

Working at the Subtle Edge:

*The Intersection of Science
& Religion*



Michelle Francl, PhD

Professor of Chemistry, Bryn Mawr College

To do theology, William James said, is to work at the subtle edge of things, at the place where words and thoughts expire. Science, too, walks a subtle edge between what we know and what we can describe. It pushes language and mathematics in its attempt to express what we understand about the universe. We create new terminology—as well as entire fields of mathematics—to describe the natural world, and are still left reaching for words that are not there when confronted with particles that can move through solid

objects, taking (perhaps) no time to do so. Philosopher of science Michael Polyani summed it up neatly: “We know more than we can say.” Are these two ways of looking at the universe inherently incompatible? What can science and faith tell each other? Edges are often perilous places, what are the risks of working at this subtle edge?

Tuesday, November 18, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

*Commonwealth Chateau
Chestnut Hill College
9230 Germantown Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19118*

The Institute for Religion and Science
Hosted by Chestnut Hill College

www.IRandS.org