“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.)
NEW FACULTY

The Center for Teaching and Learning extends a warm welcome to our New Faculty

Elizabeth Porter
Assistant Professor
English

Rafael Mejia
Lecturer
Humanities

Anna Ivanova
Assistant Professor
Natural sciences

Krystyna Michael
Assistant Professor
English

Nicole Wallenbrock
Assistant Professor
Humanities
Hurricane Maria, the most devastating hurricane in 85 years, struck Puerto Rico on September 20, 2017. Hurricane Maria was categorized as the worst natural disaster on record in Puerto Rico as it caused a catastrophe that triggered a major humanitarian crisis in the island. The death toll in Puerto Rico is believed to be far higher than the official toll of 58. The estimated loss ranges from 1,000 to more than 4,000 lives.

Also, reports from different community organizations have indicated that Puerto Rico is far from having completely recovered from the effects of the disaster. Nevertheless, these community organizations — many of them no-for-profit organizations — took the lead in providing relief across the Island. One of these organizations is the “University Institute for the Development of Communities” located at the University of Puerto Rico in Mayagüez (UPRM). During more than seventeen (17) years of its existence, this organization has been helping impoverished communities across the island. After Hurricane Maria, the Institute focused all its efforts to help in the process of the island’s recovery. The Institute at the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) in Mayagüez “has adopted a participatory action research methodology that involves professors, students and the communities themselves, which are not considered as mere beneficiary participants, but as active subjects contributing to the transformation of the reality in which they are involved” (http://www.redsolidaridad.org/instituto-universitario-para-el-desarrollo-de-las-comunidades/).

Since I am trained in action research, the opportunity to work with the UPR helped me to expand my knowledge on action research, which was primarily focused on service-learning activities. In view of the mission and the efforts of UPR for rebuilding the Island of Puerto Rico, I took a sabbatical to do the following:

1. Join the Institute at the University of Puerto Rico in Mayagüez for an academic year in its undertaking to help Puerto Rico recover from the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria. My participation was by means of working directly as a volunteer among the communities or the areas that Hurricane Maria affected the most. (See Attachment).

2. As part of my work with the Institute, I also collected data regarding the experience, perceptions, etc. of the participants in the projects for the purpose of presenting the findings to the college community. The survey used to collect data was adapted from Gelmon et al., Assessing Service-Learning and Civic Engagement. Boston: Campus Compact, 2001 and translated into Spanish.

3. This experience also helped me to enhance my teaching effectiveness and my techniques on how to develop service-learning activities, something that may not be possible through a normal workload assignment. An article about action research, teaching and service-learning is being developed and will soon be sent to a peer-reviewed journal.

From this experience I learned the following:

**Action research as a problem-solving “community” process.** When action research is applied to service-learning activities in the community, it turns into a progressive problem-solving process led by individuals working with others in teams or as parts of a “community of practice”. When applied in the classroom, the problem-solving process is an individualistic process in which the teacher is solely involved in the development of action research steps.
Identify key players in the community. One of the things learned when working with the Institute, was the importance of identifying and acknowledging community leaders as crucial and significant persons in the decision-making process. In other words, knowing the community leaders facilitated action and change as the leaders felt empowered and respected, they work toward a common goal developed to change their own communities.

The necessity of providing a guide with expectations, tasks, etc. In order to participate in service-learning activities, students at the UPR were equipped with a written guide in which all the requirements, tasks, assignments, and expectations were listed. The Institute created a very comprehensive written guide to make sure that students and all participants in the service-learning activities were informed of the requirements for completing the service-learning task. This practice can be transferred to service-learning activities in any college setting.

Establish a connection between the course and the service-learning project. I learned that students must understand the connection between the service learning course and the service and learning objectives to be achieved at the service site. By clearly establishing this connection, students were able to identify their role and the role of each of the participants.

Have all participants together at the beginning of the semester. At the beginning of the semester, the Institute conducted a presentation for students who were going to be part of the service-learning activities. In this presentation all the professors who were involved in the project talked about their courses and their expectations. Additionally, some community leaders were present and talked about their experience working with students in the past and about the success of the collaboration between UPR students and their communities.

Be flexible. Participants of service-learning activities should understand that the preparation process for an activity at a service site is not always predictable. Our flexibility for changing and adapting to situations and unforeseen circumstances can assist the partnership in working smoothly producing positive outcomes for everyone involved.

Assess service-learning activities. An assessment tool should be developed to assess service-learning activities after be completed. The UPR in Mayagüez assessed the activities at the end of the semester and professors involved met and assessed all service-learning projects using a rubric created by the Institute. This assessment tool is based in the four stages of action research.

Although my knowledge about action research and service learning increased tremendously, I learned that my island needs me more than ever. Therefore, during every trip I make to Puerto Rico, I always volunteer my time and energy to help people in need—I know we are far from full recovery. I consider this as one of the most valuable and important lessons of this sabbatical.
Dr. Sonia Maldonado Torres was born in Puerto Rico and completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Puerto Rico in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico. She possesses two Masters’ degrees — the first one in Guidance and Counseling from the Catholic University of Puerto Rico, and the second one in Educational Psychology from the University of Albany-SUNY. She also completed a doctoral in Education and Leadership from Fielding University - California.

She has been working at Hostos Community College (HCC) for the past 18 years and is presently working as an Associate Professor in the Teachers Education Unit where she teaches courses in the areas of bilingualism, multiculturalism, special education, language arts, and creative arts among others.

Dr. Maldonado Torres has published her work in different educational peer reviewed research journals. Her research interests are mainly focused on 1) Latino students’ preferences in learning, 2) Students’ graduation and retention, 3) English Language Learners (ELL), and 4) Multiculturalism among others.
Advice for Conducting Research as Junior Faculty member at Hostos

BacK in February, I published an article in Inside Higher Ed called “Advice for the Community College Scholar,” in which I provided five concrete steps that community-college faculty might take to advance their research agendas while working with a heavy teaching load. Here, I hope to offer some suggestions more specific to junior faculty members at Hostos, all of whom are required to conduct research as part of their advancement toward tenure and eventually promotion to both associate and full professor. I come to Hostos from a particular type of academic trajectory, one in which I was expected to develop a robust and specific research agenda, and to pursue it aggressively throughout and after graduate school, culminating in a dissertation from which peer-reviewed journal articles and potentially a book might result. I hope, however, that my advice can transcend my own disciplinary experiences and be of use to all junior faculty members beginning their professional academic careers at Hostos. Below, I detail five specific strategies for meeting your research requirements as a junior faculty member at Hostos.

If you have a pre-existing research agenda, pursue it, or use it as a jumping off point for related research.

If you come from a field where you wrote a dissertation or master’s thesis, these are obviously the best places to start. You might revise individual chapters or sections into articles to submit to peer-reviewed journals. Given the length of these articles and the long process involved with peer review and publication for longer pieces, you’ll want to begin planning and work on this right away. Some folks at Hostos have managed to publish books, whether they are works of scholarship or creative works. This can be a challenge, but if it’s of interest, seeking out those people and asking their advice is a perfect place to start—again, sooner rather than later, given the extraordinary amount of time it takes for books to get published, especially academic ones.

Expand the type of research you are doing by considering SoTL, pedagogy journals, and publications related to the profession.

Many faculty at Hostos across departments and units are engaged in SoTL-based research and publication. Every semester I’ve been here, at least one workshop has been held on SoTL, or Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. SoTL essentially understands our classrooms and teaching experiences as sources of scholarly research. All of us, regardless, of discipline, spend a lot of time in the classroom, so SoTL can be a productive way of generating publications out of that activity which we spend most of our time doing as Hostos faculty members.

Use your junior faculty release time strategically, in the ways that best align with your workflow and goals.

As I’m sure everyone knows, by contract we are all granted 25 hours of junior faculty release time to be used during our first five years on the tenure track. I recommend designing a five-year plan (as part of your seven-year tenure plan) that imagines how you might use this release time to accomplish your specific research goals. While teaching 27 hours, I’ve found that teaching my 15 hours in the fall and 12 hours in the spring has been best for my research output. By teaching 12 hours in the spring, and by taking more release time then, I’ve been able to jumpstart projects that I can continue
into the summer, especially when supported in the summer by a PSC-CUNY Grant. When our workload soon changes to 24 hours per year, I still plan to teach the full 12 hours in the fall and reserve release time for the spring semesters.

**Your best resource is your colleagues. Find colleagues to collaborate with, whether in your department/unit, outside of it, or both.**

Take advantage of the wonderful sense of camaraderie and community that Hostos has to offer among its faculty members. Inevitably, there are already informal writing and reading groups meeting within and across disciplines at the college. Ask around and see what’s happening. Talk to folks who have been here for five years, or seven years, about how they planned out and accomplished their research goals. Find like-minded colleagues to start writing accountability groups with. In essence, remember that you are not alone in this process— all of us are responsible for producing research, so it’s something everyone is thinking about and doing. Collaborative work is also a great way to increase your visibility across the college, and to demonstrate collegiality with colleagues both within your own department/unit and across Hostos, which is also expected when we go up for tenure.

**Apply for all of the grant, fellowship, and release time opportunities you can.**

CUNY offers many opportunities for research grants, fellowships, and release time to pursue scholarship. The Grants Office at Hostos and the RFCUNY website are great places to start when you're interested in exploring these things. So far, I've found the PSC-CUNY Summer Grants, Community College Research Grant, William Stewart Travel Award, Research in the Classroom Grant, FFPP (Faculty Fellowship Publication Program), and OAA funding for conference travel to be some options worth looking into. Again, speak with colleagues who have been successful in receiving these grants. Most everyone is happy to share their application materials to help guide you toward finding your own successes.

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**BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE**

Sean Gerrity has been an Assistant Professor in the English department at Hostos since the spring of 2017. He has published his research in both peer-reviewed and popular publications. He regularly presents at the Modern Language Association conference and is at work on a book manuscript called "A Canada in the South: Maroons in American Literature."
It has been more than sixty years since Korea was divided into two separate countries – the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and the Republic of Korea (South Korea). After the Korean War (1950-1953), these two countries have developed political, social, and educational systems under conflicting ideologies. North Korea developed into a unique form of socialist country, whereas South Korea became a democratic country. Even after the events of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union, North Korea remains one of the most closed-off nations in the world. The separation has resulted in two different Koreas with radically different current status. In 2017, the nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of South Korea was $1.578 trillion, which ranked 11th in the world. In 2014, South Korea was the seventh largest exporter and importer in the world. However, North Korea still remains as one of the poorest countries in the world.

This research examines North Korea’s secondary mathematics education alongside social and political prospective. North Korean secondary mathematics textbooks and curricula have been examined and analyzed. Facts and conclusions have been disclosed. However, large fractions of the North Korean mathematics educational system, including its teachers, students, and dynamics of the actual classrooms, still remain unknown, as North Korea maintains its isolation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

From 1910 to 1945, Korea was a Japanese colony and its education system was influenced by the Japanese model. However, the Korean War broke out shortly after the liberation. North Korea was supported by the USSR and China; and the Western allies led by the United States aided South Korea. As the war ended in 1953, two countries were formed on the Korean Peninsula. North Korea, under the governance of Kim Il Sung, belonged to the so-called socialist bloc. As North Korea gaining autonomy from the neighbouring great powers, Kim Il Sung declared his country’s mission to consist in following its own version of Marxism-Leninism, called “Juche”. Juche has been variously translated into English as “self-identity”, “national individuality”, and “national identity” or “self-reliance”. The dictatorial regime of Kim Il Sung, his son Kim Jong Il, his grandson Kim Jong Un and the Workers’ Party of Korea, which was under their control, led the country into an extreme poverty, particularly during the so-called “March of Suffering”, a prolonged period of economic decline that lasted from 1990 to 1998. It is estimated that 2.5 million people, which is about 10% of total population, died from starvation during this period. Soon after Kim Jong Il’s death in 2011, Kim Jong Un, who is a grandson of Kim Il Sung, became the chairman of the Worker's Party gaining full control of the country.
A new educational system took shape and continued to operate to a certain degree even during the most difficult and problematic years. The highlights in the development of this educational system included the establishment of a compulsory nine-year mandatory education in 1966 (four years of elementary and five years of secondary education), and then a 11-year mandatory education in 1975 (one year of kindergarten, four years of elementary, and six years of secondary school), and the publishing of The Theses of Socialist Education (Kim, Il Sung, 1977), which summarized and propelled socialist education in North Korea. As Kim Jong Un came to power, it was revised as a twelve-year mandatory education (one year of kindergarten, five years of elementary, three years of middle school, and three years of high school).

**School System and Curriculum**

In secondary schools in North Korea, the principal oversees the whole school, especially administrative and financial matters. The vice principal should be a member of the Worker’s Party and work as a Secretary of the Workers’ Party at his school. The vice principal manages teachers and is responsible for monitoring the educational ideology at the school. The vice principal also observes the curriculum and its implementation. North Korea has a national curriculum that does not give students or the schools any choice. For instance, only one set of national textbooks for all the secondary students is available and the curriculum is strictly controlled by the Workers’ Party and represents the educational direction of the Workers’ Party. Even the details of the date and time of chapter allocations is set and reinforced by the Ministry of Education in The Workers’ Party.

**Number of Hours of Middle School Curriculum Subjects by Grade Level (adapted in 2013)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total Hour</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionary Activities of our Great Leader Kim, Il Sung</td>
<td></td>
<td>136</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionary Activities of our Great Leader Kim, Jong Il</td>
<td></td>
<td>136</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionary Histories of Anti-Japanese Heroine Comrade, our mother Kim, Jong Suk</td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionary Histories of our Great Leader Kim, Jong Un</td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral of Socialism</td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>510</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean Language</td>
<td></td>
<td>510</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td>408</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
<td>136</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1156</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td>578</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td>510</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1088</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td>192</td>
<td>2weeks</td>
<td>2weeks</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>294</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>204</td>
<td>2weeks</td>
<td>2weeks</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music and Dance</td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>408</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weekly hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Teacher A, secondary school mathematics classes in North Korea consist of 45 minutes with five mandatory phases—Dea Sal Li Gi (Reviewing), Sook Jea Gum Yule (Checking Homework), Dang Jung Chek Wha (Reinforcing the Policy of the Party), Sae Ji Sik Ju Gi (Delivering New Knowledge), and Da Ji Gi (Fortifying the Knowledge). There is a 10-minute break between each class and all teachers receive a memorandum from the local board of education on the appropriation of time to each class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Time Allocation (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dea Sal Li Gi (Reviewing)</td>
<td>3 minutes (6.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sook Jea Gum Yule (Checking Homework)</td>
<td>2 minutes (4.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dang Jung Chek Wha (Reinforcing the Policy of the Party)</td>
<td>7 minutes (15.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sae Ji Sik Ju Gi (Delivering New Knowledge)</td>
<td>28 minutes (62.2 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da Ji Gi (Fortifying the Knowledge)</td>
<td>28 minutes (62.2 %)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even in the mathematics classes, Juche ideology is imposed in the form of Dang Jung Chek Wha (Reinforcing the Policy of the Party). Many teachers identify themselves as one who contemplate on the Dang Jung Chek Wha (Reinforcing the Policy of
the Party) much more than other teachers. There is no guidebook or teacher’s manual for teaching this section, but some materials are provided when teachers attend the teacher education programs that are held every summer and winter break. Teachers have to come up with how to connect the Policy of the Party with the materials that they present in class.

Mathematics Teachers and the March of Suffering

During the March of Suffering (1990 ~ 1998), survival of the nation was challenged. It was estimated that 2.5 million North Koreans died from starvation between 1995 and 1997. Many teachers had to appeal to the local board of education and they gave 10 days of food instead of the whole month. However, even this was only in 1991 and after that, any support was completely stopped. Teachers did not get any food or money at all. It was even more difficult for elderly and disabled people. They also did not receive anything and most of them died. The attendance at schools gradually dropped to 70% and morning classes would operate normally but afternoon classes were often canceled because the teachers had to go elsewhere to find food. One reason why the North Korean educational system was able to survive during the March of Suffering was because teachers were relatively free from materialism. One should always remember that North Korea is a socialist country. The main driving force of the society is not money, but a revolutionary socialist ideology. In a way, North Korean teachers were protected from materialism. They were educated to work not because we were getting paid, but to participate as a member of the society who would achieve the socialist revolution. That may be one of the reasons why the North Korean teachers kept on teaching without any paycheck for all those years.

The entire nation suffered greatly during and after the March of Suffering, when the economy collapsed. Yet, North Korea maintained its educational system, focusing on the gifted and special schools such as the First High Schools to preserve the next generation. The limited resources were concentrated towards gifted students. Students were tested and selected at the end of elementary school. Those who taught at the First High School were getting paid about 50% to 60% of the salary during the period.

Probability and Statistics Section

The chapter “Probability and Statistics” is relatively new in North Korean secondary mathematics. Most teachers were not properly trained to teach probability and statistics. Even when they learned probability and statistics at a teachers’ university, they never had to understand the subject in depth since they did not have to teach the subject. In a socialist country such as North Korea, neither probability nor statistics was regarded as important concepts. The development of probability was necessary for gambling in a capitalistic society and statistics helped to predict social phenomena closely related to insurance. Regardless, gambling, casinos, the lotto, stock market, or insurance companies do not exist in North Korea. For instance, in the textbook, the concept of probability is introduced with an example using a die, which is preceded with a physical description of a die since North Korean students do not know what a die looks like. This may be also motivated with politically driven purpose. When students start to learn more about statistics it would take more than just a number to convince them. Government may not be able to control people with just a final result. People will start to question about the numbers and they might want more explanations which are also statistically convincing.

CONCLUSIONS

This research attempts to answer questions about North Korean secondary school mathematics: What are characteristics of secondary school mathematics education in North Korea in terms of its concepts, goals, and structure? One observable characteristic of North Korean secondary school mathematics is the strong ideological and political influence of the Worker’s Party. While mathematics is generally viewed as a politically and ideologically neutral subject elsewhere, Juche ideology and the policy
of the Party, imposed in the form of Reinforcing the Policy of the Party, are mandatory in every North Korean mathematics class. The North Korean government stubbornly emphasizes this section’s importance in mathematics classes and in professional development programs, and also strictly imposes observed inspections to make sure this section is being taught. A totalitarian society is totalitarian precisely because its reigning ideology is omnipresent.

The March of Suffering affected every aspect of secondary-school mathematics education in North Korea where the teachers as well as the students had to endure extremely devastating economic difficulty. As a result, general secondary school mathematics has been neglected and deserted. During this time of difficulty, it was impossible to teach or learn mathematics because they were too hungry to concentrate. Teaching hours and mathematics content were compromised as well.

There appears to be a disconnect between equality based on socialistic ideology and reality in North Korean secondary school mathematics. While North Korea emphasizes socialism as its main governing ideology in its promotion of equality for all people, in reality, equal opportunity is not provided or promoted in the context of secondary school mathematics. The lasting effect of the economic difficulty has only widened this gap. Because of limited resources, focus turned towards gifted education, such as the First High Schools, in order to educate and produce the next generation leaders and workers.

In North Korea, there is one set of national textbooks for all secondary students and the Workers’ Party of Korea strictly controls the curriculum. The curriculum guide is forwarded from the Ministry of Education in the Workers’ Party and contains detailed instructions, including specific time allocation for each topic to be covered. It is clearly apparent that the North Korean government has full control over the mathematics content and curriculum that is being taught.

They did not teach probability and statistics for a long time because North Korea is a socialist country that does not have insurance, stock market, and gambling. And that discouraged the need to teach probability and statistics. Also, it seems intentional not to teach statistics to the general public. It would be much easier for North Korean government to control the public if they do not have any conceptual understanding of statistics. Yet, the latest textbook includes the chapter “Probability and Statistics” in the secondary mathematics textbook. It was considered a necessary change to adapt to international circumstances, such as the changes taking place in the Soviet Union and in China.

Teaching and learning mathematics should have a clear purpose. We have been teaching and learning mathematics and statistics. Once they learn, they will ask. Someone has to answer, not just with moving speech, but with convincing result with number. The p-value should be small enough to convince them.

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE

Dr. Jung Hang Lee earned his Ph.D. in Mathematics Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. He has a B.S. in Computer Programming and Applied Mathematics (Operations Research), M.S. in Applied Mathematics (Engineering Mathematics) and M.A. in Mathematics Education. He is an Assistant Professor in the Mathematics Department at Hostos Community College since Fall 2018. Dr. Lee was an Associate Professor at Nyack College for seven years before he joined HCC. He has been teaching mathematics for over eighteen years. He was elected as the best analyst when he worked for the National Security Agency (NSA), USA and Defense Security Association (DSA), South Korean Army. He was awarded as an emerging scholar of the year (2013) in Nyack College. He presented his research on North Korean Secondary School Mathematics at the 12th International Congress on Mathematical Education as an invited lecture. His main research interests are student motivation, mathematical concept map, assessment and North Korean mathematics education.
It is an honor to have the opportunity to contribute some thoughts on the topic of General Education at Eugenio María de Hostos Community College. As I started to think about what it means to me, I began to reflect on the important work of the General Education Committee, whose work of late has been to specify the connections between General Education and the Hostos Mission. It has been an exciting and revealing exercise to conclude that the two are beautifully and inextricably entwined. It is a relationship that begins with access to higher education and the promotion of multiculturalism. It continues in the rigorous development of math, English, language and technology skills, serving the needs of the community in the South Bronx and creating opportunities for socio-economic mobility. It emphasizes life-long learning, inquiry, and the ability to think critically and communicate effectively and justly. In short, the goals of both Hostos and General Education are about how to better ourselves and contribute to our communities and world in ways that are meaningful, sustainable, powerful, and uplifting.

For me personally, the most important thing has yet to be said. In order to really understand and appreciate the significance of General Education in my life, I thought about the process of learning that brought me to Hostos and how fortunate I was to attend a high school designed with blocks of courses that made it difficult to separate political science from history or geography. All of the information just sort of formed a picture of the world that was global in nature. In college, I explored majors based on requirements, ending up with abstract math for a good while before finding that I was better suited for art history.

At times, it is difficult to see a difference in the way mathematicians and artists think - they both seem to like a certain elegance of ideas. And so, in
my experience with General Education, I came to value many different types of thinking and inquiry that are, fundamentally, very similar. While I learned to recognize similarities and differences, I began to appreciate similarities more, as they bring us closer together as human beings. General Education has allowed me to see deeply and broadly, and it has allowed me to pass this on to others. General Education is inclusive and essential.

**BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE**

Thomas Beachdel, PhD is an Assistant Professor in the Humanities Department at Eugenio María de Hostos Community College. An art and architectural historian, his work focuses on landscape aesthetics/ideologies between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries, particularly in connection with the histories of science and imperialism. He maintains an active international role in contemporary art practice as curator, and lectures at museums and at contemporary galleries in New York City. His current book project is tentatively titled Wrecks, Ruins, and Eruptions: The Visual Culture of the Sublime in the Long Eighteenth Century. His article, "A Visionary Shift in Viewpoint: William Hogarth's Bathos, Edmund Burke's Sublime, and The End of Beauty," can be found in the Spring 2019 *British Art Journal* 19, no. 3. His book Marie Tomanova: Young American was published by Paradigm Press Spring 2019.

**STONEWALL**

The Center for Teaching and Learning joined the Hostos Celebration of 50th commemoration of Stonewall Riots

by Prof. Nelson Nuñez-Rodriguez, Natural Sciences

The Center for Teaching and Learning in collaboration with the Office of the President commemorated the 50th anniversary of Stonewall Riots at Hostos during last March 2019. This week of events represented a moment of Reflection, Affirmation, and Perseverance as Stonewall events definitely transcended the LGBTQI movement fight for their rights. It represented a civil rights moment illuminating a pathway for justice and a better society. From March 4 - 8, 2019, Hostos students, faculty, and staff members reflected and affirmed principles of inclusion, togetherness, and freedom in our society. The Stonewall Riots definitely rejects injustice against all marginalized communities. In this regard, Hostos’ mission embodies these values for all. It is our institution responsibility to nurture all constituents’ civic understanding, appreciation, and respect for all. This Hostos celebration indeed intended to create a climate of awareness, dialogue, and understanding about the values and dignity of human rights.

The events specifically intended to improve the institution’s support for our LGBTQI students, faculty, and staff members by strengthening the bonds and creating a better understanding of current issues; offer a time of reflection on the Stonewall Riots themselves and their impact on our past and present civil rights, as well as how our institution’s history is interwoven with them; and create opportunities for sustained
dialogues in “Togetherness, Inclusion and Respect for All.”

There were four activities scheduled this March week. A Classroom Management for All conversation facilitated by the Lauren Gretina, Director of Diversity and Compliance, clarified CUNY LGTBQI policies and guidelines while representing an opportunity to invigorate previous conversation about Safe Zone at Hostos and explore meaningful ways to include moments of respectfulness and inclusion in the syllabus and during the first day of classes. A second activity was developed as a panel with Hostos LGTBQI faculty and members. Questions such as What does it mean to be part of “the few” on campus? Was it important to find someone helping you understand campus culture regarding LGTBQI issues? What are the challenges and opportunities of being a LGTBQI community member at Hostos? were addressed in this conversation attended by more than 50 Hostos faculty, staff and students. A third activity was a common intellectual experience among students from Sociology and Introduction to Film courses. Specifically, a cross-generational conversation about sexuality, age, race, and gender explored a journey of struggle, love, endurance, and hope by gay men from different generations, as well as the need of dialogue among all LGTBQI generations. The fourth series event was a Quilt Project where Hostos community members crafted all quilt pieces inspired by stories from LGTBQI movement history. All these community-building moments were platforms to look back on our institution 50 year-journey as we imagine future conversations on civil rights and LGTBQI community.

Moving forward, outcomes from these dialogues indicate that we need more venues to share our LGTBQI faculty/staff perspectives. It is not only what students perceive and believe about it. On one hand, we need to hear student young voices. On the other hand, LGTBQI+ staff and faculty members come from different generations with different stories. A healthy institutional climate also means understand and value their needs and aspirations. A purposeful administration role is needed to revitalize our previous Safe Zone movement and offer meaningful training in collaboration with the counseling office. In this regard, faculty members also suggested to host development opportunities to break down gender binary scope present across the curriculum and explore ways to include pluralism, identity and intersectionality in it.

Overall, the Hostos commemoration of Stonewall Riots reinforces our institution mission and history embodying a 50-year journey of social justice and opportunities for historically disadvantaged social groups. The Center for Teaching and Learning is part of it and looks forward to creating faculty development opportunities fostering a climate of inclusion and respect in the classroom and beyond.
INTEGRATING TWO PERSPECTIVES ON OBSTACLES TO STUDENT LEARNING: A REAL AHA! MOMENT

One afternoon in the fall of 2018, two faculty members sat down to discuss the cornerstone research assignment for the Foundations of Education course, EDU 101, and the ways students have been navigating that assignment. One was the instructor for multiple sections of the course (Sarah), and the other the library liaison for Early Childhood Education (Linda). That afternoon, what began as a routine check-in became revelatory for both of us. Sarah and her colleagues could tell that students were struggling with specific aspects of the assignment, based on questions in class and papers submitted, while Linda and other faculty librarians had gathered impressions from a different perspective, via countless one-on-one interactions at the library reference desk with students who were struggling to understand the assignment and meet professors’ expectations. Among the things that came to light that day was the idea that many students didn’t fully grasp a key concept behind a “pro and con” research assignment—the idea that expert opinion is not always unanimous. The “Buzzword Assignment,” as it is called, asks students to select a topic from a list of current issues in early childhood education, find and analyze a certain number of sources on the topic and, through a series of scaffolded steps, produce a research paper that covers the background and arguments on both sides of the issue.

Drawing on anecdotal evidence shared among reference librarians, Linda was able to describe students’ difficulties with the simplified directive to find three pro articles and three con articles—since most academic sources on any topic will naturally lay out all sides of an issue before offering evidence or reasoning to advocate for one side or another.

Sarah realized that she was making some inaccurate assumptions about students’ understanding that were undermining their ability to succeed with this assignment. Scholars at Indiana University have written about the process of “decoding” a discipline, whereby faculty members, who are experts in their fields, work to identify the “bottlenecks” that keep students, as novice scholars, from successfully completing their academic assignments (Díaz, Middendorf, Pace, & Shopkow, 2008). Some bottlenecks develop because of students’ lack of understanding of what Meyer and Land call “threshold concepts” (2012), the foundational understandings that allow experts in a discipline to succeed at the highest level, concepts that we, as faculty, have picked up along the way but may not even remember lacking as novices. In this vein, Sarah has learned not to start with the idea of “pro and con,” but to begin by talking about expert knowledge and opinion, and then introduce the notion that experts may have conflicting perspectives on the same evidence, or may prioritize different kinds of evidence in their analyses.

As we shared impressions of students’ struggles with the Buzzword Assignment, we also realized it was time to pause, and back up, and redesign our approach to supporting students’ research process. We saw that what students really needed was support for something that had largely been left out of the equation: critical reading. Students don’t necessarily come to college ready to navigate academic and scholarly documents, focus on what’s important, pull out the information
that matches their need, and ask questions of the material based on prior knowledge and an informed worldview. They need to learn these strategies and practice them.

Back in May of 2018, we had both participated in the workshop sponsored by the Hostos Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program featuring Steven Pearlman and David Carillo of The Critical Thinking Initiative (https://www.thecriticalthinking-initiative.org/). About three months later, on that fateful date in fall of 2018, Linda shared with Sarah a critical reading activity design she had developed during the WAC workshop, and the two discussed their interest in the material presented by Pearlman and Carillo. Together they designed a sequence of critical reading/writing activities, which Sarah was able to pilot in two sections of EDU 101 that fall, revise and use again in multiple sections in spring of 2019.

The sequence of activities that emerged through these iterations further scaffolds an already scaffolded research assignment, and multiple steps in the process are supported by material in an online guide that Linda has customized (http://guides.hostos.cuny.edu/EDU101), with links and instructions for carrying out the various stages in the process. Early in the semester, Sarah gives students an article and asks them to apply the critical reading activity Linda had developed, which directs them to notice how the author covers the complexity of the topic, discussing: 1) what is the main point of the article; 2) what is unknown or under debate; 3) how does the author weigh evidence; and 4) do they draw conclusions? The structure was “I (Sarah) do it with you,” “you do it in groups,” then “you do it individually.” They used highlighting, margin notes, sticky notes, special icons or symbols, etc. on the article itself. They are already practicing critical reading even before being prompted to search for sources on their own.

Then, once students have chosen a topic, they are directed to a database full of expert encyclopedia articles, beginning to discover strategies for finding sources as they seek to gather background information. Again, instructions and links for this part of the research process are in the online guide for the course. Locating a relevant article, they once again apply the critical reading activity. These steps are repeated as students do another critical reading of an article they have found using a specific Google search technique that helps them locate credible news articles—again, instructions available to students in the online guide. Sarah also has them keep these annotated documents in a special folder they bring to class each day. They reference them throughout the semester.

At this juncture—when students have already done some database and Internet searching, developed some background knowledge, and practiced a method for critical reading multiple times, Linda and Sarah co-facilitate a library instruction session where students practice strategies for breaking apart and managing a topic, developing keywords and search queries, using the Hostos Library’s OneSearch tool to locate articles, and performing preliminary evaluation of sources. Linda has noticed a marked improvement in students’ preparedness to participate in these workshop activities, compared with students in previous semesters. This is anecdotal at this point, but what we’ve found is very encouraging. Following the workshop, in addition to reviewing students’ work at each scaffolded stage of the assignment, Sarah covers in class how to use concept mapping to organize a paper, how to paraphrase, and how to construct a strong paragraph. Across nearly two semesters, Sarah has noticed an improvement in students’ research papers, and she and Linda will be analyzing student work in a more formal way in the coming year.

References


Linda Miles is Assistant Professor, OER Librarian, and Liaison Librarian to the faculty of Early Childhood Education and the Visual and Performing Arts. Before coming to Hostos, she served for four years as Public Services and User Experience Librarian at Yeshiva University, and began her career in the library of the Lincoln Center Institute, an arts education organization. Recent publications include “But What Do the Students Think: Results of the CUNY Cross-Campus Zero-Textbook Cost Student Survey” (Open Praxis, 11(1), 2019) and “Egalitarian Teams in Action: Organizing for Library Initiatives” (Urban Library Journal, 32(2), 2017). She is currently co-authoring a book, How to Thrive as a Library Professional: Achieving Success and Satisfaction, for Libraries Unlimited (Oct 2019). Linda received an Early-career Librarian Scholarship from ACRL (2017) and an IMLS Laura Bush 21st-Century Librarian Scholarship (2009-11). She holds an MLS from St. John’s University and a PhD in theatre history and criticism from the University of Texas at Austin. Linda’s current research interests include students’ reading and college-readiness, and game design for media literacy instruction.

Prof. Church is Assistant Professor and Chair of Education Department. As a member of the faculty, Prof. Church teaches courses in the Foundations of Education, Language Arts for Young Children, Multicultural Education, Special Education, and Child Development. In her role as Chair, she serves on the College Wide P&B, Chairs, Coordinators and Directors Committee, and the Academic Council. She is a member of the Senate Budget and Finance Committee and the Allied Health Retention Committee. For the Education Department, she chairs the department’s P&B and Curriculum Committees. With Medgar Evers College she was instrumental in producing an Early Childhood Education degree articulation agreement with their Education Department. For the Early Childhood Education Unit, she is the liaison for the JumpStart! Partnership, which places students in Bronx public schools for their internships.

A wonderful celebration and culmination of five year of our Title V grant. The accomplishments included serving 4000 students and 328 class sections with supplemental instruction, training and supporting 122 peer leaders, 75 faculty participating in research, capstones, or conferences leading to 10 peer-reviewed publications and 15 conference preventions by faculty and students. Thank you to our Title V team and the college campus for your inspiring work and dedication.
You have your group assignment or assignments set up for the semester. You are all excited about using groups in your class. You know your students will resist because we all know that students hate to work in groups. How many times have you heard that statement? However, you are convinced that your assignments will garner the full support of the students. Okay. So, let’s see some ways that you can prepare the students for group work and make your group assignments successful.

Begin by changing the name from groups to teams. Most people are more comfortable with the word team than group. Team connotes community and connection. Group connotes for some people a more negative approach to working with others.

Form the teams before the first day of class. Since you have the class roster before the first day of class, you can begin to form the teams. You may want to consider forming the teams so that each team is diverse according to major, gender, or language. The idea is to have the students sit with people other than their friends or people whom they know from other classes.

For those of you uncomfortable with pre-arranging teams, you can do so randomly on the first day of class. There are several ways to select students randomly.

Whatever method you choose, the idea is to have the students be comfortable with each other before beginning any team assignment, whether regularly for in-class assignments or for the one main team project at the end of the semester.

Once the teams are formed, have the students introduce themselves to each other with any type of icebreaker. Again, you are setting the stage for the students to be comfortable with each other so that they can work effectively as a team.

Now, you are probably saying to yourself, “All of this work just to accomplish one group assignment?” Good point. As with everything in life (and teaching is a part of life), the more preparation, the better the outcome. So, no matter how simple the team or in-class team assignment, the better the outcome of the assignment if the students are more comfortable working with each other on a regular basis.

If you plan on creating one team assignment, scaffold the process by having students work in teams on a simple in-class assignment. The assignment may be a portion of the final team assignment. Students need to work with each other on a consistent basis before tackling the final team project. You may want to assign an in-class team assignment once or twice a month before the final team project, and these assignments should be very simple.

For those of you who ask students to critique their work with their peers, you can assign them to work with a partner within the team and then share out with the team. The students will be more engaged when they know their peers whom they see and interact with on a regular basis.

Set the stage for successful team projects and assignments by forming teams early and providing several in-class opportunities for the students to work with their teams. In this setting, you will also learn of any problems that the teams are experiencing early in the semester and avoid the end-of-semester project complaints from team
members that a student in the team is not working effectively.

Now, that enthusiasm for that perfect team assignment you created will be heightened when you form and work with the teams early in the semester.

For more ideas and feedback on working in teams, you can join us at our monthly meetings of the Focus Group on Incorporating Group Assignments in the Classroom. We will meet again in September.

**BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE**

Sandy Figueroa is an Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Office Technology Unit in the Business Department at Eugenio Maria de Hostos Community College since 1979. She also teaches as an adjunct faculty member in the Business Department of the School of Professional Studies. Professor Figueroa serves on a number of committees at Hostos. She received both her bachelor’s degree and master’s degree in Business Education from Hunter College. Prior to teaching at Hostos Community College, Professor Figueroa taught in high school for seven years and was the business department chairperson at St. Gabriel High School in New Rochelle for three years.

**HOSTOS READS**

**Hostos Reads 2018-19: A Year of Thinking in Community by Lisa Tappeiner and Silvia Reyes**

During the 2018-2019 academic year, faculty and staff from a broad range of disciplines and programs gathered to discuss the Hostos Reads! selection, How to Think: A Survival Guide for a World at Odds by Alan Jacobs. Jacobs believes that while our thinking often gets us into trouble, we can change the way we think for the better by avoiding pitfalls such as believing we can think independently, and replacing thought with popular catchphrases and keywords. But can we put these ideas into practice in our classrooms?

Discussions centered around ways to use the book in teaching and working with students. A helpful summary from the CBC radio (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) distills Jacobs’ arguments to five steps that are closely related to teaching and learning:

1. Just wait five minutes – many classroom activities such as think-pair-share and free writing operate on the principle that your thinking will be clearer and response will be better after pausing a few minutes to reflect.

2. Amplify constructive voices – this relates to how we facilitate discussion or which texts we assign to students; considering solutions is part of learning about problems.

3. Let go of the idea that you need to think for yourself – when we ask students to work in groups, we do it because good ideas arise from discussion and sharing knowledge.

4. Stop comparing conversation to warfare – how do we mediate conflict and differences of opinion in our classrooms?

5. Be fair to opposing views – how do we represent ideas in our classrooms we don’t agree with? How do we educate in a context where scientific consensus is being called into question?
The book this year served as a guide for raising questions and drawing attention to the ways in which our thinking can get us into trouble, particularly in a social media environment that encourages us to respond to posts and images quickly and passionately, but not thoughtfully or compassionately. By contrast, Hostos Reads! was an opportunity for faculty and staff from different disciplines to meet each other, discuss our impressions and experiences and build a stronger community.

Winning Book 2019 - 2020

![The Hate U Give poster]

"Absolutely riveting!"
JASON REYNOLDS

"Stunning."
JOHN GREEN

### Hostos Reads Workshops

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<td>B-501</td>
<td>Hostos Reads Kickoff</td>
<td>Tappeiner &amp; Reyes</td>
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<td>3:30 - 4:30pm</td>
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<td>B-501</td>
<td>Hostos Reads: Film Viewing</td>
<td>Tappeiner &amp; Reyes</td>
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[https://commons.hostos.cuny.edu/hostosreads](https://commons.hostos.cuny.edu/hostosreads)
Greetings from the Service Learning and Civic Engagement Committee!

Our committee has been hard at work in 2018-2019 and we want to share with the larger Hostos community what we have been working on, where we are headed in 2019-2020, and how the committee and/or coordinator can serve faculty and students. After a decade as the founding chairperson, Prof. Sandy Figueroa stepped down as chair in Spring 2018 but continues to serve on the committee and mentor the newly elected chair. We added “civic engagement” to our committee name (another type of Experiential Learning Opportunity (ELO), which reflects our expanded purview. With the support of CTL and OAA, we added a coordinator position. We begin the academic year with a 15-person committee that includes representation from most departments and several programs and divisions.

In September of 2018, the committee completed a self-assessment tool designed by Andrew Furco. We examined our results quantitatively using Google Forms by putting Furco's rubric into a simple survey and set our agenda for 2018-2019 using that self-assessment.

For Institutional Support, we requested and received support for a Coordinator and strengthened communication with the Registrar’s Office to ensure service learning (and eventually civic engagement) courses can be easily located in CUNYFirst. To examine Faculty Knowledge, Awareness, Involvement, and Support, we facilitated a New Faculty Orientation workshop, presented at Hostos CTL’s Teaching Day, came up with new procedures for committee terms and welcoming new members, and updated our CTL website with the help of CTL staff. We identified Student Awareness, Opportunities, and Leadership as an area that needs particular attention so we 1) increased the visibility of SL designated courses both within CUNYFirst and on campus with fliers, 2) added a student to the committee, explored ways to leverage social media, designated four new SL courses. Although we have many strong community-based organizations, our self-assessment pointed out several areas to improve in the area of Community Partner Awareness, Voice, and Leadership. Several committee members attended the Career Services Community Based Organization (CBO) Breakfast and the committee worked with Career Services to learn new tracking tools that will improve communication with CBOs and Career Services. Finally, like every other area of the college, we too focused on Evaluation and Assessment. We requested and obtained data from Institutional Research and examined the effectiveness of SL courses and presented our self-assessment model of growth and sustainability at Guttman’s Experiential Learning Opportunity (ELO) Symposium.

Moving forward, our committee strives to communicate better with units, departments, and programs at Hostos to engage more faculty who are utilizing high impact practices that dovetail or are already service-learning and/or civic engagement courses. To this end, we will be reaching out to units, programs, and departments to invite faculty who are interested in and/or engaged in this work to teach these courses as designed service-learning OR civic engagement (two separate designations in CUNYFirst) in Spring 2020.

The coordinator will seek to build bridges among faculty who are already engaged in this work and to increase the awareness of these courses through course designations, advertisement, and communication with advising and student leadership.

Community colleges were “created to democratize both American higher education and the student who came through their open doors.”2 At Hostos, my experience teaching service-learning courses has been in the context of ESL students in a learning community (SOC 101 and ESL 35/36) who have walked around the block to Patterson Senior Center starting in 2014. This group of students has learned not only about sociological topics from the seniors’ (my co-teachers) stories of their childhoods in Puerto Rico, in the Deep South, and in the Bronx but they have also been able to think about policy issues and activism as they witnessed flooding in the basement-level senior center and an extended period in which the center closed because Patterson Houses had no water, too much heat or not enough heat, and through the seniors’ stories of being fearful of gun violence, drugs, and neglect of community spaces in their communities.

With the U.S. Census and an election year in 2020, it is more important than ever to provide high quality opportunities for Hostos students to participate in ELOs. Our students have firsthand knowledge of structural inequalities and as Franco says, “these students [community college students]...will be prepared for lives of critical inquiry and not active participation, refusing to accept the perpetuation and masking of social structural inequality wherever they see it and experience it. And, most importantly, they will work as civically engaged citizens to help America better fulfill its promise of equal opportunity for all” (2006).

In solidarity and service,
Sarah & the SL-CE Committee

Chairperson, Service Learning and Civic Engagement Committee

Service Learning and Civic Engagement Coordinator

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Sarah L. Hoiland is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Hostos Community College, which is located in the South Bronx. She taught in the Florida College System for 5 years (2008-2013) at Polk State College prior to CUNY and still feels very much at home in central Florida. Her areas of pedagogical research include numeracy and faculty development, service-learning, and online learning assessment.
If you can read the title of this essay, you know basic Emoji. For those who are beginning learners of this language, it means: “I’m running 30 minutes late. I’m so sorry.” (It should be noted that I use the word Emoji to refer to the entire language system and emojis when I talk about individual symbols.)

An essential limitation that writers of digital messages face is that non-verbal cues such as tone of voice, facial expressions, and gestures are not available in digital discourse. People engaged in face-to-face communication draw heavily upon these cues to interpret how what is being said should be interpreted. To compensate for this shortcoming, computer users first began adapting features of the keyboard to convey how their messages should be read. This was when emoticons (emotion icons) came into being as early as the 1980s; symbols such as colons, parentheses, semicolons, and hyphens were combined to create smiley faces :, sad faces : ( or winky faces ;) to provide further information about the intended meaning of a message. These were early attempts to provide contextual information to written digital communication.

In response to the obvious inadequacies of using symbols provided by the keyboard, emojis began to emerge in the late 1990s in Japan. The word emoji is derived from the Japanese words e (picture) and moji (character). What began with 176 colorful characters signifying emotions, moods, or events has become a catalogue of about 2,000 characters that now include food items, animals, objects, holiday themed items, means of transportation to name just a few. However, new emojis cannot be added indiscriminately to the existing list; on the contrary, suggestions for new emojis are the Unicode Consortium, which stipulates the international standards for representations in digital media, and only Unicode-approved emojis can be used by software companies.

As part of my preliminary research on digital communication, I asked about 50 people who regularly received and sent messages on smart phones about their use of emojis, what they believed the limitations of communication via these symbols were, and if they thought that Emoji was a universal language. All of these texters used emojis to varying degrees; from just a few within written text to many that sometimes substitute text. The most frequently used items within this group were 😊, 😂, 😎, and 😗.

The majority of them agreed that emojis conveyed the feelings of the sender; often served to “soften the blow” of a message that could be misinterpreted as offensive or harsh; that they might spicke up a conversation that could otherwise be perceived as boring, and set the tone of a conversation (e.g., joking, being sarcastic or serious). However, some of the respondents mentioned less common usages of emojis. For example, one person said that she used emojis when she has run out of things to say in a conversation but felt that she could not end it abruptly. Another texter assigned idiosyncratic meanings to emojis to create a ”secret language” that only he and a few close friends could decipher. In fact, research has found that individuals frequently “repurpose” emojis when communicating with close friends, family, and partners. In these cases, the writers wish to maintain close relationships by expressing feelings that may be difficult to put into words.

Several of the respondents pointed out that using emojis, saves time and overcomes word restrictions imposed by software applications; for instance,
Twitter limits its messages to 140 words, and some emojis can represent a whole sentence such as 😂, which stands for: “I’m laughing so hard that I have tears in my eyes.”

When it comes to the universality of Emoji, many people in my group believed that some symbols may be understood across many cultures, (e.g. 😊 and 😍) while the meanings of others - in fact, of quite a few of them - seem to be culture-specific. One individual pointed out that the face with a long nose 😈 would be readily understood in the U.S. and Europe to mean that someone is a liar or lying; in other countries where the story of Pinocchio is not known, people would perhaps be befuddled when seeing this emoji. Another person referred to the emoji of two hands pressed together, 🙏, which in some countries represents a greeting, in others gratefulness, while in the U.S. it mainly signifies prayer.

Studies have suggested that the assessment of feelings expressed though emojis may be based to a large degree on the viewer’s individual interpretation. One would think that if a picture is worth a thousand words, meanings expressed by emojis should be fairly easy to understand.

Imagine sending this 😴 to a friend, which, according to Unicode, indicates that you are sleepy. This emoji could also be easily interpreted as you are sad or have a drippy nose, and prompt your friend to write something back to that effect, which, in turn, may confuse you, and so forth. So a picture may be worth a thousand words but in Emoji the interpretation of these words may depend on the eye of the beholder.

Most of my respondents agreed that misunderstandings are quite common in Emoji conversations not only because of cross-cultural miscommunications or differing interpretations of a symbol but also because different platforms (e.g., Apple, Android, Microsoft) use slightly different renditions of the same emoji so that the emoji being sent may look different from the one received at the other end. However, an effort to make emojis more uniform across platforms has been under way for a few years now.

Some in my group also pointed out that an Emoji form of slang exists, which, like spoken slang, is always in flux; meanings change, and it is difficult to keep up with the latest trends. This can be a mine field, especially for people not fluent in Emoji like some older users. Younger texters reported that they have to tell older relatives not to use certain seemingly harmless emojis such as a fruit or vegetable to avoid double-entendres, often of a sexual nature.

Attempts have been made to “translate” or write lengthier passages solely in Emoji (e.g., an article in the Wall Street Journal, a Shakespeare sonnet), but most people would be hard-pressed to make any sense of these. In order to learn more about the limitations of Emoji, I asked some people who described themselves as fairly fluent in Emoji to write the sentence, “We visited Rome last year, it was wonderful.” Interestingly, the messages were very much alike across individuals. For example, everyone used 🇮🇹 to express “we;” and ✈️ (or another airplane emoji) for “visited.” Almost everyone found it difficult to convey “Rome” in Emoji as there does not seem a symbol representing the city; thus, many used emojis related to Italy such as 🇮🇹 or 🇮🇹. Another problem was the past tense markers “last year” and “went,” which some writers solved by inserting a calendar emoji 📅, which does not truly convey the intended meaning. The second part of the sentence, “it was wonderful” didn’t pose problems and was typically expressed by a smiley face expressing joy.

What I realized during my research was that Emoji or some future mutation of it is here to stay. Even if some sceptics seem to think that “writing in pictures” may produce deficient writers, Emoji will most likely not replace written alphabets and characters but be one option that writers have to enrich written communication.
In order to fulfill its mission of promoting excellence in teaching and learning, The Center for Teaching and Learning hosts a series of colloquiums throughout the academic year. The purpose of these sessions is to provide an opportunity for faculty and members of the college community to gather and discuss topics of interest in an informal, relaxed setting. As members of the CTL Advisory Committee, Prof. Sarah Hoiland, Prof. Andy London and I organized a colloquium in the fall of 2018 to discuss the role and use of social media at Hostos.

Twenty years have passed since social media was first introduced. In that short time, the phenomenon has taken over all spaces of modern life, met with joy by some and chagrin by others. Institutions of higher education have grappled with the repercussions, creating policies which straddle the line between honoring free speech rights while protecting vulnerable communities. We wanted to know: what is CUNY and Hostos' social media policies? What is protected speech? What can be said? What shouldn’t be said? Accepting that the environment in which we live and work has shifted, we wanted to know how faculty, administrators and students, could leverage the opportunities of this evolving technology and work collaboratively with one another to navigate it.

Faculty, students, administrators and staff engaged in a lively discussion regarding social media use at Hostos. A panel of experts included Prof. Catherine Lewis who discussed the many ways faculty can use social media to better connect with their students. Lisanette Rosario, Director of Career Services, encouraged use of social media to promote visibility and showcase one’s talents when job searching. Carlos Guevara, Director of Educational Technology and CTL, and Richard Pietras, Communications Manager, informed all of the various ways in which Hostos utilizes social media to celebrate accomplishments by members of the college community. Finally, Hostos alumni Axsell Bonilla's artwork adorned the event space as he discussed the importance of social media in allowing him to make his work more visible.
Attendees enjoyed the event, calling it “interactive and enlightening”, “clear and concise” and appreciated “hearing many voices about teaching and career info”. Many expressed their desire to continue the conversation: “I wish there was more time for questions and comments.”

We’d like to thank all the panelists for sharing their expertise, and to all who attended for helping to make the event a great success!

Faculty from across the college met together in the final week before summer break for CTL’s 10th annual “Spa Day” professional development event. This year the planning team sought to provide a complement to the content-rich “Day Zero” event that took place in January, looking for ways to prompt reflection and critical discussion via activities that are deeply engaging, relaxing, and fun—in other words, working intentionally to get a little bit of “spa” back into “Spa Day.” Juno Morrow, Assistant Professor in the Humanities Department, facilitated an “Event Jam,” loosely based on an activity pioneered by game designer Stone Librande. Faculty convened in cross-disciplinary groups, and each group was charged with planning a hypothetical event on campus, limited by certain constraints, such as audience, event type, topic, and budget/location/schedule.

As an example, one group designed a week-long workshop series to teach recent Somali refugees how to facilitate art therapy sessions in Bronx public schools, using the A building atrium and a meager budget of $100. The group had to work together creatively in order to accommodate the interests and needs of their audience, and through discussion they considered myriad issues, realizing the limitations of their own cultural awareness. At the end of the morning session, Professor Lisa Tappeiner and Silvia Reyes, Director of Hostos’ Title V initiative, unveiled Angie Thomas’s The Hate U Give (HarperCollins, 2017) as Hostos’ 2019-2020 Hostos Reads! selection. Without giving too much away, this award-winning work of fiction follows a teenager as she navigates the intricacies of race and place and dignity and danger in her world. In the coming academic year, faculty and students will explore the novel’s narrative and its connections to the college curriculum and students’ lives.

After a presentation by Gena Farmer and Tanieka Wright of the College Connects program, who led participants in an exploration of the concepts of self-care and mental well-being, the “Carnival” segment of the day provided an opportunity for faculty to let down their hair, relax, and have fun together. Individuals were able to select from among several activities, including: a fast-action matching card game; a couple of reflective practices, one using a predictive text generator to create a collective story of the year and another using an iPad drawing and painting app to develop personal visual reflections of the day’s experiences; a card game that builds quantitative reasoning (QR) skills; mask-making; and juggling. The final reception included a “6-word story” reflective activity, along with celebratory photos and much conversation and merriment. All-in-all, the day-long “Hostospalooza” event met several goals shared by the planning team: the activities were both engaging and enlightening, and provided space for discussion of issues that are sometimes difficult or simply absent from consideration; faculty had opportunities to work collaboratively across disciplines in new ways; and we got to relax a little and have fun together.
Teaching Day 2019 Recognizes Faculty Instruction and Service & Center for Teaching and Learning Initiatives

The instruction and service of faculty at Hostos Community College was recognized on “Teaching Day,” Tuesday, May 7, 2019 by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) coinciding with National Teaching week. The day started with a poster display featured in the A-Atrium, followed by networking in the Hostos Café of faculty and students.

The CTL Initiatives were featured throughout the day and were also included in the program booklet, for instance, CTL faculty inquiry groups were listed, including Service Learning & Civic Engagement, Peer Observation Improvement Network for Teaching (POINT), Team-Based Learning, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), Writing Group, and Touchstone. Also included in the program booklet was an ad advancing zero textbook cost courses.

The day culminated with a program in the Hostos Café. Dr. Denise Cummings-Clay, Assistant Professor-Education Department, welcomed attendees to the event. Dr. Christine Mangino, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, made remarks highlighting the value of faculty teaching, service, and research toward advancing excellent student learning outcomes. The program continued with a “Teaching Day” song, composed by Dr. Cummings-Clay, and performed by the students enrolled in the course, EDU 109 – Music and Movement.

Service Learning & Civic Engagement at Hostos was addressed by Dr. Sandy Figueroa, Associate Professor-Business Department, Dr. Biao Jiang, Assistant Professor-Natural Sciences, and Dr. Cummings-Clay, Assistant Professor-Education Department. This presentation was followed by one presented by Dr. Sonia Maldonado, Assistant Professor-Education Department, entitled, “Connecting Sabbatical Experience & Service in Puerto Rico.”

The program also featured a focus on the “Hostos Reads” Initiative. Ms. Silvia Reyes, Title V Director, and Prof. Elisabeth Tappeiner, Associate Professor-Library Department) led attendees in a dialogue on the campus’ reading book, “How to Think” by Alan Jacobs. Ms. Nana Mukbaniani, Quantitative Reasoning Fellow-CTL, engaged attendees in an exercise of how to infuse QR/QL in teaching.

Prof. Cynthia Jones, Lecturer-English Department & CTL Co-Director, and Mr. Carlos Guevara, EdTech Director & CTL Co-Director made closing remarks.

The CTL Teaching Day Organizing Committee was comprised of Dr. Denise Cummings-Clay, Chair, Dr. Eddy Garcia, Lecturer-Business Academic Department, Dr. Andrew London, Instructor-Humanities, Dr. Terence Brenner, Associate Professor-Mathematics Department, and Ms. Nana Mukbaniani, Quantitative Reasoning Fellow-CTL.
This event was born out of the need to share available resources and communicate important information to faculty in a timely and effective way. When proposed to the Provost, she liked the idea of having a professional development day right before the start of the semester and gave the approval to create this event. After many planning meetings of the Center for Teaching and Learning Advisory Council, we felt greatly satisfied with the success of its first annual Day Zero. More than eighty-five faculty, staff, and administrators attended this all-day event of panels and presentations. Feedback from participants identified the tips, techniques, and strategies as useful. Additionally, attendees expressed their level of engagement was very high. There were some recommendations presented that we are looking forward to implementing in order to have a more effective and successful Day Zero 2020.
### ACHIEVEMENTS

The Center for Teaching and Learning would like to Congratulate the following Faculty for these achievements:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title and Department</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrea Fabrizio</td>
<td>Associate Professor &amp; Chairperson, English</td>
<td>The Teagle Foundation awarded Hostos English professors Andrea Fabrizio and Gregory Marks a $275,000 grant to lead the implementation of Core Books: A Multi-Campus CUNY Humanities Proposal, an initiative inspired by Hostos' application of Columbia University's core curriculum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gregory Mark</td>
<td>Associate Professor, English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ernest Ialongo</td>
<td>Associate Professor, Behavioral and Social Sciences</td>
<td>Professor Ernest Ialongo published &quot;Work on Italian Migration&quot;, and he has co-authored a fascinating and timely paper on migration in Italy with Teresa Fiore, Associate Professor of Modern Languages at Montclair State University.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joelle González-Laguer</td>
<td>Adjunct Professor, Behavioral and Social Sciences</td>
<td>Professor Joelle González-Laguer receives Retrospective and award winning filmmaker as part of the 9th Annual Latino &amp; Native American Film Festival (LANAFF).</td>
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<td>Linda Anderson, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Professor, Behavioral and Social Sciences</td>
<td>Professor Linda Anderson, Ph.D., is one of three authors and clinical psychologists whose upcoming book, <em>Silent Agreements: How Unspoken Expectations Ruin Our Relationships</em>, has been released internationally by Crown Publishing Group.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linda Hirsch</td>
<td>Professor, English</td>
<td>“EDCast” with Linda Hirsch wins two more Telly Awards. This year’s “EdCast” award-winning programs were “A Conversation with André Aciman: Whose Text is it Anyway?” and “New York City Men Teach: Bringing Men of Color into the Classroom.” “EdCast” has now won five Telly Awards.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Hoiland</td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Behavioral and Social Sciences</td>
<td>Sarah Hoiland was selected a 2019 Fellow by the American Council of Learned Societies. New research: “Women and Motorcycle History: Rethinking the Hollister Riot” was published in the International Journal of Motorcycle Studies, offers a women-focused look at what really took place.</td>
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<td>Yoel Rodríguez, principal investigator</td>
<td>Professor, Natural Sciences</td>
<td>The National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded Hostos Community College of The City University of New York (CUNY) a $999,400 grant for scholarships in STEM. Yoel Rodríguez, principal investigator, worked with a team of co-principal investigators: Professors Nieves Angulo, Clara Nieto-Wire and Antonios Varelas to create the program, which is a real game changer in STEM studies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antonio Varelas</td>
<td>Associate Professor, Behavioral and Social Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clara Nieto-Wire</td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nieves Angulo</td>
<td>Professor &amp; Chairperson, Mathematics</td>
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**LINK:** [https://commons.hostos.cuny.edu/ctl/achievements/](https://commons.hostos.cuny.edu/ctl/achievements/)
Maria Subert, Assistant Professor, Humanities
Professor Maria Subert published a new article “From Hate Speech to Hate Crimes: Hungary’s Roma Murders” in the journal Contemporary Justice Review.

Carlos Guevara, Director of EdTech & Co-Director of CTL
Kate S. Wolfe, Assistant Professor, Behavioral and Social Sciences
Kate Lyons, Assistant Professor, Librarian
Jacqueline Disanto, Associate Professor, Education
I am very proud to share another milestone in my professional career. My first book, co-authored by my dear colleagues Kate Wolfe and Kate Lyons, and with contributions from esteemed colleagues and members of my team was published on August 16, 2019. "The Development of Educational Technology at an Urban Community College" is the result of 10 years of work with the objective of innovating and achieving a change in the organizational culture to adopt educational technology at Hostos Community College. It is available on Amazon.com, Palgrave McMillan and other important online outlets. Getting ready and working on the next milestone! - Carlos Guevara, director of EdTech and co-director of CTL.

Kristopher Burrell, Assistant Professor, Behavioral and Social Sciences
Professor Kristopher Burrel published "The Dilemma of Black Citizenship: Struggling Against Perpetual Partiality Through Patriotism," on PublicSeminar.org

Congratulations to all of you!

CTL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Cynthia Jones
CTL Co-Director & Lecturer, English Department
Carlos Guevara
CTL Co-Director & EdTech Director, OAA
Luz Rivera
CTL Coordinator, OAA
Silvia Reyes
Title V Director, Office of Academic Affairs
Rayola Chelladurai
Instructor, Allied Health Sciences
Asrat Amnie
Assistant Professor, Education
Stacey Cooper
Assistant Professor, Behavior & Social Sciences
Chanh Phan
Assistant Professor, Natural sciences
Joseph Caravalho
Assistant Professor, Humanities
Terrence Brenner
Assistant Professor, Math
Linda Miles
Assistant Professor, Library
Elizabeth Porter
Assistant Professor, English
Louis Bury
Assistant Professor, English
“Demystifying Learning Mathematics - A quest to find out how we all can excel at Mathematics.”
3rd Annual Mathematics Day @ Hostos – Spring 2018, and

“The Mathematics in Diverse Disciplines – Exploring how mathematics is related to the discipline of your interest.”

The theme for the upcoming 5th Annual Mathematics Day @ Hostos projected for Spring 2020, “Experiencing Mathematics –Thinking About Life Through Mathematical Quests in Diverse Disciplines” is an invitation for presenters from all disciplines to create presentations that not only illustrate how mathematics is used in a given discipline, but that also challenge the audience to practice/experience the mathematical thinking practiced to advance understanding in a particular area: to recognize phenomena or situations that are not explicit to the eye, to assess conditions, to clarify situations, to identify facts, to discover inconsistencies, to make decisions, to support equality, and to create solutions among others.

Interested presenters for the 5th Annual Mathematics Day @ Hostos during Spring 2020, are welcome to contact the coordinator of the event, Prof. Clara Nieto-Wire at cnieto-wire@hostos.cuny.edu at the beginning of the fall semester (September-October). All new and returning presenters are welcome to participate. We highly encourage interested presenters to contact us as soon as possible and to let us know the area of your field of expertise that you would like to use for the development of your presentation for the 5th Annual Mathematics Day @ Hostos. This will help us to assemble the event in such way that we can achieve the overall goal of this conference. We are also planning to have a seminar/workshop at the end of October for anyone interested in learning more about preparing presentations to achieve “Experiencing Mathematics Through Mathematical Quests in Diverse disciplines.”

Students’ feedback indicates the positive impact of this event. Students have reported that Mathematics Day @ Hostos helps them “to gain confidence in the
field of math and its applications”, and that it “is a very motivating and educating day”, “is interesting and inspiring”, “it allows us to communicate with professors and reminds us how important mathematics is in our lives”, “it was good because they were describing the outcome of mathematics that is going on in the world”, “everyone should be encouraged to participate in this event”, “it was interesting to see the views and perspectives of math and why we study it”, “it helps us learn new things about math”, and many other comments just as encouraging.

On behalf of the Mathematics Department and as the event coordinator, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all participants, collaborators, supporters, and sponsors who have made this such a unique event. It has been a great privilege working with all of you.
This past year Touchstone has continued its mission of documenting and sharing the work and the ideas of the Hostos community. Touchstone accepts essays from faculty and staff on any aspect of academic life. Not only does publication in Touchstone help faculty move a project closer to publication in peer-reviewed journals, but it also helps faculty share their work with the rest of the community at Hostos.

The upcoming issue, for instance, represents a range of topics, from the use of language by native speakers to a lesson plan that uses the New York Times application. Along with the help of the entire Center for Teaching and Learning Council, Touchstone is grateful to its editorial board whose hard work has helped the upcoming issue come together.

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 external 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: The Hate you Give by Angie Thomas

Send your articles using discipline appropriate citation to Dr. Jason Buchanan (jbuchanan@hostos.cuny.edu) by December 31, 2019.