Second Annual Science Faculty Exchange  
November 28, 2011

In attendance: Teachers and administrators from Orange County high schools, Orange-Ulster BOCES, and SUNY Orange

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED:

Common Core Standards
Discussion centered on how common core standards for science will impact high school curricula and assessment instruments in New York high schools. New York State has been chosen to collaborate with 19 other states to develop the Next Generation of Science Standards (NGSS), which will define the content and practices that students will learn from kindergarten through high school graduation.

Lab Reports
Professor Damon Ely of SUNY Orange discussed the curriculum of his General Biology II course which includes a group research project focusing on the ecological assessment of a stream in Middletown. The student groups assess water chemistry using LaMotte test kits and handheld conductivity and dissolved oxygen meters, and conduct benthic sampling procedures such as algal and macro-invertebrate quantification to calculate various biotic indices of stream integrity. Students also work in groups to develop and present research based on the observations made.

Other Topics
Also discussed:
- science clubs such as Valley Central High School’s Chemistry Club, which hosted “Manya: A Conversation With Marie Curie,” which spurred student interest in the scientist’s life and related scientific topics;
- the possible advantages of narrower but deeper curricular focus in science education;
- portfolio-style assessments; and
- future meetings (AY 2012-2013) for instructors in specific scientific disciplines.

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