“Creating better teachers to better serve our students.”

CTL 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)
- Create and disseminate instructional resource materials, including a faculty handbook
- Support curriculum development and revision
- 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 (assistance locating funding sources, grant writing workshops, etc.)
MEET OUR CTL STAFF

Carlos Guevara
Director of EdTech & Co-Director of CTL

Cynthia Jones
Co-Director of CTL

Luz Rivera
Coordinator of CTL

Juberth Tueros
College Assistant

Itzel Ortega Mendez
College Assistant

Kevin M. Gonzalez
College Assistant
Neurodiversity is an approach to learning and disability that posits diverse neurological conditions are the results of normal variations in the human genome, and not inherently pathological. Neurodiversity in the classroom provides an inclusive space, where students from diverse backgrounds could learn together. This requires instructors to design a dynamically integrated approach with students at the center of their vision that provides alternatives for students to learn and express their knowledge of the subject matter. One of the key tools used to address the needs of neuro-divergent students is Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL refers to a set of principles that guide the design of inclusive classroom instruction. The UDL educational framework is based on evidence from research in the learning sciences. UDL guides the development of adaptable learning environments that can accommodate individual learning differences. UDL originally emerged from the fields of urban design and architecture, and refers to the process of designing practical solutions to meet the needs of those with disabilities but at the same time benefitting those without disability as well. As universal design removes barriers from the physical environment, so also universal design for learning eliminates barriers from the learning environment, and it does so through the following three principles: 1) multiple methods of representation that give learners a variety of ways to learn; 2) multiple means of student action and expression that provide learners options for demonstrating what they have learned; and 3) multiple modes of student engagement that tap into learners’ interests, challenge them appropriately, and motivate them to learn.

The goal of UDL is to maximize the learning of students with a wide range of characteristics. UDL principles are applicable to all aspects of instruction, including instructional methodology, physical spaces, information resources, technology, personal interactions, and assessments.

The UDL approach offers all students an equal opportunity to succeed through flexibility in the ways students access material and how they engage to acquire information and build knowledge. The table below adopted from educational strategies developed by the Understood Team illustrates some of the differences between the traditional and UDL classrooms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TRADITIONAL CLASSROOMS AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN CLASSROOMS</th>
<th>UDL Class Rooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching focuses on what is taught</td>
<td>Teaching focuses on both what is taught and how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodations are for specific students</td>
<td>Accommodations are for all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher decides how the material is taught</td>
<td>The teacher works with the student to decide how the student will learn the material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The classroom has a fixed setup</td>
<td>The classroom has a flexible setup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There’s one way for a student to complete an assignment</td>
<td>There are multiple ways to complete an assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades are used to measure performance</td>
<td>Grades are used to reinforce goals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adopted from Educational Strategies, The Understood Team (2018)
As a scientifically valid framework for guiding educational practice, UDL reduces barriers in instruction. Moreover, UDL provides appropriate accommodations; maintains high achievement expectations; and eliminates or reduces roadblocks to academic success for all students. UDL values diversity in the classroom through proactive design of inclusive curriculum; increases options for access, participation and demonstration of learning; and leads to increased equitable access to the general curriculum.\(^7\)\(^8\)

The UDL involves the use of appropriate technology, including assistive technology, within curriculum design and instruction that provides challenging, supportive curriculum. Moreover, UDL and Assistive Technology are increasingly becoming essential as a means of providing free or affordable and appropriate education to students with disabilities, addressing unique learning needs that result from a student’s disability.\(^9\) In practice, the process of implementing UDL can be broken down into four critical elements: (1) The establishment of clear goals, (2) intentional planning for learner variability, (3) the use of flexible methods and materials, and (4) maintaining timely progress monitoring.\(^10\)

It is also important for instructors and educational technology support teams to understand and debunk the prevailing misconceptions about UDL. Theses misconceptions are not limited to but including the following: (1) The use of technology does not constitute the use of UDL; (2) UDL is not just for persons with disabilities, it is for all students; (3) UDL is not an instructional strategy; UDL is a scientifically based framework, supported by both foundational and field-based evidence; (4) UDL is not for specific subject areas; UDL is inherently designed for all subjects; and (5) The assertion that there is no research behind UDL is unfounded and UDL is based on solid research evidence from the learning and brain sciences.\(^12\), \(^13\)

Evaluation of the implementation of UDL is based on measuring four fundamental parameters: (1) The extent of implementation of UDL instructional practices; (2) The impact of UDL implementation on student engagement; (3) The impact of UDL implementation on student’s independence in learning; and (4) The impact of UDL implementation on teaching practices.\(^14\) The monitoring and evaluation plan of UDL implementation should be incorporated in the design of the UDL and provisions made for flexibility and adjustment of the plan based on the results of ongoing monitoring during the implementation process.\(^14\)

In Sum, UDL is an essential framework in educational technology for personalized learning which should be implemented to foster equity, and inclusivity and to address the unmet needs of an ever-growing diversity of students, including students with learning disabilities.

References


Professor Asrat Amnie joined Hostos Community college in 2014. Professor Amnie received Doctor of Education in Health Education (EdD) degree from Teachers College Columbia University in 2016. He also earned a Master’s in Public Health from Emory University in 2013, specializing in global health with an infectious disease concentration.

Teaching and Related Service
Professor Amnie has taught Medical Terminology, Introduction to Community Health Education, Nutrition, and Interpersonal Relations and Team Building in the Education Department. He has also taught Bio 230 Anatomy and Physiology I (Lab and Lecture) and Bio 240 Anatomy and Physiology II (Lab and Lecture) at the Natural Science Department.

He is a member of the American Public Health Association; the New York Academy of Sciences, and Teachers College Columbia University Inducted Member of Kappa Delta Pie International Honor Society in Education.

Research Interests
Professor Amnie’s research interests include high risk health behavior, substance use and abuse, adolescent health, school health education and community health promotion, and exploring novel approaches to changing lifestyles for better health at individual, family and community level.

Personal Style
Professor Amnie lives in Manhattan, New York City. He loves spending time with his wife and three children. When time allows, he enjoys hiking and traveling.


Over the last three decades, I have enjoyed working intensively with students to help them achieve their academic goals here at Hostos. Upon my appointment, I knew that research would be expected of me, but I didn’t realize how challenging it would be to develop a realistic research agenda. Early in my career, I found time for research primarily during the summer break, when I was free from my committee work and teaching responsibilities. After attending an international conference during one of my first summers, I realized that both my bilingual background and New York City base were assets to scientific organizations overseas. My research agenda of promoting scientific exchanges via international meetings and conferences was shaped and influenced by those early contacts with professionals abroad. Together with my colleagues from Latin American and Spain, we organized the first International Conference on Health & Behavior which took place at Hostos in the early 90s. The Conference gave researchers from Ibero-American countries a platform to present their research in their native language to students and professionals who share a similar culture and background. Simultaneous translation was offered for monolingual English participants. After the Hostos event, we successfully organized four annual and biannual follow-up conferences in Spain and Latin America. Based on those positive experiences, I sought to expand the scope of Health & Behavior conferences to developing countries in Africa, Asia, Australia and Europe. I subsequently worked with other professional organizations to establish the World Congress Committee based in Denmark. I obtained a sabbatical to undertake a major leadership role in the organization the first World Congress of Health & Behavior in a developing country sponsored by Ibero-American organizations. Forty one countries participated from six continents and it was deemed a success by the stakeholder associations. After the economic crisis hit Spain and Latin America, universities and professional organizations could no longer support such costly events, and as a result, conferences were significantly scaled down. Despite these setbacks, I remained interested and continued pursuing research exchanges on a smaller scale. At the beginning of 2016, I was approached by a professional organization in Spain to work in developing and expanding the scientific program of their International Congress to be held in Santiago de Compostela, Spain in November, 2017. After discussions in Spain, I agreed to Chair the International Scientific Committee, and to help them increase the number of submissions and presentations in the areas of Health & Behavior from Ibero-American presenters. Likewise, they asked me to assist in the production of an enhanced proceedings book with mini-chapters to replace the customary abstracts.

During my sabbatical, I spent a great deal of time obtaining the support of 74 national and international organizations, which all agreed to be listed as sponsoring institutions and encouraged their members to participate in the International Congress. To further promote the event and highlight the quality of the speakers, I interviewed a renowned German researcher, whom we later recruited as a keynote speaker. The interview was published in Spanish in the widely disseminated journal: COP online. The interview generated tremendous interest, and we received more submissions after it was published. The President of the American Psychological Association and the Coordinator of the World Health Organization in charge of developing a new system of classification of mental disorders (known as ICD-11) both presented. There were a total of 1205 presentations including keynotes, symposia, workshops, posters and conversation hours. During the actual Congress, I was heavily involved in presenting speakers, moderating talks, and overseeing the execution of the scientific program. There were 33 countries represented and more than 80% of the participants came from Ibero-American countries.

As far as the enhanced proceedings book, the Scientific Committee team was instrumental in reviewing, selecting, and preparing 97 mini-chapters ready for publication. A colleague from Spain and I were the lead editors to ensure that mini-chapter submissions met the standards of peer review publications. Our goal of author diversity was met and surpassed, as 90% of the published authors came from Ibero-American countries. I was grateful for the opportunity to complete my sabbatical experience during the academic year 2017-2018. My long term scholarly goals were realized and the objectives of the international organizations involved were met.
Dr. Juan Preciado is a full professor of Health Education in the Education Department. He has served as Coordinator, Chair and participated in committees and task forces within and outside the College for the last 31 years. His primary interests include cultural issues, international health, as well as the dissemination of scientific information via international conferences. He was awarded visiting professorships at various universities in Spain during summer intersessions. Dr. Preciado serves on the editorial board of several international peer-review journals, and participates in scientific committees of international conferences.
It was not until I was watching the recent 'heist film', Oceans Eight, where a group of 8 ladies decide the rob the Metropolitan Museum annual Ball that I realized the significance of getting mentioned in the Page 6 gossip page of the New York Post newspaper. Sandra Bullock, Cate Blanchett, Anne Hathaway and Rihanna are all sitting around a café table and go into paroxysms of ecstasy when they receive a mention in the eponymous "PAGE 6".

However when I was first contacted by the reporter I was flabbergasted that they had even heard about my exhibition with the future King of England, Prince Charles. I don't read the New York Post so really know nothing about it. Apparently a famous New York art critic named Charlie Finch had gotten wind of my exhibition and got the publicity machine rolling.

For the last 17 years I have been invited to exhibit in the annual display of paintings on show in the Highlands of Scotland.

Initially the patron of this event was Prince Charles’s grandmother, the Queen Mother, and, after her death at age 101, he inherited her castle and the patronship of the annual exhibition.

Prince Charles is actually an accomplished watercolorist and always has a selection of his new paintings ready for each year’s show.

He and I have our paintings displayed together on a special stage and there is quite a contrast for the public to behold! His Royal Highness creates rather beautiful watercolors produced in the various local and global locations where he has managed to set up his easel. Mine on the other hand are very intense and somewhat surrealist paintings designed to stimulate and make one question preconceived notions of reality.

The Prince always makes comments about my work. (Due to Buckingham Palace protocol I am not at liberty to quote them)!

It is always a great honour to have been selected for this annual display with a person who I believe will make a very fine King.

I emphatically asked that mention be made of Hostos Community College in the New York Post article as it is an important part of my life in New York City where I can get a chance to help people discover their inner potential to find creative solutions to life and work.
About the Author

Ian Charles Scott was a child prodigy winning first place in a world wide art competition aged 6 to meet the actual Walt Disney and be shown around his creation Disneyland in California by Walt himself.

He went on to become the top student in the whole of Dundee University earning the only 1st Class Honours B.A degree in Fine arts given that year and the only Highly Commended degree awarded after completing his Masters degree later.

His paintings are in every Museum collection in his native Scotland including the National Portrait Gallery and the Royal Scottish academy amongst many others.

He won Scotlands top Artists award "The Alastair Salvasen Award "amidst fierce competition and used the money to move to the United States.

In the United States he has been showing with the Silverstein Gallery in Chelsea and is currently represented by the Marion Harris Gallery on Lexington Avenue. He was nominated for the "Mayors Award for outstanding Contributions to the Cultural life of New York City" in 2010 when he was acknowledged by Mayor Bloomberg in Gracie Mansion.

He has taught and run the Painting department in Hostos College becoming full-time in 2003.
The idea behind the apexart International Fellowship is to break artists out of our comfortable little bubbles of work and expose us to new ideas and cultures. Every fellowship recipient is sent somewhere they have never been before, where they are not familiar with the culture or the language. I definitely felt out of my comfort zone! Most fellowships grant you a scholarship to further research your area of expertise. The purpose of my apexart International Fellowship was in direct opposition to this idea and included cultural immersion and even a form of alienation. I am an actress and was not allowed to engage in my art. Even seeing my art was forbidden, so I did not see any theater in Jerusalem. This fellowship was definitely one of the hardest things I have ever done. First of all, it was brutally lonely for an extrovert like me. I am a true Myers-Briggs Type Indicator extrovert in that I get my energy from other people. So, being alone in a strange country for a month and having to eat most meals alone was hard.

Being separated from my five-month-old baby and husband was also quite difficult. I am an organized person who likes to plan ahead, and a young man in his 20s had complete control over my itinerary for the entire month that I was in Jerusalem. Three to four different activities were required daily, and there were only two days off the entire month. Some activities were quite interesting, and some were downright miserable.

I am a typical New Yorker so the rigorous schedule didn’t bother me. However, often I was not given clear instructions on exactly where to be and had no contact number, which was exasperating. There were times where I literally had to wait two hours in a random, uncomfortable location for clearer instructions. My contact person in New York was pro-active and constantly advocated for clearer itineraries; however I often felt a lot of my time was wasted.

Not only did I struggle with unclear instructions, I also was sent to events that made no sense for me. For example, I saw a film in German with Hebrew subtitles! (I don’t speak either language.) I attended a final lecture in a series so I was lost regarding the content. I struggled with navigation and got lost many times. The transportation system in Jerusalem makes the MTA look like heaven on earth. The police there usually can’t give directions because they are often from other places and don’t consider it their job to do so. Since I do not speak Hebrew or Arabic, I often felt like the “ugly American.” I usually travel to countries where I speak the language or have some familiarity because I have studied it before I departed. As a new mom, there was no time for this preparation. I felt incredibly frustrated when I could not communicate, especially when I needed to find my way. The claim that “everyone speaks English” was definitely not my experience. Although, it surprised me is that people there often assumed I spoke their language and would frequently approach me for directions.

The first two weeks of my travel blog is filled with me venting about my daily challenges. Posting a daily travel blog was required and I actually loved practicing the discipline of daily writing. It was also quite cathartic when I was frustrated by my “handler.” In addition, it enhanced my photo-editing skills as I was only allowed to post 4 pictures daily on the official blog. (I did, however, post all my photos on Facebook.)

In some of my photos I am almost unrecognizable as I am conservatively dressed or have an expression of ambivalence. In some ways, I feel that Jerusalem was wasted on a non-religious person like me because it is such an important place worship for monotheistic religions. In the hot climate of Jerusalem, the issue of modesty was frustrating for me. I lived in a quiet neighborhood with many devoted religious people. I could not wear many of the sundresses I brought because I would get comments
or looks. In order to be left alone, I needed to cover my arms with short or long sleeves and wear dresses that went at least past my knees. When I toured an ultra-conservative neighborhood, a friend there warned me to cover well or I would be spit on. Without getting too controversial, I have issues with women being told what to wear and what roles to play. One of my most interesting meetings was with a deeply religious woman whom shared how conflicted she was about sexism in her religion, especially because she had a daughter.

Naturally, meeting with different people was the best part of the fellowship for me. Jerusalemites have the best hospitality I have ever encountered. I attended a Shabbat dinner and an Iftar dinner (to break the fast during Ramadan), and both families had made everything vegetarian for me! They had never met me before and sacrificed meat for these important religious meals. One family even made everything gluten-free for me since I have Celiac Disease. Trying to find gluten-free food in restaurants was often challenging, especially food that was affordable. I was shocked by how expensive restaurants were. (My fellowship did not cover the cost of meals.) That said, I was blown away by the generosity of time these strangers bestowed upon me. A photographer took me around Palestine, taking me to art shows, The Palestinian Museum, and even gained us access to an exhibit before it opened. One man spent an entire morning taking me on a tour of his neighborhood and telling me stories about his activism and how it impacted his neighborhood. It was inspiring and heartening.

I had incredible access to fascinating people, including museum directors and Holocaust survivors. I cried throughout my time at Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center. I thought it very strange that I did not see one other person cry. At first I felt very nauseous and then faint and then just very sad. I kept remembering every book, poem, and film I had ever experienced about the Holocaust. The pictures of the emaciated people reminded me of the Ethiopian famine. The belongings of the murdered were too much to take in. The Children’s Memorial overwhelmed me. I had to leave quickly before really breaking down. I spent about five minutes in a bathroom stall really crying. Interestingly enough, I did not “learn” much that was new. I did not know about the death vans, but most of the other information I had gleaned over my lifetime. I was reminded that my parents were born during World War II and it was not so very long ago. The atrocities that human beings commit against one another stuns me. I think of Trump and how ugly America has become. Or, revealed its true self to be. I fear for my daughter’s future. A mixed-race girl growing up in Trump’s intolerant America. While I was there, I struggled with the fact that so many Jerusalemites support Trump and even more so now, considering the recent Tree of Life Massacre.

Thus far, I have not been cognizant of this fellowship directly impacting my acting and directing. However, I am quite a shy person when around people I don’t know, and this experience forced me to engage with many strangers. I now find myself being more outgoing with new people. I felt a sense of fulfillment when I volunteered on a farm and two hospitals; I love that volunteering is incorporated into this fellowship experience. The incredible amount of interrogation, scrutiny, and security that I had to go through at both airports gave me new depths of empathy for people that get profiled all the time. In the world of theatrical improv, there is a rule that you must say “yes” to what your partner is offering you, I feel like this fellowship took that concept to an entirely new level. I literally gave my entire life over to an arts organization for an entire month. Letting go is an important concept in the craft of acting, and, while I was in Jerusalem, I had to give myself over to many uncomfortable things, including getting lost and letting someone else dictate my entire itinerary. I do feel a great sense of accomplishment and empowerment for committing to this challenging fellowship and am deeply grateful for the educational experiences it provided.

Link to my travel blog: http://apexart-journal.tumblr.com/tagged/natasha-yannacaneda/chrono
As an actress, writer, casting director and director, Natasha Lorca Yannacañedo’s work spans independent film, radio, primetime television, and infinite plays. She has a Master of Fine Arts in Acting from the American Conservatory Theater. Professor Yannacañedo is passionate about the craft of acting and public speaking and is an Assistant Professor at Hostos Community College. She is a company member of Harlem Shakespeare Festival and a proud member of AEA and SAG-AFTRA. Professor Yannacañedo is thrilled to be serving as Vice-Chair for the National Playwriting Program for the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.
This Fulbright Specialist opportunity in Honduras revealed a faculty community questioning the meaning of assessment of student learning outcomes, classroom management and student engagement in Higher Education today. In this regard, a framework based on Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) was a successful framework to facilitate workshops on these topics at Escuela Panamericana Zamorano in Honduras. This Fulbright opportunity built on previous similar experiences at higher education institutions in Colombia, Spain, Cuba, Costa Rica and Argentina. The SoTL movement represents a bridge reconciling faculty passion for teaching and learning and different discipline ways to develop knowledge and skills, with administration expectation regarding assessment of student learning. Overall, it was critical to use faculty language to shape conversations with faculty from Honduran institution. All workshops aimed to embody faculty dissimilar pedagogical backgrounds, varied research skills, and ways to preserve discipline identities and passion for teaching in this age of accountability. The SoTL scope decreased found tensions between faculty vision regarding assessment and language used by administration to convene assessment duties.

This engagement included nine 3-hour workshops. The first series of four workshops focused on Classroom Management and Student Engagement. This took place during the first week and set the tone for a subsequent workshop on Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes, and a second series of four workshops focused on Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. About 15-20 faculty members attended each workshop of both series and around 50 faculty members attended the Assessment workshop. Several faculty members attended the three different workshops. The Fulbright Specialist also met groups of students on three different occasions, two academic- department faculty members, the College Dean and all academic chairpersons, the Dean of Student Life, the Vice President of College Affairs, staff members overseeing student life, the director of Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and two members of the Board of Trustees. All of these meetings helped to understand college life, culture, and academic expectations. This Fulbright opportunity also intended to help the Honduran institution with the preparation for accreditation process with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) agency.

What the Fulbright Specialist Opportunity brought to Honduras: The value of the process and speaking faculty language: It was essential to talk with faculty using language rooted in different discipline identities. It was also suggested to support the role of the department chairperson in assessment. They are key players translating institutional vision on assessment to faculty, and also bringing back faculty voices to the administration. It was discussed how to recognize faculty members that naturally embrace the process, such as statisticians and sociologists. They can help other faculty members to understand the meaning of the process. The institution should recognize that many faculty members feel unavoidably uncomfortable performing this task, as the course-evaluation process is outside their area of expertise. In this regard, as the host institution already has some faculty members taking leadership in assessment process, it was suggested to formalize a Faculty Assessment Committee with an advisory role to the process.

Redesigning the academic assessment cycle: The institution has a comprehensive three-year meta-assessment cycle at course level to document student-learning outcomes. It was suggested adding a fourth year to this cycle to assess the assessment, close the loop, and connect different dots. It means to analyze what works, what they learned, what should be refined, and build understanding on the meaning of the process, while embracing all faculty voices in the process.
The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) as a framework to foster a culture of dialogue and inquiry about teaching and learning: The Zamorano faculty members are really committed to improve students’ learning. The SoTL scope showed to be an effective framework to foster a culture of inquiry and documenting teaching practices. This organically embodies an assessment process and serves as a bridge to reconcile dissimilar faculty and administration expectations regarding evaluation. This seminar brought to the surface several successfully implemented teaching and assessment strategies by the host institution’s instructors that were unknown by other faculty members. Thus, these workshops naturally open new collaborations. They learned new several teaching techniques to manage large lecture halls such as using case studies and using clickers from the phone, and several strategies to set the tone during the first day of classes.

What the Fulbright Specialist Opportunity Brought back to the United States

The Escuela Panamericana Zamorana has an impressive Experiential Learning program, Learning by Doing (Aprender
Haciendo) program in all majors. This robust program instills students’ work responsibility, discipline, professional mindset, and ability to solve problems and create solutions in real-life settings related to agriculture and food production. The host institution’s graduates value this program as the most significant portion of the curriculum. Furthermore, all students at Escuela Panamericana Zamorano are required to have a second experiential learning opportunity structured as an internship before graduation. Many of them develop it in US labs and companies. The feedback received from internship-based institutions demonstrated students have the knowledge and skills to thrive in different job settings. Thus, several experiential learning strategies from this program can be implemented as part of Service Learning programs in US institutions.

**Meta assessment Cycle Effectiveness:** The host institution has a comprehensive three-year assessment cycle to document course-level student learning outcomes (SLOs). They use Nuventive Improve software. All faculty members are involved. They redesigned all syllabi, created SLOs and assignments that assess the objectives. They shared several ways to enhance assessment making it more sustainable and meaningful. This long-term assessment movement has three staff members with Education majors working on assessment, accompanying faculty, and facilitating the clerical work. They report to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Overall, this showed the need to have full-time staff members with the appropriate educational background facilitating the task and able to convene a meaningful message for faculty community.

**Invisible (Hidden) Curriculum:** The host institution is intentional about student well-being during their campus life years. They use the term invisible curriculum to embody all student campus life non-academic aspects. The term curriculum brings to mind connectivity and institutional efforts to constantly enhance students’ human experience on campus. Some of them are from different countries and remain on campus for long periods of time. They have a strict discipline code, as well as a calendar of cultural and sports events to enrich student experience. The creation of an Arts course was suggested during this visit. This might serve as a bridge reinforcing the connection between academic curriculum and the invisible one, and, ultimately, enhance student experience on campus.

**Strategies for managing large lecture hall groups**

Some professors shared strategies that create individual experiences for students during the first day of classes. This breaks class anonymity and engages students regardless of large class size throughout the term. The advantages and disadvantages of other phone Apps as clickers were also discussed among host faculty members.

Overall, this experience reinforces the transformative impact of an abroad experience from both the visiting faculty member and the host institution faculty members. It was an opportunity to listen and learn from each other regardless of different institution settings and nationalities. The opportunity reinforces an international faculty community message: the faculty community members need to have intellectual conversations about different ways to document teaching and learning effectiveness. There is a need to recognize different discipline identities and multiple ways to understand pedagogy. This intellectual diversity has to be an institution driving force propelling administration needs to document institution values.

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**About the Author**

Nelson Nunez Rodriguez is Professor of Chemistry, Unit Coordinator at Natural Sciences Department, and former Director of Center for Teaching and Learning at Hostos Community College of the City University of New York. He currently serves as Fulbright Specialist on STEM Education and sub-award Principal Investigator for a NIH IRACDA program. His scholarly interests focus on developing scientific skills in urban college students. He received a Bachelor Degree in Biology from Havana University, Cuba in 1992, a Ph.D. in Chemistry from National University of Cordoba, Argentina in 2001 and developed a four-year-postdoctoral training at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York.
How to Think

About the Author
Alan Jacobs (born 1958) is a scholar of English literature, writer, and literary critic. He is a distinguished professor of the Humanities in the Honors Program of Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

The 2018-19 Hostos Reads! selection is the challenging and intelligent book by Alan Jacobs, How to Think: A Survival Guide for a World at Odds. Jacobs encourages us to investigate how biases, patterns of thought, and a need for belonging can get in the way of thinking wisely.

Hostos Reads! 2018-19 got off to a great start this semester with a kick-off event in September with activities designed to introduce and generate ideas for using the book this year in classes and programs. Each month fall semester, a discussion group composed of faculty, staff, and a few students met to investigate themes and ideas from the book and share their insights into how, as an academic community, we can we encourage sound thinking.

Join us during the spring semester for more monthly discussion groups, games to test your logic, and student contests and activities. We will also be taking nominations for the next Hostos Reads! selection. Pick up a copy or arrange for your class the read the book at the Center for Teaching and Learning. Get involved, read a great book, and be a better thinker!

For more information, checkout the Hostos Reads!
Libguide: http://guides.hostos.cuny.edu/hostosreads/howtothink
Website: commons.hostos.cuny.edu/hostosreads/

Hostos Reads - Reading Groups:
Monday Feb 11, 3:30-4:30
Wednesday Mar 13, 3:30-4:30
Thursday, May 2nd 3:30-4:30
All in room B-413
The beauty and diverse benefits of studying mathematics is captured in the following excerpt by Prof. Jung Hang Lee, who joined the Mathematics Department at Hostos Community College in the Fall of 2018:

"It might not be everyone’s dream to become a great mathematician, but strong mathematical knowledge is an essential skill in stretching one’s mind toward full capacity. Pursuit of a pure academic curiosity might reward one’s heart and mind with overflowing satisfaction. Yet, it also must have some very delightful byproducts, such as innovative minds, acute reasoning and unimaginable imaginations.

Between the lines of numbers and formulas, young minds will begin their journey to search for a logical world. By attempting to understand and apply, the minds of men and women will grow beyond their understanding. This is the true secret and joy of mathematics and its educators.

Logic will fly to the moon and explore the universe and beyond. Formulas will build the bridges not only between both sides of a river, but also between dreams and realities. Innovative minds will lead the way and conquer the unknown, and eventually overcome their limitation and more. Numbers are not just numbers; they will be solutions for many.

One might teach mathematics, but many will learn more.

By: Prof. Jung Hang Lee
Assistant Professor
Mathematics Department

I have observed a common denominator among my students: a sincere desire to understand, and in many cases a skepticism about the relevance and importance of mathematics in their lives, academics, and professional endeavors. “When will I use this in real life?” “Why do I need to take this class? It is not even part of my major”, “I just need a C.” These are some of the questions that inspired the creation of the Annual Mathematics Day @ Hostos Community College three years ago. Since then, Mathematics Day has been very successful in allowing students to explore mathematics within different disciplines and in providing answers to these types of questions.

There is plenty of research that indicates that the study of mathematics positively affects the expansion of the human intellect and its capacities. Making this information and understanding part of students’ academic lives would promote their interest in the subject, enhancing their motivation to do the work required to learn the subject. While educators and researchers are well aware of the benefits of studying mathematics, the academic conversation on mathematics
with students, in early stages of their higher education, appears to be limited to explaining/understanding its principles, procedures, and applications. This situation narrows students’ perception of the importance of studying mathematics.

Evidence of this can be found upon further examination of the questions formulated by the students. On one hand, students want to know the practical applications of information acquired in the classroom; “When will I use this in real life?” “Why do I need to take this class? It is not even part of my major.” On the other hand, statements such as, “I just need a C” may be translated into “I just need to get this class out of the way.” This reveals that there is a lack of a deeper and more fundamental understanding, the understanding of the importance and relevance of studying mathematics independent of the practical applications of mathematics in a chosen field of study and independent of whether one enjoys the subject or not. That is, “How does learning mathematics contribute towards one’s general education?”

I have been asked to look into the Hostos General Education Core Competencies (Gen.Ed.C.C)[1] many times, mostly in meetings about assessment and in General Education Committee meetings. Reading the Gen.Ed.C.C. motivates me to reflect on the value of my teaching and contribution to students’ lives when I teach a mathematics or an engineering class, and on the added value of activities in class that help students accomplish much more than gaining knowledge in the subject. For instance, group work in a mathematics class is an optimal opportunity for students to “Exhibit an appreciation, understanding, acceptance and respect for human differences”(Gen.Ed.C.C.-D2) [1] while “Utilizing deductive and inductive reasoning skills with special emphasis on problem-solving, analysis and clarity of understanding” (Gen.Ed.C.C.-A1) [1]. This could be a challenging situation at times given that in a mathematics class we find the same rich diversity that characterizes Hostos in every way. In addition to a multicultural setting, students find themselves interacting with individuals of all ages, different motivations to learn mathematics, and different levels of proficiency with the subject. In exercising patience and open-mindedness within a diverse learning group, students gain insight into conducting themselves as global citizens, a trait that is of great value in their everyday lives and in their future professional lives. Furthermore, students learn and experience mathematics as a universal language that transcends languages and cultures, and like Prof. Jung Hang Lee stated, a language that allows us “acute reasoning”, “unimaginable imaginations” and bridges “between dreams and realities”, greatly expanding their intellectual capacities.

I find the Gen.Ed.C.C to be a valuable document in promoting and guiding this reflection about education and the additional values, beyond the mathematical aspect, of the activities that I propose in class. The Hostos Gen.Ed.C.C is a document of high quality and meaningfulness, which I consider, can be used in academia to broaden understanding of the value of teaching and learning a particular subject. I too believe that to keep education in perspective, students, not just faculty, should also explore the understanding derived from reflecting on how the study of a subject can promote the Gen.Ed.C.C. in a person’s life. Perhaps this is a way to broaden the academic conversation with our students about mathematics (and other subjects), and to decrease attitudes such as “I just need a C” while increasing attitudes of self-motivation to learn and of making education an essential part of growing as a human being for a lifetime (as opposed to just attaining a grade at a particular instance).

In my classes, on the first day, students receive the Hostos Gen.Ed.C.C. with the General Education Core Competencies Assessment Matrix shown in table1. Students are asked to score each of the Hostos Gen. Ed.C.C. from 1 to 5 depending on how much they think the class will promote each competency (1 if weakly or none, through 5 if strongly). Students are encouraged to

Table 1: General Education Core Competencies Assessment Matrix designed by Clara Nieto-Wire, Ph.D.
be honest and are ensured that their answers will not affect any grade. This activity is performed twice during the semester: on the first day of classes, before they have experienced the class, and towards the end of the semester (if time permits), to provide another opportunity of reflection after they have experienced the class.

I have been conducting this activity for the last four semesters in my mathematics and engineering classes. Students’ responses are very diverse. Some score all of the competencies equally very high; others grade them all very weakly, while others relate the class strongly to only few competencies and weakly to most competencies. There are no right or wrong answers as they are a reflection of the students’ views at a point in their academic journey; therefore it is not in my interest to report data trends at this time. The main observation from this activity is that it has been successful in promoting reflection among students about the importance of studying mathematics. The classroom becomes very quiet, and students seem concentrated while recording their scores. Also, students have a positive attitude towards the activity, and most of the times they request extra time to complete the activity. They never expect this type of activity in a mathematics or engineering class.

They find the Hostos Gen.Ed.C.C. interesting; some have reported having seen a few of the Hostos Gen.Ed.C.C in a syllabus from another class, and only two students have reported having seen the entire document with all Hostos Gen.Ed.C.C. Some students have even commented that they will keep the sheet listing the competencies to look at them again. This is an innovative activity for the first day of class that provides extra information about what the students think and their expectations (beyond subject content). This activity promotes students’ reflection on the relation between class objectives and the greater (more global) educational objectives. Data collection and interpretation are simple for this activity. Finally, this activity takes only 10 minutes of one class time and provides students with an opportunity for a meaningful reflection on the purpose of education.

A last thought. Thinking at a greater scale outside the classroom, at the scale of the institution: Table 2 shows the enrollment breakdown by program [2] for Fall 2017, and the mathematics course requirement per program [3]. Out of the 29 programs, 8 programs have mathematics courses as part of their major requirements. Within the programs with mathematics courses as major requirements, 3 programs, Business Management, Community Health, and Forensic Science, have a single mathematics course as a major requirement [3]. That is, students enrolled in these majors only need to take one mathematics course as a major requirement. Enrollment in these 3 programs accounted for 7.77% of the total student enrollment. Shaded entries in table 2 show the program requirements for STEM programs, which involve a series (sequence) of mathematics courses (about 5 courses). These STEM programs are Electrical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Mathematics, and Chemical Engineering. Enrollment in these 5 STEM programs accounted for 3.98%. Students enrolled in the remaining 21 programs (88.25%) where mathematics courses are not a major requirement, take mathematics courses as a general education course either as a required or flexible common core course, or as a major elective, in which case, it is not guaranteed that the mathematics elective course will be taken (even if it is a course of the major). These percentages do not change abruptly from term to term under “normal conditions” (no economic recessions, etc.) Hence, a reasonable assumption is that the current state of program enrollment, percentage wise, is not far from the state of enrollment per program from the fall 2017 term.

Students who take a mathematics course as a general education course, instead of as a major requirement are more likely to perceive a mathematics course as a course to “get out of the way.” Could this mean that in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Hostos Academic Programs: Enrollment and Mathematics Course Requirements - Fall 2017 Term [2,3]</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 A.A./Liberal Arts &amp; Sci.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Nursing</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 B.S. Arts &amp; Sci.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Criminal Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Early Childhood Ed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Dental Hygiene</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Business Mgmt</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Residential Tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 A.S./A.A. Arts &amp; Sci.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Game Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Digital Design &amp; Animation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Community Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Accounting</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 Accounting A.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 Electrical Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 Office Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 T.P.E. (Gen)</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 Civil Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 Digital Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Aging and Health Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 Mechanical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Public Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 Chemical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Forensic Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 Paralegal Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Food Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Forensic Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Program requirement: 1 math course)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total (Program requirement: a series of each course)</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
our institution about 6,361 students (88.25%) out of 7,208 students may perceive a mathematics course as a course to “get out of the way”? Could it be that students have this attitude towards other subjects that are taken as general education courses as well? Could it be that these many students (6,361 out of 7,208) don’t have a clear idea why a mathematics course is part of the list of courses he/she needs to take to graduate?

Understanding students’ perception toward having to take general education courses becomes very important at the community college level where many students need to take several remedial/developmental courses to fulfill one college level mathematics course that is presented as a general education course; many are first generation attending college; many are trying to decide what major to pursue; and many others need to work and provide for their families while attending college. No wonder why at times socioeconomic mobility through education is confused with simply obtaining grades and a diploma in the minimum amount of time. Perhaps the Hostos Gen. Ed.C.C. could provide to students a glimpse of the greater value of education and what the journey at Hostos could bring into their lives.

Acknowledgements:
I would like to thank Prof. Jung Hang Lee for sharing his insight and for his meaningful contribution to this article. I would like to acknowledge all faculty colleagues whose work and dedication went into producing and streamlining such a high quality document containing the Hostos General Education Core Competencies.

References:

2. Hostos Community College Office of Institutional Research and Student Assessment (OIRSA) http://www.hostos.cuny.edu/Hostos/media/Office-of-the-President/Institutional-Research-Assessment/rptHostosStudentProfile20180802_1.pdf

3. Hostos Community College Pathways Degree Programs of Study. http://www.hostos.cuny.edu/Administrative-Offices/Office-of-Academic-Affairs/Student-Support/Academic-Advisement/Pathways-Programs-of-Study

Dr. Clara Nieto-Wire received her Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from the CUNY Graduate Center in May 2012, and her B.E in Electrical Engineering from the City College of New York, CUNY. She is an Assistant Professor in the Mathematics Department at Hostos Community College since Fall 2012 and currently she is the Mathematics Department Representative at the Hostos General Education Committee. Dr. Nieto-Wire taught at the Grove School of Engineering of The City College of New York for over three years and at City Tech before joining HCC. She has over nine years of experience teaching freshman through senior engineering classes, including theoretical, experimental, and computing applications, and over six years teaching mathematics including remedial through college level mathematics at Hostos Community College. Dr. Nieto-Wire’s technical research interests include control systems with applications to aeronautics, robotics, and Artificial Intelligence. Dr. Nieto-Wire has developed several projects where she combines education theory with engineering/STEM undergraduate research at early stages to provide meaningful learning spaces within informal education frameworks for students who are interested in engineering and/or STEM fields in general. Her research interests in education also include metacognition for high performance in STEM education. Dr. Nieto-Wire is a recipient of the Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) Fellowship, a CUNY President’s MAGNET Fellowship for doctoral student, the LSAMP Bridge to the Doctorate Scholarship, and the Latino Honor Society Award in Mathematics.

**Category A: Skills**
This category addresses fluency in reading, writing, and oral communication; mastery of the basic principles of logical, mathematical, and scientific reasoning; and literacy in information resources and learning technologies.

A1. Utilize deductive and inductive reasoning skills with special emphasis on problem-solving, analysis and clarity of understanding.

A2. Develop the acts of speaking, reading, listening, and writing; demonstrate the act of speaking and synthesizing information correctly and effectively with the ability to use context-appropriate vocabulary and communication technology; parse lectures, text, and other educational material.

A3. Distinguish factual information from subjective opinion; consider informational origin in analyzing relevance in order to represent content in a clear, succinct and logical manner.

**Category B: Subject Area Knowledge**
This category addresses discipline-specific academic literacy. The category stresses mastery of the core concepts, principles, and methods in the various disciplines students will encounter in their programs at the College.

B1. Demonstrate knowledge of defining principles and canonical ideas in arts and humanities; cultural and historical studies; social and behavioral sciences; and the mathematical, physical, and life sciences.

B2. Make meaningful interdisciplinary connections, recognizing that subject area knowledge may go beyond a particular course.

**Category C: Synthesis and Application**
This category addresses logical analysis and synthesis of information and ideas from multiple sources and perspectives. The student’s acquisition of knowledge should be considered, as well as the integration of different forms of knowledge and ability to apply it to the student’s intellectual, personal, professional and community experience.

C1. Access and identify the information necessary and appropriate to the production of projects, such as course papers, reports, and portfolios.

C2. Demonstrate awareness of different types of evidence and apply this evidence appropriately to a task.

*Gen Ed Rubrics Subcommittee Spring 2015:*
Piotr Kocik; Darmaris-Lois Lang; Andrew Lucchesi; Sherese Mitchell;
Anne Rounds; Karen Steinmayer; Jarek Stelmark; Kate Wolfe
C3. Organize, analyze, evaluate, and treat information critically in order to use and present it in a cohesive and logical fashion.

C4. Interpret data and observations; comprehend research material. Be able to present and explain conclusions.

C5: Identify and analyze relevant aspects of natural and ecological realities and apply the knowledge obtained to human and environmental challenges.

**Category D: Global Citizenship**
This category addresses the application of the principles of ethics and governance to the larger society, one’s immediate community, and to individual conduct on campus and in society. It addresses valuing the diversity of human experience and recognizing our common human heritage and the interconnectedness in the region, the nation, and the world.

D1. Demonstrate the ability to reason ethically and to apply ethical principles in making decisions.

D2. Exhibit an appreciation, understanding, acceptance and respect for human differences.

D3. Develop an ability to participate with self-awareness when interacting as a member of diverse local and global communities.

D4. Develop and demonstrate leadership, interpersonal relationship skills and an ability to interact with others espousing different views.

D5. Develop and demonstrate an understanding of the various ways human societies value and interact with their natural surroundings.

**Streamlined Hostos General Education Core Competencies and Rubrics (2015 – 2017)**

Hostos Community College is in the process of establishing a cycle of General Education assessment in line with recommendations from our most recent Middle States self-study. The information that is gathered from Gen Ed assessments is intended to be used for departments to examine how their courses and missions integrate Gen Ed competencies, and more broadly, for the college to see whether it is infusing its offerings with these competencies. As with all assessments, the purpose is not to evaluate, but to gather information to continue to improve teaching and learning. For such informational purposes and to facilitate assessment, members of the Gen Ed Committee have designed the following questions and rubrics.

*Gen Ed Rubrics Subcommittee Spring 2015:
Piotr Kocik; Darmaris-Lois Lang; Andrew Lucchesi; Sherese Mitchell; Anne Rounds; Karen Steinmayer; Jarek Stelmark; Kate Wolfe*

For more visit: https://commons.hostos.cuny.edu/ctl/gec/
## CTL Special Events

### Professional Success for Faculty: Conversations about Faculty Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Room</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, March 14, 2019</td>
<td>3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>FDR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, March 20, 2019</td>
<td>3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>B-401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, April 4, 2019</td>
<td>3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>FDR</td>
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### Teaching Day

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, May 7, 2019</td>
<td>11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Cafeteria</td>
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### SPA DAY

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>Wednesday, May 29, 2019</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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Register at: [www.hostos.cuny.edu/facultydevelopment](http://www.hostos.cuny.edu/facultydevelopment)