The mission of the Frank Aydelotte Foundation for the Advancement of the Liberal Arts is to inspire the quality and inventiveness of Swarthmore College’s liberal arts practices and to promote the understanding of the Liberal Arts in higher education, throughout society and around the world.
• Aydelotte Book Discussion Group
• Faculty Dinner Discussions
• Faculty Pedagogy Seminar (continued)
• Faculty Research Seminar on Collaboration
• Higher Ed Coffee Hours
• Second Tuesday Arts & Humanities Cafes
• Sound Breaks: The Gravity of the Situation

www.swarthmore.edu/aydelotte-foundation/initiatives
SNAP SHOT FOR 2015-16

- 44 events hosted
- 34 conveners/presenters contributed
- 790 participants engaged
“The discussions were very good and enlightening. As a faculty member, it was very interesting for me to hear perspectives from non-faculty members. That is, I often have discussions, including intellectual ones, with other faculty members; but I have such conversations far less frequently with staff members.”
— 2016 Book Group Participant

Since 2014, the Aydelotte Foundation has brought faculty and staff together for an annual book discussion program. Faculty-staff pairings co-facilitate discussion for sub-groups who meet several times over the course of a semester, culminating in a potluck with all of the groups.

Stats: January – May 2016 • 8 facilitators • 13 group sessions • 56 participants • 9 books
The fully-subscribed 2016 book program centered on work. Through reading and discussion of fiction and non-fiction books alike, participants examined different definitions and aspects of work as well as current public debates about the changing way we work as a society.

The series was anchored by Professor Barry Schwartz's book “Why We Work.”
This shared intellectual exercise successfully promotes community building, the exploration of different points of view and self-expression. The Aydelotte Foundation supports this small group experience because we believe that sharing and creating knowledge together strengthens a community of thinkers and is an integral part of the liberal arts mission.
Book Discussion Group (continued)

Book Discussion Facilitator Pair

Jennifer Moore (Administrative Assistant, History)  
Carina Yervasi (Associate Professor, French & Francophone Studies)
Book Discussion Group (continued)

Book Discussion Facilitator Pair

**Pam Harris** (Associate College Librarian for Research & Instruction)

**Kathleen Howard** (Professor, Chemistry)
Book Discussion Group (continued)

Book Discussion Facilitator Pair

Maurice Eldridge (President’s Office)

Marjorie Murphy (Professor, History)
Book Discussion Group (continued)

Book Discussion Facilitator Pair

**Paula Dale** (Director, Campus & Community Store)

**Barry Schwartz** (Professor, Psychology)
Book Discussion Group (continued)

Featured Books

- The Beautiful Bureaucrat by Helen Phillips
- Studs Terkel: Working
- Blue Collar, White Collar, No Collar: Stories of Work edited by Richard Ford
Book Discussion Group (continued)

Featured Books

Just Mercy
A Story of Justice and Redemption
Bryan Stevenson

The Book of Unknown Americans
Cristina Henríquez

Three Strikes
Miners, Musicians, Salesgirls, and the Fighting Spirit of Labor’s Last Century
Howard Zinn, Dana Frank, and Robin D. G. Kelley
Book Discussion Group (continued)

Featured Books

- *Death of a Salesman* (Pulitzer Prize, N.Y. Critics' Award)
- *Studs Terkel's Working*
- *Why We Work* by Barry Schwartz
Aydelotte Foundation Highlight
Faculty Dinner Discussions

“I just wanted to thank you for organizing this really fantastic event. I deeply appreciated the opportunity to get to know my colleagues outside of the natural sciences and to discuss such a substantive and fascinating topic.” — 2016 Dinner Guest

The Aydelotte Foundation was excited to offer a new initiative this year that was crafted to help faculty get to know their colleagues’ scholarly work more deeply. Aydelotte faculty dinners occurred several times over the course of the academic year. At these dinners, a small group of faculty gathered to discuss a short piece of published work by one of their colleagues. Dinner conversation included a brief presentation of the work by the featured author and also questions posed by the group. This is a dinner party, Swarthmore-style.

Stats: November 2015 – April 2016 • 2 conveners • 4 presenters • 45 participants
Dinner Discussions (continued)

Dinner Discussion Conveners

Grace Ledbetter (Associate Professor, Classics & Philosophy)

Alex Baugh (Assistant Professor, Biology)

“In my opinion, this Aydelotte initiative is one of the best faculty collaborations that Swarthmore has seen in recent years. It's a terrific idea, and I know that it's going to be met with enthusiasm by a great number of faculty members. Cheers to Grace, Alex and anyone else involved in its inception.”

— 2016 Dinner Guest
Dinner Discussions (continued)

- **Krista Thomason** (Assistant Professor, Philosophy)

- "Call-Out Culture: Should We Shame on Social Media?"

- Dinner: November 30
Dinner Discussions (continued)

- Christy Schuetze (Assistant Professor, Sociology & Anthropology)

- “Narrative Fortresses: Crisis Narratives and Conflict in the Conservation of Mount Gorongosa, Mozambique”

- Dinner: November 30
Dinner Discussions (continued)

- Tristan Smith (Assistant Professor, Physics & Astronomy)

- “Neutrinos, the Strangest Beasts in the Particle Zoo, May Soon Open the Way to Unexplored Realms”

- Dinner: February 29
Dinner Discussions (continued)

- **Cat Norris** (Assistant Professor, Psychology)

- **Negativity Bias, Neuroticism & Memory”**

- Dinner: April 6
The Aydelotte Foundation continued to offer support for the faculty pedagogy seminar co-convened by Ken Sharpe (Professor, Political Science) and Betsy Bolton (Professor, English Literature). Originally designed to run for just one academic year (2014-15), sessions continued in 2015-16 at the urging of co-conveners.

As before, this seminar brought together 12 faculty members from different disciplines to work in pairs to observe, discuss and refine one another’s teaching strategies. The seminar focused on three key areas: learning through observation, peer coaching and reflective practice.

Stats: September 2015 – March 2016 • 2 conveners • 4 group sessions • 12 participants
Aydelotte Foundation Highlight
Faculty Research Seminar on Collaboration

“I’m definitely now excited about building into my fall course a more explicit collaboration with a community entity, and I can partially thank the collaboration seminar for encouraging me to do that, by showing me through people’s anecdotes and discussion how powerful nontraditional collaborations can be. I think it was most powerful for me to hear from others on WHY and HOW collaborations happen, and I was so thrilled to learn that many felt that the PROCESS was such an important part of their ongoing experiences in collaboration.” — Faculty Seminar Participant

Conceived of by Professor Philip Jefferson (Economics) as a space where ideas, questions and analysis about a topic can be explored, tested, challenged and refined, the inaugural Aydelotte faculty research seminar was held in 2013. This second research seminar brought together faculty for rich interdisciplinary conversations and inquiries on the theme of collaboration.

Stats: January 2016 – April 2016 • 2 conveners • 6 group sessions • 13 participants
"Lynne's and Rachel's leadership and organization provided great support and motivation for seminar participation. Their work was essential to the success of the seminar and I think putting the same group of people together with a broad/nebulous topic of collaboration without some initial guidance would have not led to such a productive seminar."

— Faculty Seminar Participant
The co-conveners selected collaboration as a topic in part because of their own interests. The topic also appealed to them because while it touches on the research interests of a range of faculty at Swarthmore, much of the existing academic research on collaboration has taken place in and across fields not represented at Swarthmore (information studies, higher education studies, organizational dynamics and theory, management studies, history of science and science and technology studies, design).

Seminar Goals — to Study:
1. Academic approaches to research on the topic of collaboration across a wide range of disciplines and methods
2. Practice-based approaches to collaboration across a range of disciplines, fields and institutions
Weekly Themes

**Week 1: Introduction** • **Topics**: Definitions and types; tools and practices (writing, materiality); description and narratives, intra-, extra- and inter-disciplinarity; what is noncollaboration?

**Week 2: Histories** • **Topics**: Epistemology, teaching, history of technology, digital vs. analog, artists' workshops, co-creation

**Week 3: Measurement, Value & Representation** • **Topics**: Authorship, sub-authorship, hierarchies, bibliometrics, tenure, responsibility, formal vs. informal, ethics, lone genius and other creator/authorship myths, myths, materiality, intellectual property, assessment, dyadic + triadic
Themes (continued)

Week 4: Expertise and Its Opposites • Topics: Teaching, epistemology, crowdsourcing vs. expertise, interdisciplinarity, interspecies, post-humanist, unintentional, w/o shared goals

Week 5: Institutions • Topics: Cross-institutional, within-institutional, transdisciplinary; SLAC collaboration, community college collaborations, teaching collaborations

Week 6: Facilitating Collaboration • Topics: Tools reprised, teaching, guidelines, productive vs. unproductive practices, value, DH, Peripeteia, student, faculty
Faculty Seminar on Collaboration (continued)

Collaboration Seminar Participants

Andrew Danner (Associate Professor, Computer Science)

Giovanna Di Chiro (Professor, Environmental Studies)

Emily Gasser (Visiting Assistant Professor, Linguistics)

Alexandra Gueydan-Turek (Associate Professor, French & Francophone Studies)
Collaboration Seminar Participants

Cat Norris (Assistant Professor, Psychology)

Tomoko Sakomura (Associate Professor, Art & Art History)

Lynne Schofield (Associate Professor, Mathematics & Statistics)

Matt Zucker (Associate Professor, Engineering)
The Aydelotte Foundation sent out a call to faculty and staff — “Which higher ed issues are you finding interesting?” “What are you reading and thinking about?”

This new initiative asked community members to join the Aydelotte Foundation several times over the course of the spring semester for coffee, donuts and a discussion of current issues in higher education.

**Stats: February - May 2016 • 2 conveners • 4 group sessions • 43 participants**
Higher Ed Coffee Hour Conveners

Eric Jensen (Director, Aydelotte Foundation)

Peggy Seiden (College Librarian)
Articles discussed include:

- “Researcher Illegally Shares Millions of Science Papers Free Online to Spread Knowledge” — ScienceAlert
- “How a ‘Syllabus Commons’ Could Change Higher Education” — The Chronicle of Higher Education
- “If Skills Are the New Canon, Are Colleges Teaching Them?” — The Chronicle of Higher Education
- “Computer Science as Liberal Arts 'Enabler' — Inside Higher Ed
- “Don’t Grade Schools on Grit” — The New York Times
- “Rethinking Gen Ed” — Inside Higher Ed
“As a staff member whose office is off campus, this is one of the few opportunities I have to interact with the broader community. So that is a valuable feature for me. However, the intellectual component, being able to stretch my understanding, of both the topic presented and the pedagogical practice employed by the presenter, is most enjoyable and helps me feel connected to the mission of the College.” — Second Tuesday Cafe Attender

“An excellent job has been done with taking subject matter and making it interesting and understandable to a diverse audience. This recognition of the diverse makeup of our community makes it a welcoming atmosphere.” — Second Tuesday Cafe Attender

Stats: September 2015 – May 2016 • 1 convener • 9 presenters • 520 participants
The most heavily-attended of Aydelotte Foundation programs, the Second Tuesday Cafes originated in 2012 with a proposal by Professor Amy Vollmer (Biology). Professor Vollmer is interested in bridging the gap between scientists and non-scientists and is passionate about promoting science literacy beyond the classroom and laboratory.

With this in mind, Professor Vollmer conceived of a program where Swarthmore science faculty described their work to general audiences who may be unfamiliar with science. This was not meant to be a “dumbing-down” of content. Professor Vollmer thought about how these interactions could freshen a faculty member’s perspective about general assumptions about science. She also considered how this could help an audience member develop enhanced appreciation for how scientists think about, identify and approach problems.
This tradition was continued in the Social Sciences Cafes (2014-15) and also last year’s Arts & Humanities Cafes.

Convened by Professor Yvonne Chireau, 2015-16 Arts & Humanities Cafes highlighted the intellectual relevance of humanities approaches to arts and culture, on topics ranging from visual narratives in Japan, to reflections on life and death in South Indian religions, to current intersections of theater, dance and music performance in the U.S.

*Link to cafe audio podcasts: [www.swarthmore.edu/aydelotte-foundation/second-tuesday-cafes](http://www.swarthmore.edu/aydelotte-foundation/second-tuesday-cafes).*
Arts & Humanities Cafes (continued)

“Time and the River: Hindu Goddesses of Life and Death”

Arts & Humanities Cafes (continued)

"Listening to the Lessons of Chopin Without Piano"


Allen Kuharski (Professor, Theater)

Barbara Milewski (Associate Professor, Music)

Fall Semester Presenters

Audio link: www.swarthmore.edu/news-events/listen-tomoko-sakomura-picturing-a-classic-tale-genji-japanese-visual-culture

Tomoko Sakomura
(Associate Professor, Art History)

Fall Semester Presenter
“Places of Our Own”


**Syd Carpenter** (Professor, Studio Art)

Fall Semester Presenter
Arts & Humanities Cafes (continued)

Krista Thomason (Assistant Professor, Philosophy)

Spring Semester Presenter

- “Should We Shame on Social Media?”
Pallabi Chakravorty
(Associate Professor, Dance)

Spring Semester Presenter

• “Theorizing Indian Dance in the Age of Bollywood”

Arts & Humanities Cafes (continued)

Bob Rehak (Associate Professor, Film & Media Studies)
Spring Semester Presenter

- “Treknology: Reference Materials and Worldbuilding in Science Fiction Fandom”

Arts & Humanities Cafes (continued)

K. Elizabeth Stevens  
(Associate Professor, Theater)

- “Collaborative Theater Making”

- Audio link: www.swarthmore.edu/news-events/listen-director-k-elizabeth-stevens-collaborative-theater-making

Spring Semester Presenter
The Aydelotte Foundation was pleased to support **Sound Breaks: The Gravity of the Situation**, a faculty roundtable discussion celebrating 100 years of Einstein’s theory of general relativity. Many other institutions are celebrating this milestone in modern physics, but at Swarthmore we had the opportunity to celebrate it from diverse viewpoints and within the context of the liberal arts.

*Stats: November 2015 • 1 convener • 7 presenters sessions • 50 participants*
There are many points of intersection between Einstein’s achievement and a wide range of other disciplines. Einstein’s theory of general relativity took his theory of special relativity and applied it to the inner-workings of gravity, transforming the push and pull of action at a distance to the geometric picture of curved surfaces.

The concepts of ‘relativity’ and of ‘gravity’ clearly resonate in other fields. In addition to this, Einstein’s achievement was an act of imagination, persistence and profound creativity—it is a human act and as such must be examined and celebrated from a diverse set of viewpoints.
Sound Breaks (continued)

Facilitated by Tristan Smith (Physics & Astronomy), the panel featured Helen Plotkin (Religion), Alan Baker (Philosophy), Peter Schmidt (English Literature), Mark Lomanno (Music), David Cohen (Physics & Astronomy) and Jumatatu Poe (Dance). (Pictured left to right)
Confirmed Programming for 2016-17

2016-17 Faculty Pedagogy Seminar

Betsy Bolton (Professor, English Literature)  Sara Hiebert Burch (Professor, Biology)

Like the inaugural 2014-15 seminar, these sessions will bring together 12 faculty members from different disciplines to work in pairs to observe, discuss and refine one another’s teaching strategies. Co-convened by Professors Betsy Bolton and Sara Hiebert Burch, the seminar will once again focus on learning through observation, peer coaching and reflective practice.
Seminar Participants

- Betsy Bolton (English Literature)
- Joshua Brody (Computer Science)
- Catherine Crouch (Physics)
- Desiree Diaz (Spanish)
- Cheryl Grood (Mathematics)
- Sara Hiebert Burch (Biology)
- Thomas Hunter (Mathematics)
- Milton Machuca-Galvez (Latin American Studies)
- Joseph Nelson (Educational Studies)
- Sunka Simon (German and Film & Media Studies)
- Alex Torra (Theater)
- Liliya Yatsunyk (Chemistry)
Confirmed Programming for 2016-17

Second Tuesday Cafes:
2016 Presidential Election & Its Significance

The Foundation’s popular lunch-time series returns in September with a new season of programming. This time around, the monthly presentations by faculty for faculty and staff will focus on the 2016 presidential election. Co-convened by Carol Nackenoff (Professor, Political Science) and Sa’ed Atshan (Visiting Assistant Professor, Peace & Conflict Studies), cafes will include presenters from the social sciences, humanities and natural sciences.
2016 Cafes will provide interdisciplinary perspectives on critical issues underlying the campaign, and the likely consequences of the election on domestic and foreign affairs.

Topics may include prospects for Supreme Court appointments and decisions; the debate over climate change and movements for climate justice; economic insecurity, growing inequality, political frustration and the Trump phenomenon; American conservatism today; issues of race, gender and LGBT rights; the meaning of the election in and for the Middle East; and the relationship between religion and politics.
In development — the Frank 5: Aydelotte Foundation Ambassador Program is designed to spark conversation on the value of the liberal arts.

The pilot riffs off of “Forbes 30 Under 30” awards. Under this model, the Foundation will recognize five Swarthmore alums under 30 who embody the spirit of the liberal arts and who are doing interesting and inspired work across a variety of fields. Dubbed “The Frank 5” in recognition of Swarthmore’s 7th President, these ambassadors will form an intimate cohort that is dedicated to sharing “a year in the life” of a liberal arts grad.
While deeply embedded in the Swarthmore experience, this initiative aims to showcase liberal arts education in as broad a manner as possible. We aspire to:

- Cultivate a new generation of advocates for the liberal arts.
- Invite the active participation of non-scholars in the liberal arts experiences through programming and conversation.
- Amplify the many voices of Swarthmore College who act as champions for the College’s mission of empowering students with the knowledge, insight, skills and experience to become leaders for the common good.
Our primary strategy is to de-mystify the liberal arts — to make them more knowable by putting a face to them.

With this program, we will through telling the stories of liberal arts grads, in essence, create “ambassadors” for the liberal arts who will help us to make our case.

These stories are intended to act as catalysts — expanding our conversations with public audiences on the value of a liberal arts education.
FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Aydelotte Website
- News, Video & Audio
- Aydelotte Facebook Page