



May
2025

FacDev Chatter

The FacDev Chatter is the monthly (or so) newsletter about faculty development at Knox College. These include planned workshops and funding opportunities, both internal and external to Knox College.

Rainy Notes from the ADFA



As I write this, the weather has turned from the warmth of the usual Galesburg Spring to the wet and the stormy of the usual Galesburg Spring. While I know that the rainy weather is great for the plants (especially my lawn after treating it with borax), and while the drear uplifts me and gives me some peace, I realize that it is a drag on most others. What can I say? I'm different. 🤖

This month, there are the usual items, including information on a book about generative AI and thoughts on advising as we transition to J1. However, there are three big events that you should be aware of (and attend). Brandon Polite presents the philosophy behind the pop sensation Taylor Swift in this month's Friday at Four.

The annual Writing Workshop takes place in this merry month of May. This annual event gives us all some insight into our teaching and how we can support our students in what could be the most difficult part of college: the writing.

Finally, our very own Gerald & Carol Vovis Center is celebrating the research done by our students. The HORIZONS conference provides our students with the opportunity to showcase all that they did in their research. These research projects were all overseen by you.

And for that, I thank you.

~ Ole

The Fac Dev Calendar

Subscribe by clicking here →

In this issue:

- May Events
- May Writing Workshop
- The 411 Corner
- The Book Corner
- Faculty Funding



Upcoming May Happenings

Are we still in the midst of Spring Term? It feels both like it just started and that it is lingering far too long. I can only imagine what others are feeling now. I know my students are excited for Flunk Day... I know I am, too.

This month offers three major events. The first is the Vovis Center HORIZON's celebration of student research at Knox (May 16). The second is the annual Writing Workshop (May 17). Finally, we end May with a slew of student presentations across campus... and Brandon Polite's Friday at Four talk on the philosophy behind Taylor Swift (May 23).

HORIZONS Conference of Student Research

When: May 16 from 4:00 until 8:45pm

Where: Starting in Alumni Hall

Knox students from all academic disciplines push themselves to their intellectual and artistic limits through creative and performing arts, humanities, science and mathematics, and social sciences projects. HORIZONS provides an opportunity for students to present their work among peers, faculty and staff, and family and friends.

Join us for an on-campus research symposium that has the feel of an academic conference. The event begins with a reception, followed by academic posters and oral presentations. Family, friends, and Knox College students, staff, and faculty are invited to attend. For more information:

- <https://www.knox.edu/offices/research-and-advanced-study/horizons-student-celebration>

📌 The May Writing Workshop

When: May 17 (all day, TBD)
Where: Trustees Room (ALUM 302)

Given the feedback, we are holding the annual writing workshop in May this year. With the encroachments on your summer schedule, we decided that having the workshop in May would give everyone a greater chance of being able to attend — as well as give them some important things to think about over the summer.

Please save the date: **Saturday, May 17**. It will be an “all-day” event (starting and ending times to still be determined) held in the Trustees Room. While this is designed for FP instructors and other teachers of first-year students, I encourage everyone to attend. I will be there because I teach two courses that have lengthy writing requirements, and I would like to discover ways to make it easier for the students (and for *me*).



The guest speaker is Jaclyn (Jaci) Wells, who gave a writing workshop a few years back. Given how well she did, I am very happy that she is joining us again. By the way, Jaci is a local. Her family is in Macomb. So, she knows all about us. In fact, she provided a fantastic workshop for us a few years back.

🎤 Friday at Four

When: May 23 at 4:00pm
Where: Trustees Room (ALUM 302)

This is the final Friday at Four for the academic year. We’ve come a long way. Let’s send the year off with a presentation on Taylor Swift and her philosophy, as presented by our very own Brandon Polite. We will enjoy good food, good company.

ONE CHILD, ONE TEACHER, ONE BOOK, ONE PEN CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.

- Malala Yousafzai

List of Upcoming Events

May Faculty Meeting	May 5
HORIZONS Conference	May 16
Annual Writing Workshop	May 17
May Friday and Four	May 23
Birthday of Vincent Price 🦋	May 27, 1911

The 411 Corner

This month, let us look at **advising**.

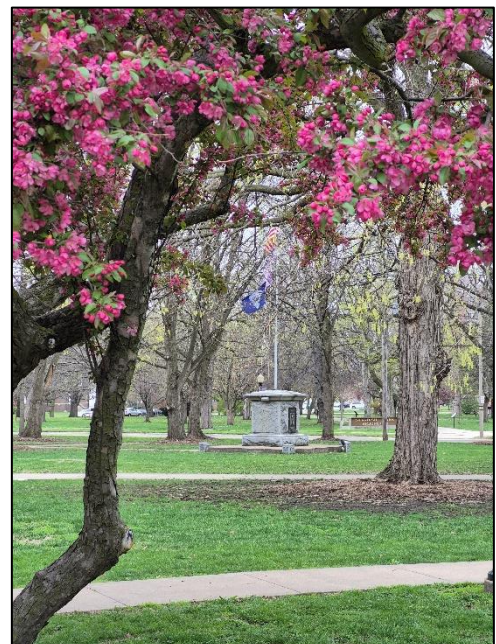
Next year, we will implement new processes for student advising (moving from CX to J1). On the one hand, this change allows us more time to be the advisors we wish we had time to be. On the other hand, it is a significant change from what we currently do, a significant change from all the band-aided fiery hoops we jump through to accomplish the easiest of tasks.

This new change is exciting because it allows us to be the mentors we enjoy being. As is currently the case, students will still be responsible for the courses they take. However, *this* will be much more apparent to them. This is true because our advisees will have to select classes themselves... after thinking through their educational plans and how these courses fit into their overall academic goals.

This change offers us the opportunity to re-form ourselves as advisors and mentors to our students. It is a big change, but it will be so much better for our students. They will have more ownership of their education and their time at Knox.

However, this change comes at a price. It will take time and a lot of effort for each of us to modify our own procedures and to help the students with their planning. To that end, as you go through the last advising process under Jenzabar CX, think about how you engage with your advisees, how you ensure they are on the right path, and what you would rather do than cram all 30-or-so advisee meetings in a two-week period.

Thinking through these questions will help you be better prepared for the shift that is happening in the fall.





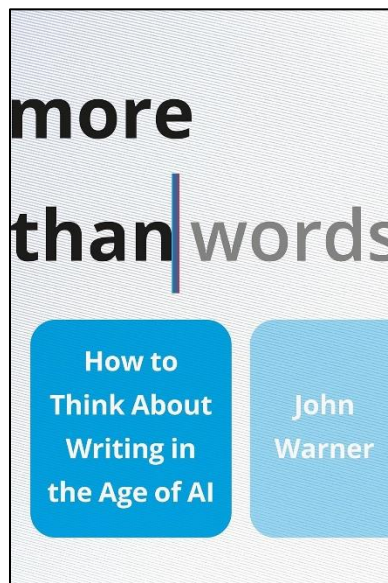
The Book Corner

This month in the **Seymour Library Faculty Development Collection**, let me draw your attention to

Warner, J. (2025). *More than Words: How to Think About Writing in the Age of AI*. Basic Books.

This month's book explores how to return to what matters in writing. While the conclusions of this book are interesting, it is a great read that encourages us to think more deeply about writing, why we do it, and how we can encourage our students to see its value.

The publisher states that *More Than Words* argues that generative AI programs like ChatGPT not only *can* kill the student essay but *should*, since these assignments don't challenge students to do the real work of writing. To Warner, writing is thinking—discovering your ideas while trying to capture them on a page—and feeling—grappling with what it fundamentally means to be human. The fact that we ask students to complete so many assignments that a machine could do is a sign that something has gone very wrong with writing instruction. *More Than Words* calls for us to use AI as an opportunity to reckon with how we work with words—and how all of us should rethink our relationship with writing.



The book (LB 1028.43 .W367 2025) forces us to reevaluate our teaching and the importance of the “five-paragraph essay.” It is so good that there is a book club already working their way through the book and learning from it.

Knox's Faculty Development Collection is located to the right of the circulation desk. This book, along with many others, can be found there. I encourage you to visit the collection and see what else we have available.





Faculty Funding Opportunities

The following is mostly a repeat of my previous announcements. As always, more information can be found on the “Faculty Funding” page at

- <https://www.knox.edu/offices/faculty-affairs/faculty-funding>

Whether you are looking for seed money for a new project or just need a bit of help finishing something already under way, the Committee on Faculty Resources (CoFR) can help. We support your professional work at all stages of its development.

Support for Research, Creative Work, and Conference Travel

- The final Research and Creative Work (R/CW) deadline for the fiscal year has passed. However, please plan and submit them. We want to fund your research and your creative works.
- Applications for your first CTA award continue as before.
- For applications and information for these two resources, please visit
 - <https://www.knox.edu/offices/faculty-affairs/faculty-funding>

Note that other sources of funding are decided on a rolling deadline. These include

- For the Cultural Events Committee, visit this site:
 - <https://sites.google.com/a/knox.edu/cultural-events-committee/>
- For External Grants and assistance, visit our grants office:
 - <https://www.knox.edu/support-knox/grants-office>