CTL MISSION

Welcome from CTL!

Slogan: “Creating better teachers to better serve our Students.”

Mission: In keeping with Hostos tradition, the Center for Teaching and Learning promotes excellence in teaching and learning with innovative pedagogies and state-of-the-art technologies by fostering interdisciplinary and cross-divisional collaborations.

Goals and Objectives:
In order to fulfill its mission, the Center for Teaching and Learning strives to accomplish the following goals and objectives:

- Promote teaching innovation
- Provide faculty professional development activities
- Support Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)
- Support curriculum development and revision
- Create and disseminate instructional resource materials, including a faculty handbook
- Promote and showcase faculty work and research through conferences such as CTL Professional Development Day (SPA Day), Bronx EdTech Showcase, CUE Conference, CUNY IT Conference and others.

Additional offerings by the Center for Teaching and Learning include:

- Support for student participation programs (honors programs, WAC, Study Abroad Program, etc.)
- Collaboration with the Grants office to:
  - Propose strategies to support faculty engagement in grantsmanship
  - Provide development support for faculty research initiatives (assistant locating funding sources, grant writing workshops, etc.)
WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

As we start a new semester, the doors open for new opportunities to enrich teaching and learning, take risks, and innovate; all with a common mission to engage, motivate, and guide our students through their lifelong learning paths. The Center for Teaching and Learning and Educational Technology teams are eager to support and partner with faculty and staff to accomplish this mission. CTL is working on many professional development opportunities for this semester, and invites everyone to take advantage of them: Mindful Conversations, Hostos Teaching Institute, Hostos Reads, colloquiums, Teaching Day, Bronx EdTech Showcase, and CTL Spa Day. It is a privilege for Cynthia and I to serve as Co-Directors of the Center, and we look forward to working with you to build a very successful Spring 2018 semester.

Love in the Classroom-for my students

Afternoon. Across the garden, in Green Hall, someone begins playing the old piano—a spontaneous piece, amateurish and alive, full of a simple, joyful melody. The music floats among us in the classroom.

I stand in front of my students telling them about sentence fragments. I ask them to find the ten fragments in the twenty-one-sentence paragraph on page forty-five. They’ve come from all parts of the world—Iran, Micronesia, Africa, Japan, China, even Los Angeles—and they’re still eager to please me. It’s less than half way through the quarter.

They bend over their books and begin. Hamid’s lips move as he follows the tortuous labyrinth of English syntax. Yoshie sits erect, perfect in her pale make-up, legs crossed, quick pulse minutely jerking her right foot. Tony, from an island in the South Pacific, sprawls limp and relaxed in his desk.

The melody floats around and through us in the room, broken here and there, fragmented, re-started. It feels Mideastern, but it could be jazz, or the blues—it could be anything from anywhere. I sit down on my desk to wait, and it hits me from nowhere—a sudden, sweet, almost painful love for my students.

“Nevermind,” I want to cry out. “It doesn’t matter about fragments. Finding them or not. Everything’s a fragment and everything’s not a fragment. Listen to the music, how fragmented, how whole, how we can’t separate the music from the sun falling on its knees on all the greenness, from this moment, how this moment contains all the fragments of yesterday and everything we’ll ever know of tomorrow!”

Instead, I keep a coward’s silence. The music stops abruptly; they finish their work, and we go through the right answers, which is to say we separate the fragments from the whole.

Author - Al Zolynas

Cynthia Jones, Co-Director, CTL, and Carlos Guevara, Director, EdTech; Co-Director, CTL
MEET OUR CTL STAFF

Carlos Guevara
Director of EdTech &
Co-Director of CTL

Carlos Guevara holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Computer Science from CUNY & NYU Poly and is currently pursuing a doctorate degree in Instructional Technology at Teachers College, Columbia University. With over 15 years of experience in Higher Education, Carlos currently works at Hostos Community College, CUNY, as Director of the Office of Educational Technology and Co-Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning. Carlos is also Chair of the CUNY Center for Teaching and Learning Advisory Council and Founder of the Ecuadorian Youth Organization and Ecuadorian Scholars Fund.

Cynthia Jones
Co-Director of CTL

Cynthia Jones began her tenure at Hostos Community College in 1977 as an adjunct in the English Department teaching ESL, reading courses of beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. She was appointed as a full-time Lecturer in 1981 and has taught the full range of English course offerings. Cynthia Jones earned a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Teaching from Teachers College, Columbia University and received a Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood, Elementary Education, and Reading from Adelphi University. Cynthia has been called an “Hostos lover” because of her love for its mission; she proudly and passionately embraces that name.

Luz Rivera
Coordinator of CTL

Luz Rivera holds a B.S. degree in Computer Information Systems from Lehman College and an associate’s degree from Hostos Community College, CUNY. She joined CTL in 2014. Prior to joining the center, she worked in the Education department as a College Lab Technician. She supports all center initiatives and activities, and she participates in special projects to improve the center’s effectiveness. Committee member: CTL Advisory Council, & General Education.

Juberth Tueros
College Assistant

Juberth Tueros started working at the Center for Teaching and Learning as a College Assistant since 2017. Prior to joining the Center he worked as Clerical Assistant and Desktop hardware Technician. He holds a certification as a Pc technician and also he is pursuing a Degree in Network technology at BMCC.

Gabrielle Lugo
College Assistant

Gabrielle Lugo is a current student at Lehman College. Prior to working for the Center of Teaching and Learning she worked as a DOE Tech Support Intern for 2 Years. She will be graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Computer Information Systems in January of 2019.

Itzel Ortega Mendez
College Assistant

Itzel Ortega Mendez has been a College Assistant with The Center for Teaching and Learning, as well as a collaborator with The Office of Academic Affairs, since September 2014. Itzel started her career at Hostos Community College as an intern with the At Home in College program in 2013. She has completed her Associate’s Degree at Hostos Community College in Office Technology. She is currently attending Lehman College studying Health Services Administration.
On January 11, the CUNY Centers for Teaching and Learning Advisory Council held its Winter 2018 Retreat, a tradition that has been consolidating for the past few years. The retreat is a great opportunity for CTL Directors to engage in discussions about current pedagogical trends and innovations. This year, the retreat focused on how to design an accessible classroom (traditional and online) at CUNY. The aim of this retreat was to establish a repository of resources for institutions to use as they are exploring accessibility.

The retreat brought together a select group of experts in the area of accessibility at CUNY, including students. The day consisted of a series of panels and working groups to offer the participants opportunities to ask questions, discuss, and learn from each other. About 40 representatives from 19 campuses, CUNY Office and CIS attended this fruitful event, which allowed participants to learn about existing resources and to identify different approaches to overcome the many challenges students and faculty face when attempting to design and accessible and inclusive classroom at CUNY.

Some of the takeaways from the retreat are the vast amount of resources and knowledge available throughout CUNY, and the challenge to find ways to collaborate and work together to take advantage of what already exists and to develop policies and best practices to better serve our students with disabilities. We also learned that disabilities go far beyond the physical impediment to perform an academic activity and that the more we practice and apply universal design principles to the way we design teaching and learning, the more inclusive, engaging, and accessible the classroom at CUNY can become.

The Co-chairs of the Council (Allison Lehr Samuels, Mari Watanabe, Michael Guy, and Carlos Guevara), and members of the planning committee (Priscilla Stadler and Fausto Canela) were thrilled with the outcome of this retreat and will analyze the contributions from the working groups and identify future steps to continue the conversation about accessibility. The success of this year’s retreat was also possible thanks to the continuous support from the University Dean for Undergraduate Studies, Dr. Lucinda Zoe.

For more information, accessibility resources, and video recordings visit the CUNY CTLs' website at http://cuny.is/ctl
The center for Teaching and Learning extends a warm welcome to our new faculty

Asrat G. Amnie
Assistant Professor
Education Department

Rodney Blair
Assistant Professor
Allied Health Sciences Dept.

Katherine L. Boehm
Assistant Professor
Humanities Department

Joseph Caravalho
Assistant Professor
Humanities Department

Gisselle Guzman
Lecturer
Mathematics Department

Sanjay Arya
Assistant Professor
Allied Health Sciences Dept.

Sean Gerrity
Assistant Professor
English Department

Joseph K. Gyan
Assistant Professor
Business Department

Alexandra Milsom
Assistant Professor
English Department
Quantitative Reasoning Initiative

Quantitative reasoning is the skillset of reasoning quantitatively, which is to say, having the ability to intuitively interpret, and produce, quantitative information such as math or stats. This include being able to quickly ascertain info, as well as communicate, via charts, graphs and tables. It is also called numeracy, ad is considered the sister skill of literacy, the ability to read and write.

Soheli Chowdhury
Lecturer
Natural Sciences Department

Charles Rice-Gonzales
Assistant Professor
English Department

Maria Subert
Assistant Professor
Humanities Department

Drew Green
QR Fellow
Center for Teaching and Learning
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As a global consultant focusing on change management within organizations, over the past decade I have adapted my thirst for problem solving to the field of education. This provided an exciting trajectory as I transitioned my significant expertise in organizational development into the field of education.

In 2015, I won a competition to become a First-Time Case Writer with The Case Centre, based at Cranfield University in the United Kingdom. Chosen as only one of 18 professors worldwide (just three in the United States), this was an affirmation of my efforts to integrate business practices with pedagogy. My case study examined the implementation of symptomatic thinking in a corporate environment with an aim towards encouraging authentic leadership in a world of changing demographics.

My thesis was that traditional approaches to diversity learning are remarkable in their consistent gaps when it comes to addressing historical inequities as an avenue to understanding future opportunities for business when inclusion is emphasized. The current environment of changing demographics, not only domestically but globally, requires, indeed, deserves a more focused approach to addressing this multicultural landscape as the majority/minority language takes on a different shape. The case provides the background and substance to educate the reader in that regard.

The case study method is utilized by business professors worldwide at the graduate and undergraduate level. Cases can focus on a myriad of areas – in addition to all spheres of management, other disciplines such as accounting, finance, entrepreneurship, international business, marketing, negotiation, social enterprise, and strategy are included. In my business, management and marketing classes here at Hostos, I have students collaborate in teams to analyze business dilemmas, using case studies. After group discussion, students then provide answers to directed questions. Students are stimulated and challenged as teams are encouraged to critique and even debate other teams’ responses. The result is healthy dialogue and scaffolded learning.

The past several decades have displayed a focus on diversity in the workplace throughout the corporate environment. Questions remain: has the effort been at all impactful – or, due to its symbolic nature, has it only been a distraction? What behaviors would have been better emphasized to achieve full participation and opportunity by all actors in a firm?

Considerable research has revealed that attempts at diversity are clumsy at best; and spurious at worst. The challenge for firms has been to develop a “business case” for why those

1 The Symptomatic Thought Process® was created by global consultant Edgar J. Ridley. It is a management concept geared towards replacing symbolic behavior patterns with an alternative, symptomatic thinking, for more effective decision-making. The outcome of such a behavior transformation will end global conflict. For detailed information, see Ridley’s series, The Golden Apple: Changing the Structure of Civilization – Volumes 1 and 2.
contributing groups represented by women and people of color should be promoted to levels of leadership within the corporate environment. The unfortunate result, after decades of trial and error, are policies designed to tighten the grip of white males on business through the creation of artificial glass ceilings beyond which only a few from the affected groups can reach, with a tenuous hold. Cutting-edge research on symbols and symptoms tells us that the refusal to examine in totality the history of discrimination and racism allow us to perpetuate a mythology that prohibits any real growth. That mythology, of white male supremacy, is enhanced through impotent diversity programs replicated throughout corporate America.

Race remains one of the most hotly controversial and highly complex issues in our society. In American society, race is politically and socially defined. Race has been used to reinforce already powerful groups, while weakening those groups with less power; prior to and even into the twentieth century, race determined a woman’s political rights and social status.

As we engage with a student body here at Hostos that is in the midst of a changing demographic environment, we are being encouraged to enhance our skillset regarding the need to equip our students with tools that are effective in changing their mindset. This often requires transformative methodology that addresses the mindset. Our student population is preparing to exit into an environment in which they need all the tools available to them, especially as they encounter mythologies designed to threaten their future success. The beauty of my case study is that it demonstrates the utility of symptomatic thinking in the pedagogical process. I presented a poster at the Hostos Research conference to display this idea.

This begs the question: what would other disciplines look like if symptomatic thinking were incorporated? Here at Hostos, wouldn’t it be beneficial to incorporate new tools that can assist us in transferring knowledge?

In the discipline of Natural Sciences, for instance, Prof. Vyacheslav Dushenkov suggests that the application of symptomatic thinking is essential for encouraging students to eliminate stereotypes.

In the discipline of Business Communications, Prof. Sandy Figueroa provides her students with an opportunity to incorporate symptomatic thinking into their learning processes. Student sharing regarding their experiences becomes spontaneous, as they change their mindset towards a new way of problem solving.

Even in the discipline of Mathematics, Prof. Lauren Wolf suggests that symptomatic thinking may be beneficial for encouraging students to expand their worldview, as they examine previously held assumptions that may or may not be accurate.

But what is symptomatic thinking? Why do we need it in business? How would it work in a pedagogical environment? What about the instructor population? Could they benefit?

I posit that it is important that we faculty reflect and question our own teaching practices. As educators, it is important for us to understand the dynamics of symptoms and symbols on the thinking process and behavior. According to Jung (1964), “a word or image is a symbol, when it implies something more than its obvious and immediate meaning. A symbol is anything that implies, in any way, something more than is obvious and immediate in the casual observer” (p. 21). Further, Ridley (2001) tells us “Symbolism is used to mythologize history, manipulate behavior, and set in motion a way of thinking that creates the phenomena of racism, neurosis and other forms of mental illness. Symbolism, through its mythological content, has caused the distortion of scientific facts. Nothing can be accomplished by thinking symbolically. Our decisions should not be made from mythological assumptions. A thoroughgoing, careful reading of history tells us that it is only when we are not able to face the realities of life that we tend to mythologize and distort anything and everything that we do not want to be true. Symbols produce myth, superstition, and ritual, and these elements cannot be allowed to stand if we are to progress” (pp. 5-6).

Indeed, it is commonly accepted by all scholars that there are only two ways of thinking and behaving: symptomatically or symbolically (Ridley, 2008, p. 122). We want to practice thinking symptomatically in all interactions with our students, hence modeling behavior they can emulate.

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Abstract
This case immerses students in the everyday, palpable environment of an old-school financial services environment as it struggles to change its culture to enter the 21st century. The case enables students to assess the progress of the intended diversity efforts within a large firm, as well as develop an ability to critique the pitfalls due to continued symbolic thinking on the part of the actors. (Per Edgar Ridley, symbolic thinking, a learned behavior, causes individuals to mythologize and think superstitiously, seeking secondary meaning instead of an acceptance of facts.) Students develop the ability to identify and appreciate symptomatic thinking in management. Symptomatic thinking, which is innate to the neurological processes of the human brain, allows individuals to see things as they really are; to implement policy and evaluate individuals free of superstition and mythology. Unlike symbolic thought, symptomatic thought and behavior is natural, requiring no effort.

Introduction
Considerable research has revealed that attempts at diversity are clumsy at best; and spurious at worst. The challenge for actors has been to develop a “business case” for why those contributing groups represented by women and people of color should be promoted to levels of leadership within the corporate environment. The unfortunate result, after decades of trial and error, is an industry designed to tighten the grip of white males on business through the creation of artificial heights, the levels of which only a few from the affected groups can reach, with a tenuous hold. Cutting-edge research on symbols and symptoms tells us that the refusal to examine in totality the history of discrimination and racism allow us to perpetuate a mythology that prohibits any real growth. That mythology, of white male supremacy, is enhanced through impotent diversity programs repeated throughout corporate America.

Empirical studies done by *Ella Bell and Stella Nkomo* on comparative challenges faced by women of color and white women in corporate America; Empirical studies conducted by *Hekman, Foo & Yang* on the negative impact experienced by women and minorities who attempt to diversify their firms; Cutting-edge qualitative research conducted by *Edgar Ridley* on the negative impact of symbolic thinking and the liberating influence of symptomatic thinking; Empirical research from *Thomas Shapiro* on wealth inequality; and Qualitative research from renowned American thinkers such as *W. Edwards Deming and Albert Einstein.*

Methodology
This case examines the implementation of symptomatic thinking in a corporate environment with an aim towards encouraging authentic leadership in a world of changing demographics. The point of view will be that of a primary protagonist, an African-American woman, and the venue will be a major commercial bank based in the United States. For the purposes of confidentiality, all names will be changed. The case will follow the trajectory of a manager of color who happens to be a woman, incorporating research from multiple areas including, but not limited to: *Catalyst* studies on women in corporations, including women of color;
A New Approach

Demonstrate knowledge of the multiple aspects of identity [gender, age, race, ethnicity (including White identity) religion, class, national and regional identity] and intercultural communication.

Analyze and evaluate how differences in social culture influence values in the workplace

Discussion

Traditional approaches to diversity learning are remarkable in their consistent gaps when it comes to addressing historical inequities as an avenue to understanding future opportunities for business when inclusion is emphasized.

The current environment of changing demographics, not only domestically but globally, requires, indeed deserves, a more focused approach to addressing this multicultural landscape as the majority/minority language takes on a different shape.

This case provides the background and substance to educate the reader.

Conclusions

After reading, assessing and implementing this case study, students are able to:

Analyze and evaluate symbolic vs. symptomatic interaction in a multicultural environment

Develop insights into the economic and business implications of changing demographics.

References


For instance, symbolic thinking in the Hostos environment creates a reinforcement of the unfortunate stereotypes applied to our student population. As Ridley (2008) tells us, “When one thinks symptomatically, one is led by the symptoms of one’s experience. Instead of mythologizing, one reads the symptoms of their existence like a language, to which they respond accordingly. This means they do not mythologize the events in their life, nor do they approach their life with a symbolizing attitude (p.140). Rather than allowing the disadvantaged environment that surrounds our students to dictate our response to them, we want to encourage our students to excel at every encounter!

As teaching methodologies have evolved, an applicable approach has been that of “flipping the classroom”. In such an environment, the instructor utilizes technology to facilitate learning outside the classroom, thereby liberating classroom time for fertile discussion, inquiry and reflection. I have found great utility in the use of the Panopto lecture capture tool, which allows me to record lectures that students can view at their leisure. The result is amplified student engagement in the classroom, as they transition from passive learning to increased interaction with the instructor.

An effective approach toward changing student behavior is to challenge first-year students with a semester assignment on immigration. Many Hostos students are living the experience, and the assignment gives them permission to reflect, especially in the midst of today’s challenges surrounding the immigrant experience. Their mandatory deliverable is to take a position on the pending immigration legislation and defend their point of view. Their subsequent research enables them to identify and link the potential economic benefit gained by the contribution of the many undocumented workers in our population. Naturally, this assignment provides an illumination not experienced previously – the students gravitate towards the content with enthusiasm, including personal stories of themselves or family and friends.

An additional teaching moment is to invite students to link their classroom inquiries into ad hoc, extra-credit presentations as a way of having their question answered. This activity, earlier noted as “flipping the classroom”, leads students down an unexpected path of research and investigation that is new to them, including preparing and presenting presentations to educate the entire class - and the professor! Very importantly, the students’ lack of self-confidence and general lack of self-esteem is significantly and collectively diminished.

Assignments were accompanied by full-semester messaging regarding the students’ potential for capitalizing on the nation’s changing demographics. Emphasis is always placed on diminishing and/or eliminating the tendency to think symbolically, which hinders learning. Students are reminded about their correct place in history – this goes a long way towards encouraging full development. The outcome is a strengthened resolve to overcome future obstacles in school and in life.

Summary

For a true 21st century teaching and learning environment, professors are advised to:

- Implement the Symptomatic Thought Process (STP) to confront inappropriate stereotyping and unfortunate belief systems (also known as symbolic behavior).

- Remember that the Symptomatic Thought Process (STP) offers the objective to “see things as they really are void of superstition or mythological assumptions” (Ridley, 2008, pp. 137-139).

- Discontinue symbolic thinking – poor outcomes should be evidence-based, not imaginary. Symbolic thinking is a learned activity; it is not innate to the human brain.

- Practice thinking symptomatically – be acutely mindful of the potential for deeper engagement with ESL learners.

- Symptomatic thinking is natural, it is innate to the human brain.

- Do not assume silence infers lack of knowledge.

- Be creative with the construction of pedagogy.

- Flip the classroom to intensify engagement and encourage enthusiasm.
About the Author

Linda is a tenured Lecturer at CUNY’s Hostos Community College, where she teaches Principles of Management (BUS 201) and Introduction to Business (BUS 100). Additionally, she is an Adjunct Professor and Industry Expert at CUNY’s School of Professional Studies in the M.S. program for Business Management and Leadership, where she teaches Organizational Behavior and Leadership (BUS 600), and Managing Diversity in a Global Economy (BUS 633).

As a complement to her teaching, Linda is CEO of Edgar J. Ridley & Associates, Inc., an international management consulting firm specializing in change management. Linda has been designated an Expert Consultant by the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) out of Tokyo, Japan, and she services global clients, conducting workshops and training seminars in workplace effectiveness. Linda has conducted training for women entrepreneurs from companies and organizations throughout Southeast Asia. Linda has the additional prestige of being on the faculty of the American Management Association, where her portfolio includes corporate training in analytical topics such as Critical Thinking, High-Impact Decision Making, and High Performance Accountability.

Linda studied at Virginia Commonwealth University; she earned her Masters in Business Administration from the Mason School of Business at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. She and her husband, Edgar, reside in Harlem, New York City.

Touchstone
Call for Papers

Jason Buchanan, Assistant Professor, English Editor-in-Chief

In linking the power of teaching to a broadening of our vision, Eugenio María de Hostos affirmed the power of education. In honor of our namesake’s belief, Touchstone, a journal devoted to the scholarship produced by the community of Hostos, was created. The journal is published yearly by the Magda Vasillov Center for Teaching and Learning.

The goals of Touchstone are to increase awareness of the scholarly and creative work of the faculty at Hostos and provide an outlet for work that is on its way to outside publication. In accordance to these goals, Touchstone publishes a diverse range of scholarship from the Hostos Community. This diversity of imaginative and creative work represents the many talents of the faculty here at Hostos.

Touchstone accepts works in English or Spanish on any of the following:

• Original scholarship on teaching and learning
• Scholarly articles from any discipline
• Best practices
• Conference presentations or reports
• Classroom-based research
• Teaching challenges, experiences, and lessons
• Personal essays or editorials
• WAC and beyond
• Book reviews
• Creative works

In addition to the above criteria, Touchstone would be interested scholarship, essays, or pedagogical material connected the Book of the Year: Americanah.

Dr. Jason Buchanan is the new editor of Touchstone. The journal accepts a wide range of publications, so it’s very amenable to any work in any stage of production. Send your articles using discipline appropriate citation to Professor Buchanan (jbuchanan@hostos.cuny.edu) by December 31, 2018. The entire editorial staff at Touchstone eagerly awaits your submissions!
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
CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE

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/. 
When I first sat down to write this piece, *Talking Heads’* question involuntarily surfaced: “How did I get here?” And I felt the urge to pursue the line further. What is the “Once in a Lifetime”-song really about? I went on a search and found more than I had expected: “We’re largely unconscious. You know, we operate half-awake, or on autopilot and end up, whatever, with a house and family and job and everything else. We haven’t really stopped to ask ourselves, “How did I get here?” (David Byrne, NPR March 27, 2000.) Reflecting on my journey as an educator in a rich, global context where language and communication are at the center of my daily pedagogical “chores”, I walk back and trace the knots that have come to form the intricate web of language and general education which are at the center of my teaching. That David Byrne should use the word unconscious was curious, and the quintessential lament of our failings to stop and ask: “How did I get here?” (David Byrne, NPR March 27, 2000.) Reflecting on my journey as an educator in a rich, global context where language and communication are at the center of my daily pedagogical “chores”, I walk back and trace the knots that have come to form the intricate web of language and general education which are at the center of my teaching. That David Byrne should use the word unconscious was curious, and the quintessential lament of our failings to stop and ask: “How did I get here?” (David Byrne, NPR March 27, 2000.)

In our exploratory discussions about general education and its role in a globalized teaching and learning environment, we juggle concepts and competences in the effort to create a good fit for a new generation of students. What does it have to do with the “half awake” state of mind mentioned above? General education does indeed mean to rattle the mind, to have the courage and the means to ask questions before unwanted answers fall into your lap. It means to have access to the building blocks necessary to construct an idea of the world where we learn to make connections in order to judge wisely and make informed decisions. As a language educator, my ongoing efforts consist of giving the student the necessary tools to navigate the world in a language other than their own, to communicate content, facts, feelings and opinions. The traditional role of the language educator in the past was a unilateral affair where the instructor taught a “foreign” language and a “foreign” culture to a passive recipient. The methods changed over time, and a number of “experiments” replaced the idea of the student as a “tabula rasa”, a blank slate. Now, the communicative method seemed like a better idea, where “the speech act” became embedded in the teaching and the students became an active part of the process. However, in the teaching context of a diverse, urban college, these efforts provide just half the remedy. The questions remain. Who are the students in front of me? What do they bring in their portmanteau as they join our classrooms? And this is where general education enters the picture.

During my first years at Hostos, I participated in the development of a Freshman Academy, an ambitious project that attempted to incorporate general education skills as part of students’ first year experience. Here I stumbled upon the novel *Measuring the World* by Daniel Kehlmann, a comic historical novel with an intellectual underpinning about two of the most important figures in science and mathematics, Alexander von Humboldt, and Carl Friedrich Gauss. In the novel, the two men represent different approaches to the world laid out as a humorous account of their life achievements during the first half of the 19th Century. Humorous, because of their view of the world as a place that can be measured, classified and controlled, and different in that Humboldt traveled in space and time to disclose the mysteries of unexplored territories while Gauss remained stationary and discovered a universe of mathematics. Kehlmann’s undertaking became a great best seller and is well worth reading. However, he gave Humboldt less credit than he deserves.
The universal science concept described by Alexander von Humboldt at the beginning of the 19th Century illuminates an approach to knowledge of the world as a network of global interactive, interconnecting links. His writings emphasize inclusion and interplay among cultures and natural phenomena that form a web of intertwined and equally valid “truths” about the world. (Lundberg 2015) It seems that in the new global space of education of today we have finally caught up with Humboldt’s pluralistic ideas of universal interrelationships and shared forms of knowledge. Students from all parts of the world fill our classrooms bringing with them multifaceted perspectives of knowing about the world: different belief systems, different historical contexts, and sociocultural backgrounds. Here it becomes apparent that language alone does not suffice in the effort to communicate differences and build connections.

Yet, we seem to cling to the familiar in pursuing what Kehlmann ridicules: the measuring, mapping and classifying of learning objectives and learning outcomes where in fact, the variables of this diverse teaching environment resist any such a limiting straitjacket. Instead, by inviting our students to be active representatives of diverse discourses, the interconnecting links described by Humboldt, will become more transparent. In turn, productive forms of knowing about the world may enrich current learning objectives and thereby reflect a true global citizenship as it evolves in a new shared space of education.

How do we go about such a global platform of exchange, and how does it fit with our approach to general education and contemporary curricula and course design? In pedagogy, constructivist theories and the method of culturally responsive teaching (Gay 2012) have paved the way for teaching models that put learners in the center by making them active participants in the learning process. Here the instructor guides the process, facilitating inquiry into a subject matter rather than teaching “to” the students. Such methods utilize students’ background knowledge and help them construct knowledge depending on their individual, cultural and social perspectives. Nevertheless, we still need to ask which inquiry and which subject matters will provoke a global network of knowledge within the framework of general education as we face it today. How does one obtain the means to ask the big questions, to form connections between our own experiences and the greater world both past and present. To use Humboldt’s phrase, how do we “shred the veil of the phenomena”? (Humboldt 1845). How do we become aware of the connecting knots in the web of human cultural pursuits and development? Humboldt’s take on the question is that in order to shed light on the familiar, in order to see, we must “venture into the unknown and open ourselves up to distant regions” (Humboldt 1845) that will uncover and help us decode what is strange and foreign. It is through the reflection of ourselves in the foreign that we gain an understanding of our “self” and how we fit within the interconnected world of phenomena. (Lundberg 2015) These questions have guided me in my recent efforts to respond to the skills and the knowledge and experiences readily available in our students.

In the past semester I have piloted a curriculum in a hybrid section of the Intensive ESL Program. It’s conceptualized around the theme “The City in World History.” The goal in this intermediate ESL course is to a) facilitate an understanding of the city as a platform for human development and exchange of goods and ideas and b) to support students’ awareness of by promoting their own understanding, knowledge and experiences as well as to facilitate an exchange of these ideas among the students. The curriculum spans across the Middle East, Asia, Egypt, Europe and the Americas. It takes the students back in time to the Sumerians, through Antiquity, the Renaissance and Industrialism, and concludes with the end of the colonial era. Regarding its general education content, each unit is framed around components of trade and economy, power structures, religious and moral values, the arts, engineering and architecture. Since this is a hybrid course, the students have the chance to immerse themselves outside the classroom in readings and listening exercises, discussion groups and journaling. Students comment, ask questions and reflect on the different perspectives presented in a given topic.

As I observe the students’ contributions, I am intrigued to see exchanges taking place in ways that indeed help answer the question “How did I get here?” Students often remark that they are happy to form connections among themselves and reflect on their backgrounds and past cultural developments. The discussion forum is naturally the platform where these connections become the most
transparent. One example that particularly stands out is a discussion centered around the Agricultural or Neolithic Revolution. Students reflected on the consequences of becoming stationary, of producing more food than needed, the first development of towns, power structures and the emergence of writing. It became clear that students had many perspectives on these developments depending on their backgrounds. In fact, they became active contributors of facts and experiences that expanded the knowledge available in the textbook and the video they had watched. Here the students were the providers of knowledge and the ones shedding light on the unfamiliar as we explored remote topics and “distant regions”.

To conclude, this new curriculum that I am piloting has confirmed my ideas of general education as a global platform where students share their perspectives and diverse ways of knowing about the world. As instructors, we help them “shred the veil of the phenomena,” the strange and the foreign, and lead them to construct and organize a meaningful world for themselves in which they are able to recognize their role, impact and potential for change. And maybe that way, after all, David Byrne’s question - “How did I get here?” - will never have to be asked.

References


About the Autor

Karin Lundberg, Associate Professor, Chair, department of Language and Cognition
Karin Lundberg holds a Ph.D. in Germanic Languages and Literatures from New York University and an M.A. in Linguistics, German and English Studies and Second Language Pedagogy from Heidelberg University, Germany. Her research focus covers discourse analysis and discourse comprehension, genre grammar, intellectual history and the relationship between language and knowledge acquisition. Her most recent article: “Considering Alexander von Humboldt’s Legacy in a New Shared Space in Education” explores the relationship between Humboldt’s universal science concept and global citizenship in higher education. She is currently co-chair of the CUNY ESL Discipline Council.
Hostos English Department faculty member Anne Lovering Rounds had her first book, Variations in an Emergency, published at the end of 2016. Praised by literary critics and musicians alike, the work is a collection of poems about the way longing and loss recur. The book’s 32 poems resonate with literary and musical references, and the book is inspired by the structure of Baroque composer J. S. Bach’s Goldberg Variations for keyboard, in which an aria is the theme for 30 subsequent variations and then returns to end the set. Thus the book opens with a poem called “Aria,” which contains the subjects of the other poems in the collection. When the theme returns at the end of the Goldberg Variations, the experience is one of closure and instability: something monumental has ended but is also starting again. In the same way, the book also ends with a poem called “Aria,” a poem that is both an ending and a hint that the sequence could start over. The inaugural collection of a pianists’ poet, these 32 short lyric poems bear witness to the fact that memories, encounters, dreams, and desires repeat but never resolve. Variations in an Emergency was also the 2014 winner of the Cathlamet Prize for Poetry.

About the Author

Professor Rounds is an assistant professor of English at Hostos, where she has been a member of the faculty since 2012. A native of Ann Arbor, Michigan, she graduated from the University of Chicago with degrees in English and Classics and holds a doctorate in Comparative Literature from Harvard University. Her writing has appeared in journals including Coldnoon, Hartskill Review, Journal of Beat Studies, Literary Imagination, New Writing, Penny Ante Fed, Soundings, Text Matters, and Proteus. A pianist since the age of six, she currently studies with New York-based pianist, writer, and LGBT advocate Adam Tendler.
I have joined in the Natural Sciences Department in 2007 as an Assistant Professor. Like many of us at Hostos Community College, in addition to our significant teaching loads, service and student mentorship, we are expected to carry on our research and contribute significantly to our professional field through research and publication. My educational background and professional training is in the field of nanoscience and nanotechnology which is the study, manipulation and application of extremely small things of matter on an atomic, molecular level that are less than 100 nanometer in size. Do you know- 25,400,000 nanometers in one inch. A human hair is approximately 80,000-100,000 nanometers wide. A strand of human DNA is only 2.5 nanometers in diameter. More specifically my research focuses on the fabrication and characterization of nanomaterials for application in optoelectronic devices such as sensors, LEDs, solar cells and batteries. My Sabbatical experiences in the fall of 2015 has given me an unique opportunity to continue and expand my professional journey in two directions - (i) expand my research horizon in the amazing process of discovery and (ii) to further explore my chemical education research in process oriented guided inquiry learning (POGIL) to further enhance my teaching instructions and student learning.

The nature of my research, like any others, are laborious and time demanding. Also, it requires the use of very delicate and powerful instrumentation and techniques. As an example, the use of special powerful microscope since it is not possible to see atoms or particle using light as in traditional microscope. To view the imaging of nano sized materials, it requires the use high resolution sophisticated microscope such as atomic force microscope or electron microscope which has magnification of about one million where as a traditional microscope is about 2500 times. With such a high demanding teaching loads along with availability and flexibility it was impossible to dedicate a significant amount of time to carryout carry out characterizations of the synthesized nanomaterials during academic years. In the summer of 2013 I was awarded competitive U.S Department of Energy’s Faculty Fellowship at Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago where I was able to conduct my proposed research. Later in the summer of 2014 and 2015, I was awarded with two more faculty fellowships at Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL) in New York to conduct my new proposed research. All these fellowships in the national laboratory gave me an opportunity to collaborate and network with a team of top-notch world-renowned scientists and use and access to state of the art technology and instrumentations. I was able to maneuver and image my nanomaterials using High Resolution Transmission Electron Microscope! In addition, I was able to expand the direction of my research and test new possibility of application. I was able to acquire significant amount of new data along with vast experience. When the fellowships ended in 2015, it became very obvious for me to compile the data, further characterize the samples as needed, present and publish the findings. More importantly, I wanted to take advantage of my well-established network of collaborators and access to BNL to continue further. But it became very difficult and challenging for me to dedicate a fair amount of time and commitment to continue my research during academic year. After discussing with Provost Mangino, our chairperson and colleagues, I have decided to apply for sabbatical for the fall semester of 2015 and it was approved. Finally I can dedicate my time to accomplish my research!

During the sabbatical, I was able to compile and perform in-depth analysis of the data, collaborate and publish two peer reviewed articles in scientific journals, and present in several national and international conferences including as invited and key note speakers.
Very often I serve as a reviewer. Most importantly, the findings opened up new directions and opportunities that resulted in applying and securing grants including CUNY Chancellors Research Fellowships.

In addition to my research in nanoscience and nanotechnology, I have significant interest in chemical education research. I have years of significant experience in developing and integrating Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL) model that utilized the peers as peer leaders to guide who have successfully completed the course previously. Currently I am interested in Process Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL) an active learning process that focuses on the process by which student develop new skills in information processing. During my sabbatical I was able to collaborate with Dr. Serafin of the Chemistry Department at St. Johns University to have a hands on experience in integrating POGIL as a recitation component in different chemistry classes. I am working to integrate and implement POGIL in my courses that I teach at Hostos.

My DOE Fellowships has paved the way to have a very positive and successful sabbatical experience as the time and all the available opportunities have aligned very well. Finally, I am grateful to my colleagues and office of academic affairs for the opportunity and support.

About the Author
Mohammad Sohel began at Hostos in 2007. Currently, he is a Professor at the Natural Sciences Department. He holds a Ph.D. in Chemistry - Nanoscience and Nanotechnology. He teaches Chemistry and Science courses to our science and engineering students and conducts research on the synthesis and application of semiconductor nanomaterials for applications in optoelectronic devices such as solar cells, light emitting diodes, sensors and biological imaging. In addition to serving on numerous collegewide committees, he serves as a CUNY IRB review board member, PSC-CUNY grants review committee, and on advisory council of different scientific organizations.

http://commons.hostos.cuny.edu/ctl/
01 An introduction to WAC

02 Sharing SoTL best practices within the hostos Classroom

03 Research Matters: Developing Student Ownership of the Research Process

04 Conducting peer Observations in an Online Environment

05 What we talk about When we talk about research

06 Team-Based Learning
Join Us at Our Spring 2018 Hostos Teaching Institute Workshops

**PRESENTERS:** Lisa Tappeiner, Linda Miles, Kate Lyons, and Haruko Yamauchi

**Date:** 04-13-18  
**Time:** 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM  
**Location:** C-559

**Question Authority(?)**: How do We Talk to Students about Whom to Trust?  
What do you want your students to know about how knowledge is created in your discipline? How do you stay abreast of new developments and ongoing debates in your field as a scholar (and what do you tell students about your own discernment process)? What skills do you want your students to develop so they can evaluate information as critical thinkers both in your class and after the semester is over?

**PRESENTERS:** DiSanto, Varelas, Nuñez - Rodríguez

**Date:** 04-11-18  
**Time:** 3:30 AM to 4:45 PM  
**Location:** FDR

**Workshop on SoTL Methodology**  
This Spring 2018 SoTL workshop focuses on different methodologies used to document student academic progress. The session will devote time to dissect effective methods suitable for use in different disciplines, with consideration given to the identity and preferred ways to produce and document student knowledge in each content area. Overall, the session aims to enrich the faculty’s capacity to document results from their inquiry-based teaching methods.

**DATE:** 04-13-18  
**TIME:** 9:30 AM to 12:30 AM  
**LOCATION:** C-559

**PRESENTERS:** Lisa Tappeiner, Linda Miles, Kate Lyons, and Haruko Yamauchi

**Media Literacy and Civic Responsibility in an Age of Misinformation**  
Faculty will explore how to help students evaluate, use, and ethically disseminate information in an age when misinformation is rife, and consider how media consumption and students' online experiences intertwine with their academic lives and their civic responsibility. We will also discuss the tension between encouraging students to think critically about information sources—and to question traditional forms of authority—and cautioning them against an unconstructive cynicism and blanket distrust.

**DATE:** 04-23-18  
**TIME:** 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM  
**LOCATION:** FDR

**PRESENTER:** Sandy Figueroa

**Team-Based Learning**  
Students: Working in groups? Why? I hate group work. I always end up doing all the work. I expect the teacher to teach and not have me do the work in groups!!! Sounds familiar? Maybe some of the reasons that students dislike group work so intently is the way we as faculty approach or even think about group work. Let’s come together to hear some of our colleagues’ experience with group work and why they embrace the strategy so heartily.
SPRING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

**February**

- **February 5**
  - 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
  - iPads in the Classroom Showcase
    - Dushenkov, C-559

- **February 6**
  - 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
  - Creating Multiple Sections...
    - Rosa, C-559
  - 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
  - Bringing Your Course Content Into...
    - Rosa, C-559

- **February 7**
  - 11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
  - My iPad, My Teaching, My Life...
    - Poma, C-559
  - 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
  - Blackboard Essentials
    - Rodriguez, C-559

- **February 8**
  - 11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
  - My iPad, My Teaching, My Life...
    - Poma, C-559
  - 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
  - Blackboard Essentials
    - Rodriguez, C-559

- **February 9**
  - 11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
  - Boondocks
    - Poma, C-559

- **February 12**
  - 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
  - Dealing with Student Behaviors that Compromise Learning
    - Online

- **February 13**
  - 11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
  - Creating Safe Assignments...
    - Rosa, C-559
  - 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
  - Upload Your Own Videos to Panopto
    - Poma, C-559

- **February 14**
  - 11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
  - Creating Test...
    - Rodriguez, C-559
  - 3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
  - Let the Grade Center Do the...
    - Rodriguez, C-559

- **February 15**
  - 11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
  - Lecture Capture
    - Poma, C-559
  - 3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
  - Keep Your Most Useful Files...
    - Dos Santos, C-559

- **February 19**
  - College Closed
    - Presidents' Day

- **February 20**
  - 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
  - Creating Test...
    - Rodriguez, C-559
  - 3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
  - Let the Grade Center Do the...
    - Rodriguez, C-559

- **February 21**
  - 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
  - Creating Test...
    - Dos Santos, C-559
  - 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
  - The Flipped Classroom: Strategies...
    - Online

- **February 22**
  - 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
  - Creating Test...
    - Dos Santos, C-559
  - 3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
  - Let the Grade Center Do the Math...
    - Dos Santos, C-559

- **February 23**
  - 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
  - Creating Test...
    - Rodriguez, C-559

- **February 26**
  - 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
  - Keep Your Most Useful Files...
    - Rodriguez, C-559
  - 3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
  - Creating a Test Bank of Questions...
    - Rosa, C-559

- **February 27**
  - 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
  - Keeping Your Classroom Climate Cool
    - Savvy D-202

Register at: www.hostos.cuny.edu/facultydevelopment
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<tr>
<td>4/10</td>
<td>12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. Team-Based Learning (Kubany)</td>
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<td>4/11</td>
<td>3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Makerspace: Engage and Inspire: Tips for Teaching Modern Learning (Online)</td>
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<td>4/12</td>
<td>11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Benefits of Using The Hostos... (Rodriquez)</td>
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<td>4/13</td>
<td>1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Aligning Student and Faculty Perceptions of Rigor (Online)</td>
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<td>4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Checkpoint with the Provost at FDR</td>
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<td>4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Earth Day</td>
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Register at: www.hostos.cuny.edu/facultydevelopment
### SPRING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

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<td>Final Examinations</td>
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**Focus on Technology**

- 5/29: CTL SPA Day
- 5/30: Grades Due

**HTI**

- 5/28: College Closed

**Hands On-Tech**

- 5/31: Commencement