyful learning and teaching in the liberal arts. He holds a B.S. (Phi Beta Kappa) in Conservation and Resource Studies, and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Energy and Resources, all from the University of California at Berkeley. He was a Fulbright scholar to India, a recipient of the Sprout Award for the best book in International Environmental Politics (with Tom Princen and Ken Conca) for *Confronting Consumption* (MIT Press 2002), and Academic Dean of the Spring 2007 'round-the-world sailing of Semester at Sea. In 2000, Allegheny College surprised him with the Thoburn Teaching Award for Innovation and Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching. His best known publications include "Environmental Studies: The Sky is Not Falling," published in *BioScience*; "Individualization: Plant a Tree, Ride A Bike, Save the World" and "In Search of Consumptive Resistance: The Voluntary Simplicity Movement" in *Confronting Consumption* (MIT Press 2002), which he also co-edited; and "Of Knowledge and Power" in his edited volume *Encountering Global Environmental Politics* (Rowman & Littlefield 2003). His current work focuses on climate change, citizen action, and sacrifice. He's made his home in Meadville, Pennsylvania since 1993 with his wife Kathy Greely (who directs the Commonwealth Community Energy Project) and his two daughters Sarah (17) and Hannah (13).

Visit Dr. Maniates' website at: <http://webpub.allegheny.edu/employee/m/mmaniate/es/maniates.htm>

I hope you'll join us for what promises to be a lively and important talk. Help us continue the conversation Focus the Nation is bringing to the fore.

Best,

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