

**Special Seminar**  
**Sponsored by the Departments of Chemical Engineering and Humanities and Arts**

***Bandwidth Recovery: Helping Students Reclaim Cognitive Resources Lost to Poverty, Racism, and Social Marginalization***

**Higgins House Library**  
**11:00 am Thursday, April 19**

Presented by Cia Verschelden  
Executive Director of Institutional Assessment at University of Central Oklahoma

Seminar Abstract

In my book, *Bandwidth Recovery: Helping Students Reclaim Cognitive Resources Lost to Poverty, Racism, and Social Marginalization*, I assert that the cognitive resources for learning of many college students have been diminished by the negative effects of economic insecurity, and discrimination and hostility against non-majority groups based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity, religion, national origin, and other aspects of difference. The costs of the many kinds of scarcity in their lives – money, health, respect, safety, affirmation, choices, belonging – is seriously reduced “mental bandwidth,” the cognitive and emotional resources needed to deal with making good decisions, learning, healthy relationships, and more. People who are operating with depleted mental bandwidth are less able to succeed in school, starting in childhood, and are much less likely to make it to college. For those who do make it, their bandwidth capacity often interferes with learning, and therefore, persisting and graduating from college. Recognizing that these students are no different than their peers in terms of cognitive capacity, I offer a set of strategies and interventions designed to rebuild the available cognitive resources necessary to succeed in college and reach their full potential.

Additional information is available at:

<https://sty.presswarehouse.com/Books/BookDetail.aspx?productID=486641>

Cia Verschelden

Cia is the Executive Director of Institutional Assessment at University of Central Oklahoma. From 2009-2012, she was the Vice President for Academic Affairs at Highland Community College in Kansas. Cia was on the faculty at Kansas State University for 11 years in the Social Work Program, on the interdisciplinary faculties in Women’s Studies and American Ethnic Studies, and Director of Women’s Studies. At UCO, she teaches in sociology and in the first-year experience program. At K-State, she taught social welfare and social policy, women’s studies, and nonviolence studies. Cia has a B.S. in psychology from K-State, an M.S.W. from The University of Connecticut, and an Ed.D. from Harvard University.