



2401 (twen 'tē fōr 'ō, wun) is a landmark number along Taft Avenue. It is the location ID of De La Salle University, home to outstanding faculty and students, and birthplace of luminaries in business, public service, education, the arts, and science. And 2401 is the name of the official newsletter of DLSU, featuring developments and stories of interest about the University.

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## PHILOSOPHY LECTURE TACKLES COGNITIVE PHENOMENOLOGY

*A Ph.D student from the University of Bergen and the National Australian University discussed the possibility of cognitive phenomenology in a philosophical lecture last October 9 at the Yuchengco Hall.*

The lecture was formulated by the Philosophy Department to give DLSU students a wider perspective on how the mind works.

In her lecture, “Is There A Cognitive Phenomenology?” Mette Kristine Hansen argued the value of science working together with philosophy in determining how the mind works. Started by philosophers and further developed through the years by thinkers from all fields, Cognitive Phenomenology is a variation of philosophical method coupled with science.

The speaker explained how traditionally, phe-

nomenology attempts to be scientific in its approach towards grasping human thought without delving into scientific exploits like clinical psychology or neurology. Phenomenology generally stresses on systematic reflection to determine the fundamental properties and structures of consciousness and conscious experience.

Although science and philosophy clash at times, making use of contrasting processes, Hansen pointed out how continuing efforts are being made to create a marriage of the two schools of thought.

# DLSU FACULTY DEVELOP BOATS FOR RELIEF OPERATIONS

*Two De La Salle University Chemistry Department faculty members recently presented a boat that they designed that could transport relief goods to hard-to-reach flood-devastated communities.*

Using his boat-building experience as member of the Philippine Home Boatbuilders Yacht Club (PHBYC), Dr. Eric Punzalan, along with fellow Chemistry faculty Emmanuel Garcia, conceptualized the ideal boat for delivering relief goods.

With the help of several companies, the team had already built and delivered a few units to Red Cross operations. They plan to build 18 more for Red Cross and other relief organizations.

Punzalan noted that many relief goods sometimes did not reach their intended recipients because delivery vehicles could not go through the floods. At the same time, water rafts and ordinary boats are too

expensive for volunteers to acquire.

The PHBYC Shuttle Boat Project is a flat-bottom row boat made of tough but inexpensive materials such as farmed high grade marine plywood and marine epoxy adhesive. It weighs only about 50 kg and can easily be carried atop a regular-sized car for quick mobilization.

Although lightweight, the boat can carry half a ton—equivalent to about eight people or 10 sacks of rice. The boat's design makes it stable even with irregular cargo. As demonstrated during a prototype test, it can tip to 20 degrees from any angle without capsizing.

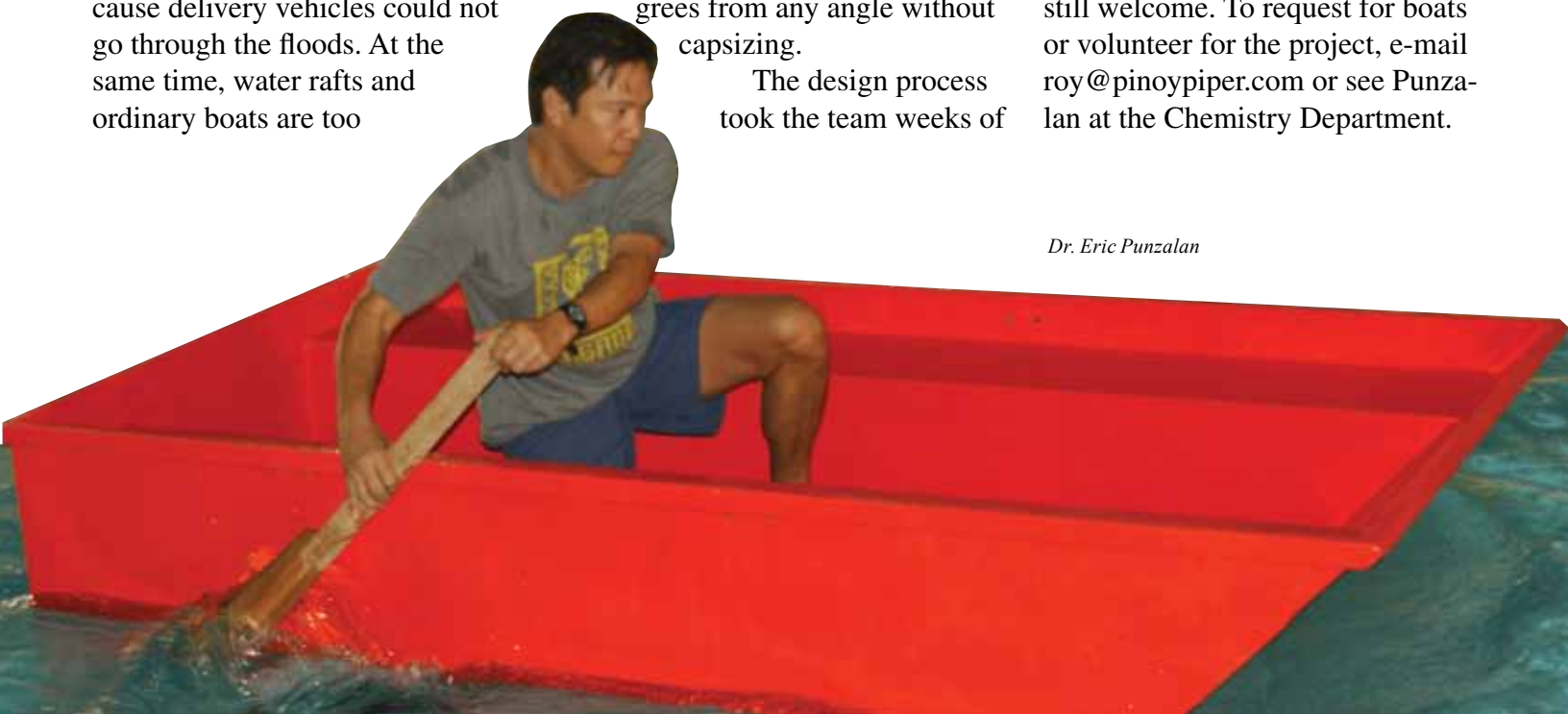
The design process took the team weeks of

mathematical calculations to ensure the boat's strength and functions. Punzalan also relied on his chemistry training to determine the best materials for the boat.

“Everything about the boat is chemistry. The plywood is derived from sheets of wood and laminated together with waterproof adhesive called polyformaldehyde. The epoxy adhesive is a two-component glue that when cured provides a bond stronger than the wood itself,” he explained.

Punzalan said volunteers to help build PHBYC Shuttle Boats at Design Ligna shop in Laguna are still welcome. To request for boats or volunteer for the project, e-mail [roy@pinoy Piper.com](mailto:roy@pinoy Piper.com) or see Punzalan at the Chemistry Department.

*Dr. Eric Punzalan*





# SHALOM CENTER OPENS TO PROMOTE EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

*Part of De La Salle University's National Teachers' Day celebration last October 5 was the opening of the DLSU Shalom Center, an in-campus relaxation and wellness facility for exclusive use of the university's faculty, non-academic, and administrative personnel.*

The project is an integral component of the University's wellness program for employees, which is aimed at helping them cope with work-related stress.

The 300-square-meter facility is located at the second level of Br. Alphonsus Bloemen Hall, across the St. Miguel Building. It features several air-conditioned lounge areas, a silent room, coffee area, and a media lounge where guests can relax to music and videos. Free reflexology services and yoga classes are offered.

The inaugural ceremonies were led by DLSU President and Chancellor Br. Armin Luistro FSC and Vice Chancellor for Lasallian Mission and External Relations Br. Bernard Oca FSC.

In his welcome speech, Br. Bernie stressed the importance of providing spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical balance to the Lasallian working community, which constantly deals with the challenges of a fast-paced trimestral system. He encouraged faculty and administrative personnel to regularly visit the facility for quiet contemplation or to de-stress.

He also mentioned the need for healing in the community, where many have been ravaged by recent typhoons: "Many of us are back at work even if we are barely back on our feet after the storm. We hope that by opening this facility, we can start the healing process and move on."

The Shalom Center is open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays and from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Saturdays.







# NEXUS:

## The image for multidisciplinary in action

Dr. Jeane Peracullo  
Assistant Professor, Philosophy Department

**Nexus**, in most dictionaries, refers to:

1. a connection or link associating two or more people or things;
2. a group or series of connected individuals or things;
3. the center or focus of something;
4. an intersection.



What is the significance of nexus as an image for multidisciplinary in action? It is an engaged position—not just a position taken by someone viewing from outside. At first glance, the cross-junction arrows give the impression of confusion because of the presence of multiple directions. Rather than confusing, it is actually liberating because it suggests plurality of directions—different ways to approach or begin. It also signifies the dismissal of the *vantage point of certainty* of which a lot of intellectual traditions hinged upon. Multidisciplinary in a university context means that each discipline recognizes and emphasizes the importance of location to knowing. Where you are necessarily engages the way you look at the world and it governs all aspects of your being, even how and what you choose.

Nexus illustrates “process.” Because nexus is open-ended, the focus is the *meeting* of entities or fields. “Meeting” is an event in the active form; it is always in the present moment; it suggests “newness” or “novelty.” Put differently, the “meeting” is a creative act, when two or more fields approach and come closer and “converge” but the process is not marked by annihilation or dissolution. Rather, a “whole” emerges from the meeting of the “parts” that interconnect with one another. It could be that the “whole” here is the pattern that connects. Using Theoretical Physics, nexus captures the contemporary understanding of reality, which is characterized by relation, convergence, interconnectivity, intersubjectivity, interrelatedness, and the like. In multidisciplinary, each academic discipline retains its own way of doing things—its own methodology and assumptions without being confused with another discipline.

Nexus signifies the tentative openness which is allowed when one acquires the depth of perception—when one sees differently perhaps after a meaningful encounter with the other—yet the path to self-disclosure is riddled with difficulties. This is an important significance of nexus because it brings forth the uncomfortable reality that a certain academic discipline (and its practitioners) can dominate this meeting. To borrow Foucault’s analysis, the process of normalization, as seen in the act of institutionalization, necessarily involves power. That which is ideologically dominant tends to write the rules of engagement and expects the less dominant to follow accordingly. In other words, the call to meet may involve “transgression”<sup>1</sup> insofar as the dominant discipline may insist that a lesser one “carries within itself” aspects of the former, and in so doing, may render the latter incompetent. Multidisciplinary in action then means that a dominant discipline, the Queen, acknowledges the hurt—the violation/transgression—she has done. When one acknowledges the hurt that one causes to the other, it is not certain whether one could be forgiven willingly, and with open arms, especially when walls are erected as a response to being hurt. So the steps are tentative yet they are steps to the right direction when these walls are lowered and one is let in.

Nexus highlights the importance of reflections on interdependence and difference to effectively counteract the debilitating effects of dualism that pits humans against nature; men against women;

mind against body; spirituality against sexuality; and immanence against transcendence. A good illustration would be a mandala, a sacred circle, which is a picture of the Buddhist universe. In Buddhism, the circle or mandala is taken to symbolize the perfection of totality, also known as the union of opposite, which may seem distinct but are actually interrelated like the part to the whole and the whole to the part. The interlocking circles suggest the dynamic encounters of parts to the whole. Eastern philosophy regards the microcosm as inseparable from the bigger macrocosm; atma inseparable from paratma (unit consciousness versus supreme consciousness), an atom inseparable from the solar systems, galaxies and the entire universe. In the same way, we could view human beings as inseparable from the earth's planetary ecosystem and all that is contained therein. It is also unthinkable to separate many of the microflora (symbiotic bacteria) which abound in the human body as they contribute significantly to what is to be a human being biologically.

Nexus implies as well the dialectic relationship among different academic disciplines by inviting the practitioners to pay attention to the reciprocity of the human being and the world. What binds academic disciplines together even if they have different methodologies, assumptions and tracts, is the common starting point—the human experience, embodied and rooted in the world; that the vulnerability of our embodiment is precisely the thread that weaves our embodied experiences together; and that the acknowledgment as well as the recognition of this thread brings forth a relational ethic, which in turn is characterized by justice, friendship, and care.

*Dr. Jeane Peracullo is an Assistant Professor of the Philosophy Department. She specializes in environmental ethics and feminist philosophy.*

<sup>1</sup>Agnes Brazal and Daniel Pilario write extensively on multidisciplinary in Theology in their article, "Disciplines, Interdisciplinarity and Theology," in their jointly edited book, *Interdisciplinarity in Theology: HAPAG Special Issue* (Quezon City: Adamson University Press, 2007), 5-25.



## URCO HOLDS FORUM ON RESEARCH WRITING, PUBLICATION

*The University and Research Coordination Office (URCO) recently held the second URCO Forum, which featured four lectures on research writing and publication, last October 15 and 16 at the Ariston Estrada Seminar Room.*

The first three lectures titled “Getting Your Research Published” focused on strategies for researchers to get published, particularly in peer-reviewed journals or those indexed by ISI or Scopus. University Fellow and Academic Publications Office Executive Publisher Dr. Isagani Cruz facilitated the lecture for the faculty in the humanities.

Meanwhile, University Fellow and Chemical Engineering Department Full Professor Dr. Raymond Tan and University Fellow and Counseling and Educational Psychology Chair Dr. Allan Bernardo

facilitated the lectures for the faculty in engineering and natural sciences and social sciences, respectively.

The series also featured Dr. Gerardo Largoza, Economics Department Associate Professor, who delivered the lecture “Meeting the Demands of Writing Research” for DLSU faculty and graduate students. The session dealt on how to write technical material and present data efficiently.



LASALLIANS

ON  
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D.O.T.

DEFINITELY ON TIME

*Lasallians on the DOT (Definitely on Time) is a De La Salle University campaign to strengthen a culture of punctuality and honesty. The program is being undertaken in response to a memorandum issued in September 2008 by the Commission on Higher Education, which urges higher education institutions in the country to support its Project W.A.T.C.H. (We Advocate Time Consciousness and Honesty).*



# PARTNER FOUNDATION LAUNCHES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

*De La Salle University recently sealed a deal with Rebisco Foundation Inc. for the Financial Assistance for Tertiary Education program (FATE), a financial scholarship grant for underprivileged but deserving incoming college students.*







**Lasallian Guiding Principles.** To answer our questions and successfully pursue our quests, we must return to the beginning. In order to find real answers and to see our way clearly, we must go back to our real source. This means going back to our core Lasallian values: the spirit of faith, zeal for service, and communion in mission.

# A steward's lifelong commitment

*"She is a good steward of the talents and gifts she has been entrusted with, as well as of the institution that has been entrusted to her care," says one employee who wished to remain anonymous, when asked how she would describe De La Salle University Chancellor Emeritus Dr. Carmelita Quebengco AFSC.*

In her many years of working with the Brothers, Quebengco played a major role in the development of numerous educational programs in DLSU and in the College of Saint Benilde. But her commitment in the work that she does for the Lasallian community can be best seen through the eyes of those working closely with her.

"When asked to lecture or present a paper on a topic that everyone knows she has a wealth of experience in, she would still make it a point to read up-to-date and relevant materials because she believes that it is not enough that she has the experience," the employee relates. "She feels the need to validate that experience as well as her theories and management practices vis-a-vis the current trends in the field."

Quebengco became an Affiliate of De La Salle Brothers of the Philippine District last year, the highest and rarest honor bestowed by the Brothers of the Christian Schools. In a letter of request submitted by Brother Visitor Br. Edmundo Fernandez FSC to the Superior General, he identified the reasons for granting Quebengco the affiliate status, the most important of which is her lifelong commitment to the Lasallian Mission. Moreover, Br. Edmundo said Que-

bengco played an important role in the development and growth of several Brothers as administrators, explaining that she has given formal and informal sessions on the management of schools.

"I admire her for her strength of character, her principles, and the way she carried out her responsibilities, especially during the time she was concurrent Executive Vice President and President of the DLSU System," the employee says. "I also admire her for her dedication to the Lasallian mission and vision. She could have earned a handsome salary with less pressures outside La Salle, but she chose to stay, because at DLSP she will be able to help the small schools in particular."



## **What is a Lasallian Associate?**

Lasallian Associates are partners who have had a long record of collaborating in the Lasallian Mission, and who feel a call to deepen the charisma, spirituality, and Lasallian communion in which they wish to participate. In particular, their lives are already marked by a number of distinctively Lasallian characteristics:

- A vocation inspired by the charisma of St. John Baptist de La Salle and his values;
- A life of faith which discovers God in everyday life understood in the light of Scripture and, for persons of other religions, in the light of their own sacred texts;
- A community experience of some form or other suited to the identity of its members;
- A mission of some duration which associates persons with the educational service of the poor;
- An openness of mind which makes it possible to see beyond the individual and his immediate environment.



## SINAG FEATURED IN MABUHAY GERMANY 2009

*Sinag, the Philippines' first solar car, which was designed, built, and raced by Lasallian students and faculty from the College of Engineering, was featured in this year's Mabuhay Germany exposition. Held at the upscale Bonifacio High Street from October 9 to 11, the exposition aims to enhance business relations between the Philippines and the Federal Republic of Germany.*



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