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"Taken from studies of butterfly wings and other patterns in nature, such as grass, sunshine, and fish, my interest lies in the moment of clarity when there is a sense of suspended time—the instant when the future is in question."

*Jenna Spevack*
Face to face with the camel looking out from the front cover of this issue of Nucleus, the pyramids visible behind, I feel as if I am encountering a timeless, distant, unknown, and entirely foreign world. Unknown to me perhaps, but as the back cover depicts compellingly, the world—with its richness, complexity, and incredible diversity—is here, is now, is us.

Situated in our vibrant Brooklyn waterfront community at the heart of New York City and the mouth of its great harbor, education at City Tech is place-based but not place bound. Our faculty and students, representing many origins and dozens of languages, bring the world to us, face to face, every day. At the same time, the disciplines they study, the professions and creative arts they practice, and the ever-growing battery of high-tech tools they employ enable and foster explorations and connections that are truly global. A key element in many collaborative efforts has been the role of the Library in identifying and introducing technological tools that extend the reach and depth of research and scholarship.

The news from the world as I write is not comforting. There is little cause to offer platitudes about globalization or global communities. In Japan, following a devastating earthquake and tsunami, damaged nuclear power plants leak radioactive substances. In North Africa and the Middle East, widespread upheaval has brought both tremendous exhilaration and harsh repression. In Haiti, a contested election proceeds amid still-unrepaired earthquake damage and rampant public health threats. And, both worldwide and in our own country, economic woes abound. These crises are global, but they are also local and personal.

This issue of Nucleus, exemplifying the many faces and talents of our faculty and staff, explores some of the multiple ways we at the college encounter the world and address its concerns. Appropriately, the articles look both outward and within, blending broad themes with personal perspectives, reports of individual scholarly work, and news of collaborations. The world it evokes is a complex ecosystem, a global economy, a collection of human beings, a product of history, the places we came from, the place where we live.

Most importantly, this issue raises questions. Just because we are face to face, does that mean I see you as you are, or that you see me? How does a diverse collection of people become a diverse community of learners? And, finally, the questions Paul King asks: amid the social complexities and the plethora of new tools, what is an effective teacher? How does a teacher engage and nurture students, one by one?

Bonne August, Provost
“[A broad definition of diversity] is an important principle for guiding discussions about how institutions value and define diversity, with attention to the rich array of student backgrounds and characteristics that can (and should) shape the makeup of a robust learning environment. . . . Important conversations on campus should include not only a focus on the role of race and ethnic diversity as part of the educational enterprise, but also real attention to issues of socioeconomic status, family educational background, geographic diversity, multicultural factors, sexual orientation, religious background, life experiences (e.g., military experience), unique skills and talents, and much more.”

-- Access and Diversity Policy Paper

The Faculty Commons, under the leadership of Professor Julia Jordan, convened recipients of the 2011 CUNY Diversity Awards to explore unique perspectives and potential synergies among the rich array of projects. Our goal was to affirm the many manifestations of diversity in our college community that are an essential element of its lifeblood.

Julia Jordan: Diversity is a term that is used often and may have multiple meanings. What is diversity? How will your projects enhance and strengthen diversity at City Tech?

Laureen Park: I think there are various ways to define “diversity” and a variety of ways it is valuable to a community and college. My working definition for the Asian Diversity Festival has been about representing the actual ethnic and cultural composition of the student body and faculty. The value in focusing on and making diverse backgrounds an object of study has long been acknowledged. There is a reason why African American Studies, Latin American Studies, and Asian American Studies programs have proliferated amongst colleges. They expand the notion of what it means to be human in its full, rich breadth. The fact that these studies are installed in an academic setting makes such platforms particularly meaningful and valid.

Armando Solis: In my own sphere, I see City Tech responding to the issue of diversity in providing a path for city students towards STEM careers and fields where they’re underrepresented racially and ethnically. My field in particular, bioinformatics and computational biology, is cutting edge, and so typically quite homogeneous in racial (and gender) participation—mostly white and male, with few exceptions (Asians of Indian or Chinese descent). For instance, I was at a conference in Bioinformatics Education last year, which was attended by educators and students (both undergraduate and graduate). During those moments (and it happens at every conference) when your eyes wander, I counted only one African-American attendee in an auditorium filled with more than 200 participants. It was also apparent that the composition was overwhelmingly male. Making the study of...
bioinformatics possible for our undergraduate students at City Tech has been quite revolutionary.

Amit Mehrotra: Beyond race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and a number of languages, regional differences from rural settings to urban settings, there are political and religious affiliations and socioeconomic circumstances: all of these factors are part of the mosaic at City Tech. We reflect New York and its energy, excitement, hardship and striving, its ambitious nature that draws us and challenges us.

Barbara Burke: Much of the discussion of diversity here is focused on data: counting the representation of particular populations in particular programs and measuring the educational outcomes for these populations comparatively. What is the importance of quantitative analysis when addressing diversity? What are its limitations?

Joni Schwartz: In almost every quantitative analysis, young men of color are statistically significant. Examples include: retention in high school and college, representation in the STEM disciplines, application to college, graduation rates, and also, unemployment, incarceration, socioeconomic status. Mixed methods and qualitative research are needed to tell their stories in order to provide a deeper narrative.

JJ: What issue does your Diversity Project address? What strategies will your project use to address the issue? What outcomes do you anticipate?

Soyeon Cho: The health and well-being of elderly immigrants has emerged as an important area in response to the dramatic growth of the foreign-born in the United States. According to 2000 Census data, minority populations continue to grow and make up almost 35% of the total US population. With this demographic trend, there has been an increase in research on disparities in physical and mental health among minority populations. Despite the rapidly accumulating research on physical and mental health, less attention has been paid to Asian immigrant elders’ health, especially dementia. Traditionally, dementia was considered a senile disease among Asian Americans and as a consequence, the attitude towards the disease was negative. Therefore, if a family had an older adult with dementia at home, it was considered as a shame of the family and the family did not seek help. It is unclear whether the attitudes and knowledge on dementia have changed among Asian Americans. Hence, the purpose of this proposed study is to explore the attitudes and knowledge on dementia among Asian American older adults and their family members, especially in the language of origin for one of the fastest growing segments among Asian Americans: Korean American elders.

Yu Wang: As the use of the technology related to microprocessor and microcontroller has exploded, organizations employing a diverse workforce in the field of computer engineering can supply a greater variety of solutions to problems in service, sourcing, and allocation of resources. African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Native Americans are represented in the information technology workforce in percentages that are far lower than their percentages in the population as a whole. In our Computer Engineering Technology department, African American and Hispanic American students comprise the majority. However, the student retention rate after the first year in our department is quite low, only around 40%. We have designed a two-part plan to enhance and support the learning experiences in microprocessor and microcontroller for minority students and to make efforts to promote their advancement in becoming computer engineering professionals. Outcomes we expect: first, to develop new and enhanced microprocessor and microcontroller based “hands-on” experiments; second, to develop a workshop to exhibit the newly developed “hands-on” experiments to stimulate interest among a diverse group of students and contribute to their retention, and third, to integrate study outcomes into teaching and learning in our courses as a way of continuously improving the curriculum.

Diana Samaroo: We need to give students a voice: what is the chemistry laboratory? Can you help us develop the curriculum? How can we better engage you as students? We have to engage students, especially women and minority students, so what better way than to start with an examination of our laboratory experiences and engage students in the curricular design. And through this engagement, modeling good teaching and opening conversations about the place of women and minorities in science will be part of the process. Our purpose is to improve rates of student retention in introductory chemistry by collaborating with students to design a more engaging introductory chemistry laboratory curriculum. In this project, we will pilot three new laboratory modules with a group of student volunteers. After using each module, the students will help us assess the pedagogical value of the lab modules through Student Assessment of Learning Gains (SALG) evaluations.
The students will also communicate their level of interest through blog entries. Finally, the student volunteers will help Professor Jay Deiner and me by suggesting changes to the proposed modules.

**Nancy Gonzalez:** As one of the most diverse and globalized campuses in the nation, our college has not been able to adequately address the interests of Asian/Asian American students because of the lack of a public platform where their cultures are represented. The mission of this project is therefore to increase visibility and generate discussion of Asian cultures. In order to fulfill our commitment to quality education in this age of globalization and to prepare our students to engage in the global economy, this project will creatively promote intercultural literacy and foster a better understanding of Asian diversity in New York City and the college community. In highlighting Asian cultures through various events and presentations, we aim to explore the ways in which Asian identities contribute to the on-going process of building and redefining New York as a multicultural and global community. We expect our presentations to provide an enjoyable and thought-provoking experience that engages the college community in a meaningful conversation on the diverse issues that shape the vision of Asia in New York. We envision the continuation of this project to be in the forms of online discussion and reading/study groups after the grant period.

**BB:** Is diversity an end in itself? How can institutional approaches to diversity result in greater positive self-definition for students? Greater academic success? A climate of openness and respect?

**Paul Schwartz:** The documentary film, *I'm Not Crazy: Young Men of Color, Counseling and Trauma*, has the potential to raise awareness and direct discussion to tangible strategies for engaging and re-engaging our young men of color in learning. It can be utilized multiple times in the classroom, for professional development and with student groups. The benefits of this project are potentially huge as the retention in both high school and college is of concern to all segments of society. The success of our young men has social, economic and psychological implications for us as a nation. Success of our young men educationally is an issue of civil rights and equity as well.

**Juanita But:** Education is not just about a set of methods and strategies; it is fundamentally about people. With the global population at City Tech, the challenge we face as an institution is to embrace diversity at a global level and at the same time address individual identities in our local capacity.

Globalizing our curriculum would mean broadening our vision in education and, more importantly, affording more opportunities for us to address and value the multifarious voices of our students. This process is essential to building a stronger and healthier college community, in the sense that it promotes openness and respect for others, especially those who are culturally or socially different.

**SPRING 2011 CITY TECH DIVERSITY PROJECTS**

**Asia in New York: Festival of Asian Diversity**
Juanita But, English; Nien-Tzu (Nancy) Gonzalez, Library; Amit Mehrotra, Hospitality Management; Laureen Park, Social Science

**Knowledge and Attitudes towards Dementia among Minority Elders**
Soyeon Cho, Human Services

**Integration of Student Perspectives into Development of Chemistry Lab Modules**
Jay Deiner, Chemistry; Diana Samaroo, Chemistry

**I'm Not Crazy: Young Men of Color, Counseling and Trauma**
Paul Schwartz, Counseling; Joni Schwartz, Communications

**Increasing Student Success in Bioinformatics through Inquiry-Based Modules**
Armando Solis, Biological Sciences

**Enhancing Students' Learning Experience in Microprocessor Technology**
Yu Wang, Computer Engineering Technology
Integrating geospatial analysis into teaching and research at City Tech has the potential to enhance the educational experience of our students and support expanded faculty research across all disciplines. This article proposes a geospatial initiative at City Tech and imagines the ways it would enhance and extend research and teaching. Such a project could help the college capitalize upon the unique resources, expertise, and experience already present among faculty, staff, and students. This initiative would also allow City Tech to strengthen strategic partnerships with other institutions of learning and culture in the New York area.

Made accessible and participatory, geospatial technologies have the power to enhance experiential learning and classroom content and to transform students from content consumers to content creators. As powerful as these technologies are, their pedagogical potential has yet to be fully realized. City Tech has the capability to be an innovator in the incorporation of geospatial technologies into learning. Infusing general education with the study of place puts students in the role of data analysts as well as content creators.

Long considered the exclusive purview of geographers, planners and architects, environmental scientists, and civil engineers, geospatial data analysis software and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) allow faculty to pursue research using tools previously unavailable to all members of the college community. Geospatial technologies have themselves transformed, found a home on the web, become social, and become simple. In fact, most of us use web-based geospatial tools on a daily basis, perhaps to get directions from point to point or even geocode and share our vacation photos with friends, relatives, or the world.

New media technologies enable the creation of thematic layers upon a map or representation of a place. A geospatial approach can easily be integrated into active, experiential learning approaches. As data analysts, students would use geospatial web technologies to explore how maps can address local social issues, such as environmental quality, pedestrian safety, or access to recreation. Students empowered with basic web tools or mobile devices can not only gather data but can create data to interpret, synthesize and explore a range of experiences and phenomena.

A deep and multifaceted understanding of place is evidence of multiple literacies: geographic, technological, spatial, and cultural. Place-based education is already resonant at City Tech, and the college continues to be successful at the critical first step of preparing faculty to infuse curricula with meaningful explorations of place. Programs such as the NEH-funded Retentions and Transfigurations and Water and Work, and the NSF-supported project The Brooklyn Waterfront 2050 help faculty develop curricula that use fieldwork and experiential learning to teach in a wide range of disciplines, from literature to nursing to architecture and beyond.
GIS and geospatial data analysis can benefit a much broader range of academic endeavors than those to which they have traditionally been applied. Spatial analysis allows scholars to analyze relationships among qualitative, quantitative and visual data that share a geography or place (Bodenhamer 2010), making it a useful tool for many social science and humanities disciplines. Geospatial applications also facilitate dynamic mapping, which can effectively demonstrate the effects of time on both a place and a population. Faculty can access and pursue new facets of inquiry into their areas of expertise via a geospatial approach. For example, research in community health could involve asset mapping of health resources. Hospitality and tourism research has always had a cartographic element, but the ability to analyze human patterns over time and space has the power to reveal important histories of a destination which were never obvious through other methods of analysis. While GIS has long been used in site planning in the practice of architecture, an architectural historian could use it to query the effectiveness of cultural heritage resource management. A researcher in marketing could use geospatially-facilitated inquiries to learn about demographic and purchasing patterns in a specific geography, or to generate meaningful comparisons among several places.

New York City is rich in potential partners for City Tech’s geospatial endeavors. The New York Public Library’s Citizen Cartographer project has developed an open source web-based mapping tool that allows anyone to explore New York City history by adding layers of contemporary geospatial data to early city maps. History coaxed from these hybrid documents reaches across time and place. Similar in concept but global in scope, the HyperCities project promotes participatory mapping of cities around the world over centuries or millennia. A spatial way to display history, it is used by researchers and students alike to extract meaningful histories from a complex place over time. As it relies upon participation from institutions around the world, City Tech’s participation, or the development of a similar platform, would allow our unique histories and stories to reach a global audience. The CUNY Center for Urban Research is an important provider of New York City-area geospatial data and maps, and has developed applications for mobile devices that put local historic preservation efforts into the palm of one’s hand.

Original research undertaken by City Tech students and faculty could contribute meaningfully to our shared understanding of the campus, our urban waterfront location at the crossroads of several neighborhoods, and the city (and thus our place on Earth). Integrating geospatial data analysis and geospatial data creation into the curricula of a variety of departments will provide City Tech with the means to encourage a spatial approach to classroom investigations. The process of creating and analyzing geospatial data is complex and challenging – students read, discuss, participate in field research, and learn to use technology tools to extract as-yet-untold histories of place and space. The ability to visualize data – and to teach its interpretation – is an opportunity to broaden pedagogy in humanities, social and natural sciences, and technical and professional studies.

Further reading:


Knowles, Anne Kelly, and Amy Hillier. 2008. Placing history: how maps, spatial data, and GIS are changing historical scholarship. ESRI, Inc.


Anne Leonard
Librarian and Brooklyn Waterfront Research Center Fellow
For this body of work, I use images of the environment and heavy industry to convey personal and introspective concepts. For me, images of industrial areas devoid of people allow the emergence of a feeling: one that is formed by juxtaposing the horizon with the search for intimacy with my immediate surroundings. I use the viewfinder as my secret keyhole to peer deep within myself as visual representations of my observations, fears, hopes and desires appear in the images.

A central preoccupation of my photography is to examine what is often overlooked or unnoticed, either in the past or the present. I hope that my work provides people with an opportunity to look anew at what they see every day but often take for granted. Perhaps they’ll see something they’ve missed or remember something long forgotten. The wide, still images aim to awaken memories and reconnect with a more nuanced understanding of the landscape.


Anita Giraldo

PHOTOGRAPHER
The work depicts individual pieces of matter which are captured at their tipping point.

The elements could be perceived as organizing to make up an intelligent and functioning whole or alternatively, dividing and failing to connect.

Taken from studies of butterfly wings and other patterns in nature, such as grass, sunshine, and fish, my interest lies in the moment of clarity when there is a sense of suspended time—the instant when the future is in question. The drawings are a reflection on the sometimes solid, sometimes precarious balance between matter, gravity, failure and success.
In a world where a deep economic crisis caused by the rich is being 'resolved' through attacks on the living standards, education and health care of working people around the world, the revolutionary upsurge in Tunisia, Egypt and a number of other countries in the Arab world is a breath of fresh air. While purveyors of conventional wisdom, like Tom Friedman of the New York Times, would have us believe that young people in the Arab world are revolting because they have fallen behind their peers in the rest of the world, their revolt signifies their more advanced consciousness regarding the extent to which contemporary global capitalism makes it impossible for young people in most parts of the world to have the kind of bright future to which they aspire and that they deserve.

A constellation of social, economic and political factors accounts for the emergence of the vast social movements that have caught most politicians and commentators by surprise. As in other parts of the world, the promotion of privatization and free market policies, in accordance with the prescriptions of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, has given rise to growing inequalities that undercut the ability of ordinary citizens in Tunisia, Egypt and elsewhere to meet even their most basic needs. While the technocratic elites running the IMF and the World Bank praised these countries for policies that led to seemingly impressive growth rates, what was not mentioned was that the fruits of this growth benefited a tiny proportion of the population at the top while about 40% of Egyptians, for example, were left to survive on less than $2 a day. Meanwhile, youth unemployment in these countries (as well as in other parts of the world) has been very high, even among young people with university education. These realities, combined with indignation over the massive corruption and repression practiced by the economic and political elites jointly running these countries, have clearly played a great role in bringing things to a head.

At least as important, of course, has been the role that authoritarian regimes in most of these countries have played in the geopolitical order of the Middle East. As many of the protesters in the Arab world made clear, such regimes have distinguished themselves by their servility towards American foreign policy, in particular with respect to the American-led ‘war on terror’ and the United States’ pro-Israel stance in the Palestinian conflict. Mubarak’s Egypt, for example, eagerly kept its torture chambers open for individuals that our government’s ‘extraordinary rendition’ program deemed to be of interest. Taking on some of the more distasteful tasks flowing out of our government’s foreign policy ‘initiatives’ was clearly a small price to pay when compared to the more than one billion dollars of yearly aid that our government generously dispensed to the Egyptian military. And, in view of all this, it is also not surprising that, while ordinary people around the world have stood in clear solidarity with the democratic movements in the Arab world, the US, Israeli and other Western governments can hardly hide their discomfort at the prospect of genuinely democratic governments in the Middle East that could not be trusted to make the ‘right’ decisions.

What our Tunisian and Egyptian brothers and sisters remind us is that, yes, we, ordinary citizens and working people, can bring about the change that we need and want. But to do so, we have to take to the streets and be willing to take risks and to challenge the priorities of economic and political elites that can only promise us more war, more unemployment and more unnecessary human misery.

POINT OF VIEW:
The Arab Uprisings

Costas Panayotakis
Professor of Social Science

Nucleus: A Faculty Commons Quarterly Volume 2 – Issue 3

Nucleus, from time to time, solicits essays on current topics. Views expressed in this article are solely those of the author.
Professor Emma Benardete Moll is a proponent of architectural technology education for the greater social good. She believes students should hone their professional skills by developing solutions to real social and environmental problems that are meaningful to themselves and their communities, both locally and in their countries of origin around the globe. A favorite book, *Design Like You Give a Damn* (Architecture for Humanity, 2006), argues for the importance of having architects and other professionals donate their time and expertise to address social needs. Professor Moll frames the educational challenge to City Tech this way: How can our college affirm the enormous range of cultural and linguistic resources that our students bring with them to City Tech and enable students to use these resources in the service of their professional programs of study? How can City Tech, as a college of technology, produce graduates who are not only technically proficient but also broadly educated, globally aware, and socially engaged? To that end, she proposes the creation of a Third-Year Learning Community that combines professional skills development, a community service orientation, and foreign language instruction in the context of an undergraduate research paradigm. Her idea places importance on using knowledge in the service of the community. She writes, “During their undergraduate studies, students are more receptive to the idea of community outreach and service learning than they will be once they are salaried and see their professional skills tied to a paycheck. It is important to help students see that their professional knowledge offers a way of addressing social issues that affect them.”
A Third-Year Learning Community is envisioned in which students have the opportunity to interact not only with professional architects but with other professionals whose work is increasingly relevant to architectural practice, such as engineers and construction managers. Students will develop communication skills that enable them to work with an interdisciplinary team of faculty members who will serve as a resource, a brain trust, for the students’ research projects. The proposed Learning Community will pair a third year Architecture studio with an upper level Sociology course. Every student enrolled in the course will do research on a social issue that the student chooses for its importance in his/her native country or in the American community in which the student lives.

The project seeks to build upon the enormous linguistic resources that students bring with them to City Tech. More than 41% of students were born outside of the US; our students represent a total of 136 countries and 60.8% of students report a language other than English spoken at home. These language skills are tremendously underutilized academically, yet they have the potential to be a tremendous asset in today’s global economy. Our proposal of a Third-Year Learning Community would allow our international student body a chance to show how their professional skills can effect change in their local communities, and how that change can have a global impact.

A new paradigm for foreign language instruction is being explored with the National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland. The Center will provide expertise on language instruction in the context of a multilingual student body where there are no foreign language requirements and students, with the exception of those pursuing associate degrees in Liberal Arts, cannot use financial aid to cover foreign language credits since they are non-contributory toward a degree. This project addresses a need identified by employers in a survey commissioned by the Association of American Colleges and Universities in December 2007, which indicated that employers felt that “global learning” is a “most striking area of under preparation.” (AAC&U, 2008).

The glue that will hold the Third-Year Learning Community together is research. Undergraduate research is a ‘high-impact learning practice’ in which the goal is “to involve students with actively contested questions” and “the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions.” (AAC&U, 2008). Each student’s work would be archived so that professors and future students could build upon previous work. This generative model will enable students to make a permanent contribution to the repertoire of architectural technology education case studies and build a knowledge base at City Tech for socially-engaged professional practice.

Professor Moll, Grants Outreach Coordinator, is working with a group of colleagues including Professors Illya Azaroff, Nadia Benakli, Paul King, Susan Philip, and David Smith to develop the idea and has identified the International Education and Foreign Languages (Title VI-A) program at the US Department of Education as a potential funding source, as well as several private philanthropies.

Emma Benardete Moll
Professor of Architectural Technology
EXPRESSI ONS OF ANCIENT EGYPT 2010

PHOTOGRAPHER

Maureen Neuringer

I use photography and art as an expression of my own personal point of view about the subject being captured or created. If the photograph communicates that view then I am successful. In the course of taking photographs, I find it challenging to view the world in new ways. That entails changing the ordinary straightforward view by ‘looking up’ or ‘looking down’ and being mindful of the rule of thirds. By dividing the camera’s frame into thirds both vertically and horizontally and placing the element that interests me in the intersections of that grid, I find the compositions pleasing. Photography has become a natural extension of my creative endeavors. While traveling, I have explored and been challenged by the media and it has enabled me to open up to more visual experiences.
Who knew that growing up in Minnesota and playing hockey would lead me to City Tech and to Brooklyn where I live and play for Green Gotham, a local women’s travel team. Hockey opened lots of doors for me, including a place at Cornell University where I earned a BA in Biological Sciences with concentrations in Latin American Studies and Neurobiology. As an undergraduate I studied Quechua (which is an indigenous language spoken in the Andes-South America) and began traveling to the Andes to work in public health clinics and to study Quechua. My experiences working in a clinic in Lima, Peru led me to earn a Masters in Public Health in Epidemiology at the University of Minnesota’s School of Public Health, where I focused on Infectious Diseases and Global Health. Because of my language study, I was given the opportunity to come to NYU as a Quechua-language FLAS fellow, and have been using this program as a way to build a bridge from Public Health to Anthropology. In the future, I hope to pursue a PhD in Medical Anthropology.

I am delighted to find myself at City Tech at a moment in its history where General Education is a hot topic. As a research aide in the Assessment and Institutional Research (AIR) office, I enjoy working closely with faculty and staff assessing General Education.

Tammie Cumming: Welcome to City Tech. It’s wonderful to have you as part of our team. Please share your perspective on the importance of establishing a culture of assessment for learning?

Rebecca Fisher: I am very excited to be part of the AIR team and to be working on this important initiative to redesign General Education for a 21st century college of technology. I take ‘culture of assessment’ to refer to a dynamic set of practices and activities happening throughout our CityTech community that are aimed at constantly improving programming through evidence-based assessment.

TC: Can you explain how the assessment and evaluation activities complement each other?

RF: Surely. The assessment and evaluation activities of the grant are both concerned with ensuring success and improving implementation of grant activities. The General Education, open lab, and assessment activities are interwoven in mutually supportive ways. The evaluation activities are designed to make sure that the programming we are doing is working, or that we are doing what we say we are doing. So as you can see, they articulate directly with one another.

TC: What is the primary goal of the evaluation element?

RF: A Living Laboratory: Redesigning General Education for a 21st Century College of Technology is a five-year project whose purpose is institutional transformation. The evaluation component will measure the extent to which transformation is occurring. The formative purpose of the evaluation activity means that evaluation immediately feeds back into the programming of the grant. The summative evaluation functions to provide an overall benchmark of our achievement of goals and objectives; it provides accountability for what we have done with federal funds.

TC: What do you think the biggest challenge will be in reaching the goals of revitalizing General Education?

RF: Well, I can only take a guess at this point, but I would have to say that in my experience the most challenging part of any new program is in the initial implementation phase. No matter how clear and nailed down a plan is, unforeseen issues, questions and consequences always emerge when it is being implemented. Luckily though, the implementation phase is also one of the most exciting and dynamic phases, when you start to see your plans take form and shape. Particularly in terms of the assessment and evaluation work, I think the biggest challenge will be that we will be using many different kinds of data from many different data sources to evaluate the grant goals and objectives. No worries though, I’m always up for a good challenge.
I have never taught a class without learning something new.

I have never met a student that did not have something to teach me.

I teach because I love to learn. I believe to be a teacher you need to be a lifelong learner. If I could accomplish only a few of my goals as a teacher it would be to have my students share my curiosity about the world and to imbue them with my love of learning.

My ideal classroom is filled with students enthusiastically engaged in discussions and working together to solve a problem or understand a new concept. It is noisy and exciting, and may appear a bit disorganized. I am either in the midst of a deep debate with my students or on the periphery moving around from group to group interjecting and providing gentle guidance. I believe in creating an atmosphere where my students are comfortable expressing themselves, are not afraid to make mistakes and are willing to challenge themselves to learn something new. To spark this dynamic interaction, all it will take is an inspiring problem or question.

To be an effective teacher I believe in:

**Knowing the group and building rapport.**
It’s important that my classroom atmosphere be conducive to students asking questions and, equally importantly, that students feel comfortable answering my questions even when they are uncertain of their answers. I use humor, I tell stories and I look for common experiences that bond us together. Build rapport among the group and everyone will learn.

**Recognizing and fostering creativity.**
As architects, creativity is our most valuable problem solving tool. Everyone is creative. If they do not recognize it in themselves - show it to them. Once a student has tapped into their own creativity the flood gates to knowledge will open.

**Acknowledging the accomplishment of learning.**
The greatest satisfaction comes from watching a student succeed in learning something that has challenged their abilities and stretched their limits. Acknowledge the accomplishment and the effort and they will always be willing to accept the next challenge.

**Planting seeds for future learning.**
As a lifelong learner I believe that my students will continue to learn from the lessons I have taught long after they have graduated. I am consciously aware when I teach that not everything will be understood that day, that week or even during that semester but that I am planting seeds for future learning. One of the great pleasures of being a teacher is having a former student come back for a visit to tell you they finally understand the big picture.
## FACULTY COMMONS CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

### SPRING 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>RSVP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/16</td>
<td>Preventing Plagiarism, co-sponsored with Writing Across the Curriculum</td>
<td>1:00pm-2:15pm</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:facultycommons@citytech.cuny.edu">facultycommons@citytech.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>3/17</td>
<td>Entering Mentoring: Evaluating Our Progress as Mentors</td>
<td>11:30am-12:30pm</td>
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<td>3/22</td>
<td>Data Dashboard Workshop</td>
<td>2:30pm-4:00pm</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:AIR@citytech.cuny.edu">AIR@citytech.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>3/24</td>
<td>Websupport 1</td>
<td>5:00pm-6:00pm</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:ITMS@citytech.cuny.edu">ITMS@citytech.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>4/1</td>
<td>5th Annual City Tech Research Conference</td>
<td>10:00am-3:30pm</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hschoutens@citytech.cuny.edu">hschoutens@citytech.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>4/6</td>
<td>Using RefWorks for Citation Management</td>
<td>1:00pm-2:00pm</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:msmale@citytech.cuny.edu">msmale@citytech.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>4/12</td>
<td>30th Annual City Tech Literary Arts Festival</td>
<td>6:00pm-8:00pm</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:gguida@citytech.cuny.edu">gguida@citytech.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>4/13</td>
<td>Introduction to Basic Photoshop Techniques</td>
<td>1:00pm-2:00pm</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:msmale@citytech.cuny.edu">msmale@citytech.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>4/14</td>
<td>Entering Mentoring: Developing a Mentoring Philosophy</td>
<td>11:30am-12:30pm</td>
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<td>4/14</td>
<td>2nd Dental Clinic - Spring 2011</td>
<td>6:00pm-8:00pm</td>
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<td>4/29</td>
<td>Developing Materials for Peer-Assisted Group Work</td>
<td>10:30am-12:30pm</td>
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<td>5/13</td>
<td>7th Annual CUNY Gen Ed Conference</td>
<td>8:00am-5:00pm</td>
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<td>5/26</td>
<td>Entering Mentoring: Challenges and Pathways</td>
<td>9:00am-12:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/31</td>
<td>10th Annual Summer Institute of Teaching and Learning</td>
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<td>6/2</td>
<td>Teaching Portfolio Four-Day Intensive Workshop</td>
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Contact us at extension 5225 • facultycommons@citytech.cuny.edu • http://facultycommons.citytech.cuny.edu/
Asia in New York
Festival of Asian Diversity

Chinese Calligraphy Display at the Ursula C. Schwerin Library
Curated by Professor Nancy Gonzalez

Tuesday, March 15, 11:30am-2:30pm
Showing of the film Namesake with a panel discussion to follow.
Speakers: Professors Amit Mehrotra and Mark Noonan
Moderator: Professor Laureen Park

Wednesday, March 16, 4:00pm-6:00pm
Performance by hip hop artist Taiyo Na and the band Magnetic North.
A talk with artists and Professors Tshombe Walker and Juanita But will follow.
Moderator: Professor Laureen Park

Thursday, March 17, 11:30am-2:30pm
Talk given by Afghan American poet Zohra Saed.
Moderator: Professor Susan Beningson

Atrium Amphitheater
New York City College of Technology

Project funded by Diversity Projects Development Fund of the University Affirmative Action Committee