[Note: below are the evaluations from the participants of a weekend seminar developed by Lynn Uzzell and co-taught last year by her and James Ceaser. All comments irrelevant to Dr. Uzzell’s contributions to the course (e.g., relating to Dr. Ceaser’s lectures, the house tours, the food and accommodation, etc.) have been excised. Those portions which pertain directly or indirectly to Dr. Uzzell’s contributions have been retained, unedited, in their entirety.]

**Montpelier Weekend Seminar Program Evaluation Summary**

*Founding American Principles*

*American Constitutional Tradition Through History*

October 29-31, 2010

**Number of Evaluations: 24**

1. **Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the statements below using the following scale:**

**4=*Strongly Agree 3=Agree 2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree***

1. In general, participating in the Weekend Seminar was a valuable experience for me.

4=23 3=1

1. I found the Weekend Seminar intellectually stimulating.

4=23 3=1

1. I have significantly deepened my knowledge of the ideas and principles

of the American Constitution.

4=17 3=7

1. I have significantly enhanced my understanding of the history and ideas of James Madison.

4=17 3=7

1. The Weekend Seminar has provided me with background I can use to support civic education in my professional capacity.

4=19 3=5

1. I had the opportunity to have my questions and/or contributions heard.

4=23 1 Undecided

1. The contributions of other participants enhanced the challenge and value of the Weekend Seminar.

4=17 3=6 2=1

1. **Please rate the value of the activities listed below and please use the space below each activity to make additional comments:**
2. Reading materials.

4=17 3=5

1. Good, valid materials. Excessive amount of reading to be done in a short period of time in order to do thorough, annotated reading. The results probably could be accomplished with fewer sources. It would have been nice to have the materials 3-hole punched in a binder to be able to add our own notes.
2. Documents directly related to topics. It was nice to see more modern documents and discuss their context within political theory.
3. Some very good selections – speeches, Federalist Paper, etc. Others I didn’t find as valuable – Lycurgus, Aristotle.
4. Excellent/informative.
5. Could be cut down – maybe zero in more on the related excerpts in some documents.
6. Very appropriate – “heart of the matter” selections.
7. The reading materials were informative and really went well with the topics discussed. I do wish that the speakers would have talked about them a little more.
8. (no comment)
9. (no comment)
10. There were just the right amount of reading that a working teacher could read in the time given.
11. Excellent collection of documents - would like to have a bibliography of secondary scholarship.
12. Good choices when so many exist.
13. The materials were not touched on much but did help with comprehension
14. Excellent choices
15. (no comment)
16. (no comment)
17. Presenters need to incorporate the readings better. We skipped over several
18. Packet of documents extremely helpful
19. I found the materials to be very helpful in preparing me for this seminar. To not have them would have made the lectures less engaging
20. The reading materials greatly enhanced the lectures
21. I found the reading materials extremely useful in preparation for the lectures.
22. Thank you for actually referring directly to reading materials! Reading materials should always be and were directly relevant.
23. Nice sequence of materials
24. Reading materials were both challenging and thought provoking. I enjoyed reading them.
25. Lecture and Discussion Sessions:
26. Natural Rights: America’s Pre-Political Foundations (Lynn Uzell)

4=19 3=3

1. Excellent overview, good analogies & examples, good treatment of questions/clarifications
2. (no comment)
3. Interesting – 1st time I’d been introduced to the concept in depth. Made later material clearer, & I like when she referred back to it later on.
4. Very interesting.
5. Very interesting – stimulating.
6. Very good presentation – understandable and lively.
7. (no comment)
8. (no comment)
9. (no comment)
10. Got lots of information to use with my students.
11. Greatly enjoyed the lecture.
12. Hard to explain – well done.
13. Liked graphic organizers
14. (no comment)
15. (no comment)
16. (no comment)
17. (no comment)
18. Outstanding explanation of state of nature—civil liberty-political
19. Good subject- gave us the key basics
20. Wonderful!
21. Lynn is very knowledgable and communicates easily and clearly. I found her to be passionate about her subject and she kept things moving at a really good pace.
22. Set the stage beautifully
23. This presentation provided a strong introduction but deserved two sessions
24. Extremely stimulating; I got an understanding of Locke that will be helpful in my classes. I have not read Locke for several years and think I would like to revisit his writings.

1. Slavery: The Historical Assault on American Foundations (Jim Ceaser)
2. Small Virtuous Republics vs Large Commercial Republics (Jim Ceaser)
3. Checks and Balances: Why and How? (Lynn Uzell)

4=11 3=11

1. Excellent explanation, content, interactivity. Fear our country/citizenry has done its best to destroy the checks & balances!
2. I enjoyed the connection back to Locke . . . great insight.
3. (no comment)
4. Good insight . . . tough subject to keep interesting.
5. Great presentation.
6. (no comment)
7. (no comment)
8. (no comment)
9. (no comment)
10. Got good info to use.
11. (no comment)
12. On board diagrams a great help.
13. (no comment)
14. (no comment)
15. (no comment)
16. (no comment)
17. (no comment)
18. Excellent
19. Great stuff! I took lots of notes.
20. (no comment)
21. (no comment)
22. (no comment)
23. Emphasis (??) the more time was needed on the how
24. My students will benefit greatly from this discussion. This is a topic my AP government class will enjoy
25. The Consequences of a Written Constitution (Jim Ceaser)
26. Judicial Interpretation and Contemporary Constitutional Issues (Lynn Uzell)

4=19 3=3

1. Excellent content, engaging, well-explained.
2. (no comment)
3. Enjoyed discussing differences between original intent & activism.
4. Lots of great Q&A.
5. Good lecture – I learned so much more about the judicial branch and future consequences.
6. (no comment)
7. (no comment)
8. (no comment)
9. (no comment)
10. Very good gave some down to earth info.
11. I think Dr. Uzell feels the same way I do about Scalia, but she is just more polite ☺
12. Tough subject – could be longer.
13. Content fantastic
14. (no comment)
15. (no comment)
16. (no comment)
17. (no comment)
18. Excellent
19. An area I was not fluent in-will help with my civics instruction
20. Gave me a different perspective of judicial review
21. I found this to be one of the most interesting and useful topics.
22. (no comment)
23. Excellent summary that brought us to important contemporary issues
24. This last lecture actually continued among participants throughout lunch and even into the closing activity
25. House Tour of the Montpelier Mansion (Susan Simpson)
26. Archaeology Tour (Mark Trickett)
27. **Please rate the value of the activities listed below and please use the space below each activity to make additional comments:**

**4=*Strongly Agree 3=Agree 2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree***

1. Organization of the Weekend Seminar

4=20 3=2

1. Fabulous! All details considered. Very impressive and well orchestrated.
2. (no comment)
3. Seemed to run smoothly.
4. Can’t ask for more . . .
5. Well organized – very professional.
6. Well organized to enhance the themes.
7. (no comment)
8. (no comment)
9. (no comment)
10. Very good.
11. Excellent.
12. Good timing – good breaks, excellent food & beverages.
13. (no comment)
14. I missed the nature tour
15. (no comment)
16. (no comment)
17. (no comment)
18. Good Balance. Could have used some good reading time built into schedule
19. Excellent
20. (no comment)
21. This was my second weekend seminar. I really liked last year when we worked through Monday. I felt the extra day gave us more time to reflect and not rush through lectures/discussions.
22. Everything was ready for us, allowing us to truly focus on the material and discussions
23. Very nice sequence of topics
24. Well organized and fast moving
25. The Thematic Structure and Content of the Scholarly Component of the Weekend Seminar.

4=19 3=3

1. Thematic Structure – Perfect for the focus of our studies this year. Scholarly Component – a bit “over my head” in some cases.
2. The essential questions helped to put everything in context.
3. (no comment)
4. I learned quite a bit.
5. Well done – very stimulating.
6. Effective and efficient use of time
7. (no comment)
8. (no comment)
9. (no comment)
10. Very well done.
11. (no comment)
12. Well thought out – perhaps a little video.
13. (no comment)
14. Enjoyable
15. (no comment)
16. (no comment)
17. (no comment)
18. Welcome new format and topic structure
19. Excellent
20. 4-Thematic structure;4-Uzell content; 2-Ceaser content
21. (no comment)
22. The common thread of the Locke relationship to Founders intentions was excellent; other topics (i.e. slavery/Lincoln) could have been more diverse.
23. Great beginning session
24. Intellectually stimulating materials and lectures
25. The level of intellectual challenge in the Scholarly Component of the Weekend Seminar.

4=18 3=4

1. Gave me lots of “food for thought.” Would like to have time to process and then reconnect w/instructors.
2. (no comment)
3. (no comment)
4. Good to get away for a weekend and discuss/theorize about such an important topic as the Constitution.
5. I found it challenging and made us think at a much higher level – very energizing for our profession.
6. Content was made understandable to all levels of interests and abilities.
7. (no comment)
8. (no comment)
9. (no comment)
10. This was a top of the line learning experience.
11. (no comment)
12. Good discussion and re-statements.
13. Good, I personally had to look up a few definitions, but that is how we grow
14. Very interesting
15. (no comment)
16. (no comment)
17. (no comment)
18. Not so theoretical. Applicable to today. Current issues discussed in relation to Const.
19. This seminar uses a real Alzheimer prevention exercise! I’m sure we all appreciated the cerebral challenges
20. (no comment)
21. (no comment)
22. (no comment)
23. (no comment)
24. Materials were challenging and stimulated interest. I learned a great deal
25. Staff members of the Center for the Constitution and James Madison’s Montpelier.
26. Weekend Seminar Faculty

4=21 3=1

1. Dr. Uzell is a shining star! She was engaging, able to handle questions, and a content expert, plus made info easily accessible!
2. Both teachers were very open to questions and personable.
3. (no comment)
4. Everyone seems genuinely interested and happy with the program.
5. Excellent!
6. Well – prepared for presentations.
7. (no comment)
8. (no comment)
9. (no comment)
10. Best in Class.
11. Greatly enjoyed Professors Ceaser and Uzell! Dr. Ceaser’s intelligent humor and semse of humanity were greatly appreciated. Dr. Uzell – best of luck with the book on the Constitutional Convention.
12. Great instructors, on point – yet flexible.
13. Helpful and friendly
14. Excellent
15. (no comment)
16. (no comment)
17. Did a wonderful job in developing the complex
18. Good clarification of complicated ideas. Examples of issues that were directly related to topic issues
19. A four star facility
20. (no comment)
21. (no comment)
22. Both are clearly brilliant thinkers. Lynn was an especially inspiring and logent speaker
23. Knowledgeable and helpful
24. Lectures were very stimulating

**What were the strengths of the Weekend Seminar?**

1) Great group of people participating. Valuable content.

2) Being treated as a professional. Focus on knowledge rather than teaching practice.

3) Lecture. Tours

4) Organization; preparations, discussions

5) Wonderful accommodations, stimulating lectures, meeting new friends, access to the grounds.

6) Efficient, direct and comprehensive delivery of the themes.

7) The speakers and topics. The seminar organization.

9) The seminar was intellectually stimulating and helped me to think more constructively.

10) Having the time to learn and reflect on what was taught and then to ask questions.

11) The professors were superb and the chemistry with the teachers was remarkable.

12) The structure that allowed lectures, site visits and rooms with comfort to research. Thanks, it was nice to be appreciated.

13. The lectures were thought provoking.

14. Intellectually top notch; food was excellent, housing very nice, flexibility.

15. The employees and the professors.

16. Friendly staff, great physical setting, terrific food.

17. The overall organization, fit in as much information as possible without overwhelming.

18. Preparation and topics addressed by faculty.

19. Subject matter and expertise of the faculty. The specialness of being able to explore the grounds, house, etc. To set on the front steps of Montpelier and have a glass of wine. We couldn’t do that at Mt. Vernon! Madison would like that.

20. Lynn Uzell was the strength of this seminar. Her lectures were organized and well presented.

21. Teaming Two faculty.

22. Retreat atmosphere inspires full immersion.

23. All aspects were strong.

24. Intellectual content.

**Which parts of the Weekend Seminar were most valuable to you?**

1) The exchange of ideas and clarification of information.

2) Lynn’s graphic representations.

3) Lectures on slavery and consequences of a written constitution. Spending time with others interested in similar topics.

4) I thought the discussion on Natural Rights, and Judicial Review were best.

5) Being able to relax and expand my knowledge through the lectures. Sharing ideas with other teachers.

6) Originist vs living constitution perspectives; Federalist Papers.

7) The contacts that were made. Meeting people from other places and seeing their struggles and strengths and discuss ways that we can overcome things pertaining to teaching this topic.) The archeological tour was also very valuable but I wish we had more time for it.

8) Meeting other teachers with a love of history.

9) The house and archeology tour were great and so were Dr. Caesar’s lecture of the consequences of a written constitution which provide me with ideas I had never hadbefore. Dr. Lynn’s best were checks and balances and natural rights. She and Dr. Caesar gave great explanations and examples.

10) The lectures and the networking with peers.

11) The arguments both pro and con for changing or not changing the 1787 Constitution.

12) The discussions and lectures.

13. Lectures and listening to peers ideas.

14. The lectures.

15. The lectures.

16. Lectures and interacting with others.

18. Seminar topics on written constitution, judicial review, natural rights and state of nation.

19. The whole thing! Everything contributes to a whole constitutional experience.

20. Uzell lectures.

22. Locke, Locke, Locke. Practical judiciary process discussion and meal time discussion with other participants.

23. I truly enjoyed the first and last session.

24. Lectures.

**What suggestions would you offer to improve future Weekend Seminars?**

1) More time for processing, q&a, application suggestions, age-appropriate lessons/content for students.

4) Possibly the use of power point or some graphics. Jazz it up with some audio visuals, but not to overwhelm the lecture format.

5) I liked the former arrangement of the lecture room in a u shape. I felt it encouraged more discussion.

7) More visual aids during the presentations. This will help those visual learners you might have in the audience and more time to tour grounds.

8) It might be nice if you ranked them based on how confident you were of the information covered. For instance, this might be intermediate or advanced.

9) Provided an hour or two of down time during the daylight hours so we could explore the property, house and gift shop. The house was closed by the time we had a moment to check it out.

11) This was a superb seminar, but I think a reading list of recent scholarships would help teachers delve further into the topics.

12) Perhaps DVD and power points – not too much.

13. They are great.

14. Bring back nature tour.

15. Power Points.

16. TV in rooms.

18. Built in reading time.

19. Keeping seminar to 3 days.

20.

21. More time.

22. Expanded tours, what about the rest of the grounds?

23. Make broader use of readings during lectures.

**What specific ideas or approaches from the Weekend Seminar, if any, do you anticipate converting into teaching materials or projects for your class?**

1) I want to dig more deeply into primary source documents in an attempt to get closer to the founders original intent. I want to help my students understand how the Constitution is a viable document today and how it allows for their participation in government.

2) Natural Rights; differing types of judicial interpretation.

4) Check and balances; laws of nature; judicial review.

5) Definitely using my expanded knowledge of separation of powers and checks and balances as well as the judicial branch to make the Constitution more alive to my students.

6) Almost all the themes are included in my curriculum, but the originist vs living Constitution debate is especially important.

7) The piece on checks and balances and the ideas presented during that lecture. The piece on the consequences of a written constitution and the ideas presented in that lecture.

9) I plan on using some of the readings in my class and I also thought of projects that I could do.

10) Too many to write down; will use everything I learned this weekend.

11) I plan on having a class debate on whether the Constitution should be rewritten or not.

12) Words matter but we must think of all their uses at that time and today.

13. The concept of natural law and infringement of rights. Better explanation of judicial review.

14. The information on Jefferson.

17. I will try to crank it down to my students level of understanding.

18. For first time, I am going to type of my notes and present them to my students.

19. Checks and balances, judicial, consequences of a written constitution.

20. New deeper understanding of Locke’s natural law; judicial review.

22. Not prepared to think of lesson plans..still processing the content.

23. Adding additional content

24. Lessons on Locke and checks and balances.

**Do you think this Weekend Seminar should be offered again next year?**

**23 = Yes**

9) Yes because it provided valuable information. Some of the information was slightly advanced for me.

11) Yes! I hope some of my colleagues from Worcester Academy attend.

**Other comments related to the program.**

1). I would like to see more about the Biblical foundations for the Constitution and our government. Dave Barton (wallbuilders.com) has wonderful insight to this. Focus on the Family Truth Project also.

2) It would be nice if there were a way for participants to hare how they transferred knowledge to their classes. Some type of online community or blog might work well.

4) Keep up the good work!

6) Could not be better.

9) Great program overall, thanks for the opportunity.

12) Excellent facilities, staff and views.

14. I had a very good time.

19. Excellent, excellent, excellent. I am so refreshed and “psyched” about the Constitution.

20. The Center always feeds us well.

21. Everything was excellent.

22. I’ll be back.

23. Excellent.

24. A great experience.

**Other comments regarding the quality of meals and refreshments.**

**Other comments regarding facilities and accommodations (if you have a repair to report, please specify the house and room number.)**

**11 No comments.**

11) Thanks so much to Professors Ceaser and Uzell for their enthusiasm and knowledge of the Constitution. I wish you the best.

12) Too good to be true!