There are worse crimes than burning books. One of them is not reading them.
–Joseph Brodsky

For many years, Professor Robert Cohen of the Department of Language and Cognition coordinated the popular and successful book of the semester program. Under his leadership, the Hostos community read and discussed books together in a range of genres and on subjects as diverse as mental illness, scientific inventions and family relationships. Last year, the Center for Teaching and Learning re-launched the book of the semester as a yearlong common read, Hostos Reads: Books in Common, Books in Community with *Just Mercy* a non-fiction work about the injustices of the criminal justice system by acclaimed author and founder of the Equal Justice Initiative, Bryan Stevenson.

Last spring, the campus community submitted nominations for the 2017-18 Hostos Reads selection and eventually chose the novel *Americanah* by Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. *Americanah* tells the story of a young Nigerian woman who comes to the United States to pursue university studies. Combining humor and clear-eyed discussions of displacement, economic insecurity, and loneliness, the heroine struggles to establish herself in unfamiliar
territory. The novel, addressing themes of immigration, cultural alienation, globalization, gender, and love, can be at times funny, and at times darkly serious.

Since the beginning of the fall semester, more than 600 copies of the book have been distributed to faculty, student, and staff across campus. At the September kickoff, faculty, staff and students devised creative ways to use the novel across the curriculum. Throughout the semester, students, staff and faculty attended regular reading groups, informal gatherings to discuss impressions of the book and connect themes and issues raised on its pages to current events.

Stay tuned for more *Americanah*-related activities in the spring semester, including a talk on Nigerian cinema, or Nollywood, and a screening of a Nollywood film, a quantitative research activity, and more chances to connect with others and discuss the book. Send your comments and suggestions to Hostos Reads coordinators, Silvia Reyes and Lisa Tappeiner. And get ready to nominate the 2018-19 Hostos Reads selection later in the semester!

Stay informed at [http://commons.hostos.cuny.edu/hostosreads/](http://commons.hostos.cuny.edu/hostosreads/).