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A Center for Teaching, Learning, Scholarship and Service

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“The Bologna Process is a far-reaching European education initiative that brings forty-nine disparate systems of higher education into a broad framework of convergence.”

Dr. Istvan Bujalos
Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence
In their meetings these days, the School General Education Committees have been identifying convergences—the places where degree programs and the disciplines they represent overlap and share essential knowledge, skills, or values. Which disciplines, for example, share a focus on evidence? Which depend on computational thinking? Innovation? Global thinking? Where is compassion an essential value and how is it developed and expressed? Where is competition rewarded?

These convergences undergird our collective thinking about the General Education that we provide to our students. Soon the circles will widen, as the faculty who represent the various baccalaureate degree programs meet with those whose departments teach courses that address general or “liberal” education, to consider how this essential knowledge, skills, and values can best be introduced, practiced, applied, and deepened over the course of a degree program and, it is hoped, through lifelong learning.

As they identify convergences, these faculty members have also been careful to note signature divergences—essential and sometimes uniquely identifying characteristics of their disciplines, professions, or industries. Although disciplinary edges have softened or blurred over the past decades, and interdisciplinarity—that most unwieldy word—has become commonplace and necessary, each field of knowledge or practice has grown from a nucleus that defines it.

The discussions of signature elements have been as rich as those about convergence, and they are as necessary to the process of reviewing General Education. We all must understand something about what history means to the historian or chemistry to the chemist. At the same time, the physicist teaching optics must be aware of how this knowledge will be understood and used by the student in radiologic technology, vision care, or telecommunications and must incorporate that awareness into pedagogy. Only when that is done well will students be able to recognize and apply the principles of physics in their work. Making such connections explicit is essential to our teaching and also to our ability to make General Education transparent to our students.

City Tech grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities initiated these rich interdisciplinary discussions. Exciting curricular projects have been generated by the grants and have stimulated others in the Learning Communities and various collaborative faculty projects. As we have continued to learn from Writing Across the Curriculum, when faculty in the disciplines broaden and deepen their attention to general skills and knowledge, students become more proficient not only in general but also in the specific material of the discipline. The new NSF I-Cubed and CPATH grants offer powerful opportunities to look beneath the surface of existing curricula and pedagogy, to embrace convergences productively, and to educate graduates who are skilled, thoughtful, ethical, and creative practitioners of their disciplines.

Bonne August, Provost
What’s New with Information Literacy at City Tech?

Maura Smale
Information Literacy Librarian, Assistant Professor

The set of competencies referred to as information literacy—the ability to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information—is increasingly important in our information- and technology-rich world. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education refers to information literacy as an essential component of any college program of study. These competencies also play a significant role in the evolving conversation about General Education here at City Tech. The City Tech Library’s instructional focus is on strengthening students’ information literacy to contribute to their success in college and beyond. Proficiency in finding, evaluating, and ethically using information is critical for students as they search for jobs, keep up with their careers, and become lifelong learners.

The latest addition to our information literacy program is the Library’s new course, LIB 1201: Research and Documentation for the Information Age. In the course we’ll introduce students to the theory and practice of research and documentation for all media, including:

- Cultural, economic and political factors that affect information and media
- The organization of information in various formats
- Developing methods for finding relevant information
- Critically evaluating information and its sources
- Copyright, fair use, and ethical use of information and media
- The role of documentation and citation

LIB 1201 may be taken to satisfy core requirements in Communications or as an elective; it’s open to all students who have completed ENG 1101. We look forward to offering the course for the first time this Spring 2010 semester.

The Library continues to support and encourage information literacy at City Tech in many other ways. Library faculty offer customized, discipline-specific research instruction for courses in all departments at the college. We are also available to collaborate with faculty to integrate information literacy into assignments and coursework, and to create course-specific research guides. The Library offers drop-in workshops for faculty, students, and other members of the City Tech community on a variety of topics including basic and advanced research skills, finding articles in databases, using other libraries, and evaluating websites.

Library faculty look forward to working with all members of the City Tech community to support our students and contribute to the academic mission of the college. For more information or to further explore the Library’s information literacy efforts, please feel free to contact me at msmale@citytech.cuny.edu or 718-260-5748.

City Tech Embraces a Culture of Assessment for Learning

A Conversation with School Deans

Tammie Cumming: City Tech is poised on the brink of a sea-change as we strive to adopt Assessment for Learning as a key tool for understanding the effectiveness of instruction across all schools and programs. What does the term Assessment for Learning mean to you?

Barbara Grumet: Assessment for Learning means that faculty will be focusing more on what and how students are learning, in addition to what faculty are teaching. The purpose of Assessment for Learning is to generate meaningful information about student learning. This data, in turn, will help faculty improve their teaching. A good assessment program will identify strengths in coursework and student learning, as well as weaknesses.

Pamela Brown: The scientific method is a systematic approach to developing new knowledge and understanding. The scientific method consists of collecting data, followed by formulating and testing a hypothesis. Similarly, Assessment for Learning is a systematic process of gathering data on student learning, followed by analysis and development of strategies to improve student learning. City Tech’s assessment initiative is an opportunity for a college-wide research project to benefit our students.

Tammie Cumming: How do you imagine the City Tech college-wide assessment process will benefit your departments and programs?

Barbara Grumet: Since most of the departments in the School of Professional Studies are already accredited by specialty accrediting agencies, the faculty are already engaged in some assessment activities. However, most of the specialty agencies, as well as the state and national licensing agencies, focus more on graduation and license pass rates as the “ultimate student outcomes.” Assessment for Learning will hone in on courses and hopefully help faculty identify strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum, in teaching, and in student learning.

Assessment for Learning goes beyond the obvious ways of measuring student learning, such as grades on final examinations and major projects, or pass rates on license examinations.

Pamela Brown: City Tech’s college-wide assessment process will benefit departments and programs by bringing the faculty together with a common goal. It will create opportunities for conversations about teaching and learning among departments, programs and schools. Our college’s mission statement is actually quite inspiring and relevant to this initiative. The mission statement describes serving “...the city and the state by providing graduates proficient in the technologies...” and providing students “with both a command of skills necessary in their respective career areas, and the educational foundations for lifelong learning.” The mission statement directly addresses assessment: “The College provides access to higher education for New York City’s diverse population and assures high quality in its programs by a commitment to outcomes assessment.”

Tammie Cumming: Is it your goal to have every faculty member involved in the Assessment for Learning process? If yes, please elaborate in how your school will meet this goal. If no, please elaborate on the factors underlying your decision.

Barbara Grumet: Ideally, every faculty member will be involved in this assessment. It is part of the full-time faculty responsibility to be an effective teacher. However, our programs rely very heavily on part-time and clinical faculty. I don’t think we can expect them to be involved in extensive discussions of critical courses, critical learning outcomes, and how to measure these. I do think all the full-time faculty need to be engaged
in discussions of student learning and how to measure and validate it. Just as faculty “own” the curriculum, they need to “own” assessment of student learning.

I expect that departments will work with their part-time faculty by keeping them in the loop, giving them the assessment tools, getting their cooperation in measurements (i.e., uniform exams, uniform rubrics for scoring presentations, uniform assignments, etc.), and in some cases, meeting with them and soliciting their input. Some departments already have these in place. Most departments also meet with their part-time faculty at least once a year, and Assessment for Learning would be a great discussion topic for this meeting.

Pamela Brown: The goal is to have every faculty member involved in the Assessment for Learning process. This will be accomplished by bringing the faculty together to develop a consensus on learning outcomes and strategies for measuring student learning followed by evaluation, implementation of strategies to improve student learning, and further evaluation. This will be done at the course, program, school and subsequently college-level. Candid discussions on what learning outcomes are important should actually drive curricular change and help keep the curriculum at City Tech current.

Tammie Cumming: Can you please explain the major priorities of assessment for your school this academic year and in the future?

Barbara Grumet: This year the major assessment priority is to assure that the School of Professional Studies programs all have the beginnings of a college-wide Assessment for Learning strategy in place. A second important priority is to dovetail this work with the assessment/outcomes/planning requirements of the specialized accrediting bodies that the programs must follow. Finally, I envision expanding the Assessment for Learning model to all courses offered in each department, and then using this data to refine teaching and learning strategies. The goal is not the process, but the benefits to teaching and learning.

Pamela Brown: The major assessment priority for this year is to develop an assessment cycle of improvement for at least one course in every department. One or more representatives from every department were selected by the Department Chairs to serve on the Arts and Sciences Assessment Committee. They are working with members of their departments, Tammie Cumming, the Director of Assessment and Institutional Research, the Provost, and me to accomplish this goal. In the future this will be expanded to include all courses, programs, and General Education requirements.

Tammie Cumming: Overall, what is the faculty reaction to this move toward a culture of Assessment for Learning at City Tech?

Barbara Grumet: I think the faculty reaction is, quite honestly, mixed. There is concern about the amount of time it will take, not just to set up the model, but to expand it to all courses and all faculty. Most departments have already had good discussions as they choose their gateway course and decide on basic ways to assess student learning. The faculty on the School of Professional Studies Assessment Committee seem to be interested in the task and are working well together. It’s a nice way to learn about how other programs look at student learning and how they measure it, and to learn about assessment in general.

There is a combination of curiosity and anxiety among other faculty: what is this about, and do I know how to do it? Some faculty are concerned that this will replicate work that is already required by their specialized accrediting bodies, creating even more paperwork. Some see Assessment for Learning as a real opportunity to explore their teaching effectiveness. Some faculty are less enthusiastic as Assessment for Learning will take time away from other priorities.

Pamela Brown: Overall, the initial reaction on the part of the faculty has been an understanding of the need for the assessment process. Naturally there have been a lot of questions as well. I have been very impressed by the seriousness, intelligence and energy characterizing the Departments’ assessment representatives that have accepted this challenge.

One of the most popular comments I hear when faculty speak about assessment is the idea that assessment is the means by which we understand what students know and are able to do. I certainly agree that this is the essence of assessment at the learners’ level. However, what I honor most about assessment that may be a bit more difficult to measure is the ability to know how well faculty and students together are reflecting on the material that is taught and learned. Students and faculty should be both reflective practitioners.

Sonja Jackson, Dean Curriculum and Instruction
City Tech
Keeping Current with Federal Database Systems

Dr. Tammie Cumming, Director of Assessment and Institutional Research (AIR), traveled to Orlando, Florida in October to attend the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) workshop, held in conjunction with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU). Dr. Cumming was awarded a travel grant by the Association for Institutional Research to attend the workshop. “It was so exciting to participate in the workshop and I was delighted when CUNY was recognized as an exemplary Hispanic-serving university at the HACU conference proceedings.” The AIR office plans to integrate the IPEDS data into its City Tech Data Dashboard (http://websupport2.citytech.cuny.edu/assessment/nyct_data.htm).

DATA DASHBOARD
for easy access to City Tech data

Learn how to get the data you need, when you need it, by using this online tool.

Especially for City Tech Department Chairs and Directors

Date: Monday, January 25, 2010
Time: 10:00am - 11:15am
      1:30pm - 2:45pm  (SELECT ONE)
Exploring City Tech’s Data Dashboard with Raymond Moncada
Institutional Analyst

Raymond: First and foremost, thank you for considering me for this interview.

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us about the work you’re doing for Assessment and Institutional Research (AIR) in developing the technology to serve faculty and staff in obtaining frequently requested data. So, let me begin by asking you to explain what Data Dashboard is and where can it be located?

Raymond: Data Dashboard is a tool that can be used to represent City Tech data in a comprehensive and simple way. At City Tech, the goal of Data Dashboard is to allow campus stakeholders to look at key performance indicators such as enrollment, graduation trends, as well as graduation and retention rates, to mention a few. City Tech Data Dashboard can be accessed from any computer with internet access by visiting the AIR website in the “City Tech Data” section. http://websupport2.citytech.cuny.edu/assessment/

There are various reasons faculty and staff go to the AIR office for data. Can you tell us how Data Dashboard provides data for faculty and staff?

Raymond: The Data Dashboard provides faculty and staff simple and easy access to our campus data. There are six components to Data Dashboard organized by programs, with exception of the financial report. Users can retrieve data on enrollment, degrees conferred, six-year graduation rates, one-year retention rates, grade distributions, internal transfers, and financial reports. It is a dynamic tool that allows users to select data for a specific program using drop-down menus. The use of drop-down menus makes the use of Data Dashboard simple.

How has Data Dashboard been received by City Tech faculty, in general?

Raymond: City Tech faculty are happy to be able to use this tool and to know that the data are available 24/7. It is fairly new and was used heavily during the recent Middle States reaccreditation. Faculty typically use Data Dashboard for program accreditations, grant applications, and report writing.

Recently you attended Data Dashboard training at the North East Association for Institutional Research (NEAIR) conference in Baltimore. Do you have any plans for improving the current City Tech Data Dashboard?

Raymond: At the request of Dr. Tammie Cumming, the new Director of AIR, I attended the conference along with Assessment Analyst, Rachel Tsang. Data Dashboard training at the NEAIR conference in Baltimore was very helpful. Looking at different models for data representation has given me new ideas to improve the current Data Dashboard model at City Tech. Additionally, with new technologies available, the key indicators for success used with CUNY’s Performance Management Process can be queried and presented in different ways. I’m really excited to start upgrading our dashboard.

Does AIR offer Data Dashboard training?

Raymond: In Fall 2009, AIR hosted three workshops on how to use Data Dashboard. The workshop was hands-on and the attendees left satisfied and confident. AIR will be hosting three workshops every semester on how to use this tool. Dates and times are posted on the Faculty Commons website and emails are also sent to the college community.

If you have any questions about Data Dashboard, please feel free to contact us at AIR@citytech.cuny.edu.

Thank you so much for taking the time to chat with us about this technology.

Raymond: Thank you.
“Some people may take photographs to escape the familiar; I take photographs to record what is startling in the everyday.”

Carole K. Harris
“‘Water and Work: The Ecology of Downtown Brooklyn,’ an NEH grant, inspired me to document the decline of Brooklyn’s historic waterfront.”

Robin Michals

“Photography is my way of gaining a better understanding of how images provide insight into expressions of tradition and history.”

Sonja Jackson
Julia Jordan Interviews CUNY Writing Fellows

Julia Jordan: The whole idea of this interview is to add a level of visibility to the work of the Writing Fellows. We’re graced with former Writing Fellows at this table. I’m pleased that we can use NUCLEUS to shine a light on your work.

JJ: Do you write? For what purposes and how does your experience as a writer influence your teaching of writing?

Cori: I obviously write as a graduate student and I also write poetry, and one of the things that I try to get across in the classroom is that there is joy and pain in the process itself.

Baris: I’m getting a Ph.D. in Anthropology so I write a lot; it’s a daily activity for me.

Ellen: I’m in the Philosophy Department at the Graduate Center, and finishing the conclusion to my thesis. There are so many changes. Scaffolding, breaking it down, knowing how parts come together—these techniques are part of my daily practice of writing.

Liza: I do write in a variety of formats and also just started a blog. When I work with students at City Tech I tell them that writing is your stamp on the world. I remind young people that they are so unique. No one else sees things exactly as they see them.

Mark N: I’m writing and I’m onto new topics and recently I’ve been writing about novels that grew out of 9/11. The other thing I’m realizing is just how close writing is to human emotions.

JJ: How important is the concept of an audience in your approach to teaching writing?

Ellen: In Philosophy it doesn’t come up all that often. But with different departments that I worked with as a Writing Fellow a lot of the assignments are so creative that they really do emphasize an audience. For instance, the Hospitality Management Department students are reading restaurant reviews. And one of the assignments they are trying now is writing a review as a professional reviewer not as a student. It lets students have a little distance from themselves and express themselves as someone else.

Cori: I think that audience always comes up when I teach writing. When I am in a literature classroom, students are always writing analytical essays and so the idea is for them to have to think about all the things they have to say in order to make their arguments completely persuasive.

Jody: I use technology to emphasize audience so that I am not the only one reading my students’ writing but that their classmates are as well. When students are writing to a blog for the class the audience is much more apparent to them. That really makes it not a fictional audience but a live audience. I can remember as a Writing Fellow I wasn’t always on the same page with the faculty members I worked with, about who the audience was. That was a really enlightening moment for me. The professor wanted the student to write as though the audience has never read the material they were writing on. And that seemed very artificial to me because I thought of the classmates as the audience or the professor as the audience. And they had that shared experience. So, I use the class as the audience for any of their writing assignments.

Baris: I discovered the importance of audience when I was teaching a class. For students, seeing an academic audience is one thing, and seeing their parents as an audience quite another. I used it as a
Robert: One of the difficulties I found in the classroom is that the students are worried about being right or wrong. They are constantly trying to fish for providing information that their instructor wants instead of developing their own voice. That becomes something you want to break them from or try to get them to see that we are interested in what they have to say. What is the information they are trying to convey? Giving students the confidence to know that what they have to say is important.

Liza: I would just add that, in a way, that sort of redefines or pushes back on our notion of audience because if students are defining audience as the professor, then they are tailoring their responses towards the professor. I think this question of audience is really important.

JJ: What challenges do non-native speakers of English face in writing? Are there particular approaches that you have found to be effective?

Baris: There is no easy way out of it. What I try to do to sympathize with my international students is to give a lot of feedback to their effort and to give them one-on-one time. There is no shortcut. For an undergraduate student it is impossible to expect him or her to navigate his/her way without careful direction. It’s all about practice. They have to work more than a student who knows English.

Mark S: One technique I’ve found to be effective is to focus on one or two characteristic “patterns” of error. If you teach a student the underlying principle, he/she can start to self-correct. Over-correcting usually results in frustration on both sides. Less is more in these cases.

Cori: Last semester I did work with a few ESL students. The more they read, the more the language will get into their heads. For us as instructors it is important to remind students that they know more than they think they know and to help them contextualize their issues because they are very diligent students. They realize that reading will give them a sense of mastery.

Liza: The students whose first language is not English actually write very beautifully, because they write in pictures and they have such distinct ways of expressing themselves. Students who speak multiple languages have unique challenges but bring unique gifts.

continued on page 18
At the movies, in daily life at work and play, and especially at City Tech, how do we communicate effectively with our multiple audiences? Faculty Commons Fellows, Humanities Professors Victoria Lichterman and Shauna Vey, are on a mission to find out.

As members of the first cohort of Commons Fellows, Professors Lichterman and Vey are exploring new ways of bringing scholarly, pedagogical, professional, and creative research to bear upon the college’s curriculum and classroom pedagogy.

Their two-year project to improve oral communication at City Tech is inspired by the recommendations of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and the aims outlined in City Tech’s Goals and Targets 2008-2009. Their interdisciplinary project will focus on faculty development in Speaking Across the Curriculum (SAC); it will encourage best communications practices by both students and faculty. The goals for faculty training are to provide exemplary oral instruction and student-presentation training.

Professors Lichterman and Vey will begin by surveying the faculty to assess the state of oral communication in classes throughout the college. They will then partner with Architectural Technology (ARCH) and Advertising Design & Graphic Arts (ADGA) Departments for intensive work during the 2009-2010 academic year. In much the same way that Writing Fellows work with college faculty, Faculty Commons Fellows will provide support for faculty members who teach classes that utilize student presentations. Faculty will be given skills and information that will enable them to coach and evaluate their students’ oral presentations in ways that are consistent, clear, and demonstrate palpable progress. The Fellows and the participating faculty will work together to develop learning activities that support course-specific student learning outcomes.

In the second year, the project will expand. Workshops and materials will be offered
to all faculty interested in better preparing students for the workplace by increasing their oral communication competency and reinforcing their knowledge of course content through oral presentations. Online and hard copy resources will supplement faculty training and student instruction. Clear assessment standards will be a major goal in the project’s implementation and success.

Speaking Across the Curriculum is premised on the following assumptions;

• Listening skills can be taught and faculty can teach them.

• Communication skills, whether written or oral, depend on translating a process of thought into words; one method of delivery is read and the other is heard.

• Effective oral communication is central to General Education and should be considered, along with Information Literacy and WAC initiatives, as interrelated and as essential to a ‘liberally’ educated individual.

• Writing Across the Curriculum and Speaking Across the Curriculum are both processes of thought expressed through different modalities. Oral communication, like writing, is learned through time on task and guided practice.

• Motivation, vocabulary, posture, dress, demeanor, clarity, modulation and directed focus are elements of effective oral communication.

• Professional practitioners speak with their clients. Successful entrepreneurs and sales and project managers use various forms of oral communication— including description and persuasion—to present or pitch a concept or service to clients.

In a recent workshop led by Professors Vey and Lichterman, they shared research of Coakley & Wolvin (1990), who found that even though most of us spend the majority of our day listening, it is the communication activity that receives the least instruction.

“Listening skills are learned skills and you can teach them.”

Yes, City Tech faculty, we’re talkin’ to you. And we’d appreciate your assistance to further our research.

Please complete our IRB approved survey on oral communication.

You can find it in your email from Vinny, sent 11/16/09 at 10:44 am.

Victoria Lichterman is a professional actor and holds a terminal degree in Acting from The Yale School of Drama. Victoria is an assistant professor in the Department of Humanities. At City Tech, Prof. Lichterman has been a Faculty Foundation Publication Fellow, ’07 and a Collaborative Knowledge Fellow, ’09. Ms. Lichterman has special training in The Arts In Education and, at Brooklyn College, in the teaching and development of Creative Teaching Techniques for the Classroom Teacher.

Shauna Vey teaches speech and theatre at City Tech and is the immediate past president of the CUNY League of Active Speech Professors (CLASP), an organization that provides professional development for speech faculty. Her research has been published in Theatre Journal and Theatre History Studies, and supported by two PSC/CUNY awards and the CUNY Faculty Fellowship Publication Program. Dr. Vey’s writing won her the 2006 Robert A. Schanke Research Award for Excellence in Theatre Scholarship.
Professor Istvan Bujalos, our Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence for the 2009-2010 academic year, spoke to the college faculty on Thursday, November 12, 2009, on the Bologna Process and its implications for the European Community and higher education in the United States.

The Bologna Process is a far-reaching European education initiative that brings forty-nine disparate systems of higher education into a broad framework of convergence. This convergence mirrors the economic integration that is the rationale for of the European Union and can be understood as a fundamental underpinning of it. Here are excerpts of his remarks.

The Bologna Process aims to establish a European Area of Higher Education. The objectives of Bologna Declaration, which now has 46 national signatories, are

(a) The introduction of undergraduate and postgraduate levels in all countries, with first degrees no shorter than three years.

(b) The adoption of the European Credit Transfer System in all EU countries.

(c) The elimination of remaining obstacles to the mobility of students and teachers.

A brief characterization of the history of Hungarian higher education:

(a) Before the World War II Hungarian higher education and research policy followed the German or Prussian model. The basic principle of that model was the unity of research and teaching in the framework of the universities. There is a clear difference of vocational institutions (colleges) and academic higher education (universities). The structure of education and universities was based on traditional disciplines. There were few universities, few students, and elitist training. Students had to pay high tuition but the poor and talented students were subsidized by the government.

(b) After the World War II the higher education system became based on Soviet model which was only a modified form of German model. The main difference between the two models is that Soviet model separated the highly specialised research institutes from the universities, and thus professional training came to be the main objective of education, while research tasks were given to the institutes of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Institutions of higher education were state owned; the higher education was free for students but the training remained elitist (only 8-10% of the generation were students) and was based on traditional disciplines.

Essential changes in Hungarian higher education have occurred during the last fifteen years.

Streamlining and the interoperability of European educational systems are the hallmark of these changes. The total number of state institutions has been reduced from 55 to 30; 17 are state universities and 13 are state colleges. More than 400 undergraduated programs have been consolidated into 100 programs. In some fields such as Medicine, Veterinary Studies, Pharmacology, Dentistry, Law, and Architecture the system has kept the long single-cycle continuum.

Colleges and vocational universities have been gradually transformed to full-scale universities. A mass training system has been developed. By 2005 more than 40 percent of the appropriate age group participated in higher education. Higher education is free for students and the admission to universities is based on secondary school achievement. In the field of arts there are only 13 basic arts subjects whereas before there were more than 50, a significant streamlining.

It is possible to explain that structural reform from a theoretical point of view but I know that it was a result of the cultural and political battles of our time.
My Teaching Philosophy

An old Chinese proverb states:

If your vision is for a year, plant wheat.
If your vision is for ten years, plant trees.
If your vision is for a lifetime, plant people.

I believe “planting” a good mathematical foundation for students is important to developing confidence in the subject which supports future learning. My teaching philosophy fosters a positive learning environment that encourages participation, instills structure and methodology in the classroom, models a systematic approach to problem solving, and equips students for independent learning.

A good mathematics teacher should …

Provide an environment conducive to learning.
For many of my students, mathematics has been a significant challenge. Many suffer from anxiety which they developed as children. In an atmosphere of mutual trust these students begin to share their ideas and learning is enhanced. When students feel comfortable making mistakes in front of the class, they learn not to be discouraged, and see their errors as part of a learning process. It is exciting to witness a class discussing the mistakes, suggesting alternate solutions and laughing together at the same time.

Encourage the potential in students.
Simple words as “I know you can grasp this concept!” - can motivate students to work harder. Students observe the expectations of success or failure that others have for them. When teachers provide students with challenging yet attainable learning tasks, self-confidence increases as they experience success in learning.

Acknowledge students’ efforts.
Recognition of students’ efforts to overcoming a huge hurdle of learning in a “difficult” subject encourages students to be more active in their learning and open to challenging themselves.

Be organized and well prepared.
I expect my students to be organized and well prepared and I lead by example. A good lesson has clear objectives and is structured logically so that the students are able to follow with ease.

Take time to explain concepts.
Time spent reinforcing the subject matter either deriving the formula or theorem or providing more examples for individual or group work ensures that students establish a solid grounding upon which to build their math knowledge.

Provide good notes.
Good note-taking skills are essential in mathematics as they help reinforce classroom learning. By providing objectives at the beginning of each class session, writing notes on the board in an outline form, first stating the key words and definitions, then summarizing the procedures used and supporting with examples, I enable my students who have weak foundations to follow the solutions. My step by step approach serves as a model for solving other problems.

Establish a mathematical vocabulary.
Mathematics is like a foreign language with unfamiliar vocabulary. When students learn and apply the vocabulary, they develop a deeper understanding of the subject.

Insist on clear expression.
Set a high standard for effective oral and written communication for all students. Students who can explain how they solve mathematical problems can reinforce their knowledge of the subject.

Coach students to teach.
If teachers are constantly learning when they teach, students will also learn when they guide their peers through a mathematical concept. The sharing of knowledge can have a profound effect on the student’s individual and professional growth. I use a collaborative approach, nurturing students to become active learners.
Mark N: The CUNY Proficiency Exam (CPE) places very little emphasis on grammar and punctuation. There's a larger emphasis on separating your voice from the author's voice. We need to do a better job at communicating point of view, developing an argument, and critically analyzing the writing of more than one author.

Cori: One of the first things I heard from faculty when I got here is “I’m so glad that I’m working with Writing Fellows because the writing that I’ve seen from students is so poor. It’s something the students need to work on.” After working with students I found it’s not nearly as problematic as faculty have told me. The challenge is to help students think logically rather than focus primarily on grammar.

Robert: I think it’s also important for us sitting in this room to recognize and remember who our audience is as well. Because many of the professors we are reaching out to are adjunct professors. It’s very difficult when you are teaching multiple classes and you give a writing assignment and you have to grade from 60-100 papers. You don’t have time to see how a particular argument was logically put together. So this is a challenge for faculty and students.

JJ: Does the CUNY Writing Fellows program provide an opportunity to reflect on your own practices as a teacher of writing?

Liza: The space we are in right now, the Faculty Commons, is an example of a structure that is built to serve the program. And I think that for graduate students who are working full time, the reflection piece gets put aside. So you need to have intentional spaces. I am a first year Writing Fellow. I’m finding this dialog to be very valuable. Working with Robert was also a great experience because we were able to reflect together in our preparation for facilitation. I will just echo that this is really useful.

Baris: I’m preparing this workshop for next week about grading. That’s the reason why I brought up the issue of designing the assignment. The more I reread my first assignment, the more I realized I had done a terrible job about constructing it. And a good friend of mine who is now teaching gave me feedback. Next time I teach I will be clearer.

Ellen: I completely concur. I am thinking about putting together a mock syllabus for the job market on a course that I potentially would like to teach. And I’ve gone through my materials from a few years ago, and just looking at the assignment and looking at a syllabus and just saying, “Wow, I am so pleased that I could put a mock syllabus together.” It’s just simply missing in those early materials. So absolutely I think I could do so much differently with the types of assignments I would make. Building them into the class in different ways. And I would incorporate more reading in the assignments. In the history of my own education, this is what professors did.

Ellen: Does this assignment allow the students to express their views of the world? Does this writing assignment allow for students to think outside of their own experience or stories? And all assignments should do both no matter what kind of assignment it is.

Cori: Advice for a faculty member is that not every piece of writing has to be read. That is something I carry with me now that I am back in a classroom.

Mark S: Carefully designed, specific assignments (that are typed up and given as handouts) always work better than only delivering the assignment orally. The clearer you are about what you want from the beginning, the easier it is for both student and faculty down the road.

THANK YOU!
“Many people who join the CUNY Academic Commons do so because they would like to collaborate with others across the CUNY system. The impetus behind these collaborations ranges from shared academic interests to university-wide committee work to networking pages for innovative programs to intellectual explorations to just plain fun.”

Matthew K. Gold, English
Asst. Professor and Project Director
CUNY Academic Commons

SUMMER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES FOR FACULTY

Harvard University Houghton Library
Short Term Fellowship
Eight short-term fellowships are available to assist scholars who must travel to work with library collections. Each fellow is expected to be in residence at Houghton for at least one month during the period from July 2010 through June 2011. The stipend for each fellowship is $3,000. The deadline for submissions is January 15, 2010. http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/houghton/public_programs/visiting_fellowships.cfm

New York State Archives-Larry J. Hackman Research Residency Program
The New York State Archives and the Archives Partnership Trust announce the availability of awards for qualified applicants to pursue research using historical records in the New York State Archives. The Larry J. Hackman Research Residency Program is intended to support advanced work in New York State history, government or public policy by covering research expenses. It also encourages public dissemination of research products. Awards are intended to defray costs of travel, lodging, meals, photo duplication, and other research-related expenses. Award amounts range from $100 to $4,500 depending on the length of stay at the State Archives and research expenses. Research visits range from a few days to several weeks depending upon the nature of the research. Applications must be postmarked by January 15, 2010.

National Humanities Center 2010 Summer Institutes in Literary Studies
Reading Thomas Hardy’s Jude the Obscure
Five by Five: The Short Story as Art and Artifact
From July 4 to 9, 2010, the National Humanities Center will offer two innovative seminars on literary understanding. Open to scholars who have received a Ph.D. within the last ten years and who teach in departments of literature or other relevant disciplines at colleges or universities in the United States, the seminars will concentrate on the detailed operations of literary texts. Each seminar will include only twelve participants. The National Humanities Center will cover the cost of travel, lodging, meals, and texts. Participants will receive a stipend of $1,500. Applications must be postmarked by March 12, 2010. http://www.nationalhumanitiescenter.org/siliterarystudies/

Oak Ridge National Laboratory
http://www.orau.gov/hereatoml/index.htm
Higher Education Research Experience
Opportunities to participate in a broad range of science and engineering activities in basic sciences, energy, and the environment. Discipline(s): life, health, and medical sciences; mathematics; computer science; physical sciences; earth, environmental, and marine sciences; engineering; computer sciences; earth, environmental, and marine sciences; engineering; life, health, and medical sciences; mathematics; physical sciences. Duration: 10 to 12 weeks during summer term. Benefits: monthly stipend based on base academic salary; limited travel reimbursement. Application deadline February 1, 2010 for summer appointments. http://see.orau.org/ProgramDescription.aspx?Program=10085

National Energy Technology Laboratory Faculty Research Participation Program
Opportunities to participate in ongoing energy research and development in following disciplines: mathematics; computer science; physical sciences; engineering; chemistry, chemical engineering, engineering, earth sciences, physical and natural sciences, mathematics. Duration: 10 weeks to three months. Benefits: monthly stipend based on regular salary; limited travel reimbursement. Apply by February 15, 2010 for summer appointments. http://see.orau.org/ProgramDescription.aspx?Program=10087

Please let the Grants Office (ext. 5173) know of your intent to apply.
### SPRING 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/6, 1/7, 1/8</td>
<td><strong>Teaching Portfolio Four-Day Intensive Workshop</strong> 10:00am – 3:00pm</td>
<td>2/22</td>
<td><strong>Grants Workshop (topic to be announced)</strong> 2:00pm – 3:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>1:00pm – 3:00pm (presentation) <strong>RSVP: <a href="mailto:facultycommons@citytech.cuny.edu">facultycommons@citytech.cuny.edu</a></strong></td>
<td>2/23</td>
<td><strong>Developing Faculty Surveys</strong> 2:30pm – 4:00pm <strong>RSVP: <a href="mailto:AIR@citytech.cuny.edu">AIR@citytech.cuny.edu</a></strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1/20</td>
<td><strong>Developing Online Faculty Surveys</strong> 9:30am – 11:00am 11:30am – 1:00pm 2:00pm – 3:30pm <strong>RSVP: <a href="mailto:AIR@citytech.cuny.edu">AIR@citytech.cuny.edu</a></strong></td>
<td>2/24</td>
<td><strong>Developing Faculty Surveys</strong> 9:30am – 11:00am <strong>RSVP: <a href="mailto:AIR@citytech.cuny.edu">AIR@citytech.cuny.edu</a></strong></td>
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<td>1/25</td>
<td><strong>Using Data Dashboard</strong> 10:00am – 11:15am 1:30pm – 2:45pm <strong>RSVP: <a href="mailto:AIR@citytech.cuny.edu">AIR@citytech.cuny.edu</a></strong></td>
<td>3/2</td>
<td><strong>Developing Faculty Surveys</strong> 2:30pm – 4:00pm <strong>RSVP: <a href="mailto:AIR@citytech.cuny.edu">AIR@citytech.cuny.edu</a></strong></td>
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<td>2/8</td>
<td><strong>Scannable Surveys and Rubrics</strong> 1:00pm – 2:30pm</td>
<td>3/9</td>
<td><strong>WAC Workshop N227</strong> 1:00pm – 2:00pm <strong>RSVP: <a href="mailto:facultycommons@citytech.cuny.edu">facultycommons@citytech.cuny.edu</a></strong></td>
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<td>2/9</td>
<td>2:30pm – 4:00pm</td>
<td>3/22</td>
<td><strong>Grants Workshop (topic to be announced)</strong> 2:00pm – 3:30pm <strong><a href="mailto:ebergonzo@citytech.cuny.edu">ebergonzo@citytech.cuny.edu</a></strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2/10</td>
<td>9:30am – 11:00am</td>
<td>4/7</td>
<td><strong>WAC Workshop N227</strong> 1:00pm – 2:00pm <strong>RSVP: <a href="mailto:facultycommons@citytech.cuny.edu">facultycommons@citytech.cuny.edu</a></strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2/10</td>
<td><strong>WAC Workshop N227</strong> 1:00pm – 2:00pm</td>
<td>4/13</td>
<td><strong>Grants Workshop (topic to be announced)</strong> 2:30pm – 4:00pm <strong><a href="mailto:ebergonzo@citytech.cuny.edu">ebergonzo@citytech.cuny.edu</a></strong></td>
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**Especially for New Faculty -- Summer Institute of Teaching and Learning-- A632 9:00am – 4:00pm**

Dr. Estela Rojas, Summer Institute and FYLC Workshop Leader

**Tuesday, May 25, Wednesday, May 26, and Thursday, May 27, 2010**

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**Faculty Commons Ribbon Cutting**

Provost Bonne August invites City Tech faculty to use assessment, faculty development and grants resources in Namm 227.

Contact us at extension 5225 or facultycommons@citytech.cuny.edu

http://facultycommons.citytech.cuny.edu/