MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

While driving home yesterday, struggling to come up with an inaugural column for *Nota Bene*, something that would sound erudite and profound, I caught this song on the radio:

“We don’t need no education  
We don’t need no thought control  
No dark sarcasm in the classroom  
Teachers leave them kids alone...”

*Another Brick In The Wall – Part 2*

So I went a different direction, choosing pop culture. Pink Floyd says what I want to say as we embark in the new academic year. Our students do not need the type of education that constraints their intellect and shuts them down emotionally.

In this connected age, where information is literally at our fingertips through our cell phones, tablets and computers, and comes at us at a firehose rate, our students need now, more than ever, to be able to discern what is important information. They need to know when information is insufficient, when it is useful, and when it is superfluous. They need to know what deductive steps to take and what inductive leaps to make to reach the right conclusion. They need to navigate around this contradiction and that circular argument to discern what is clear and relevant. Our task is to help our students hone those skills to become clear thinkers, problem solvers and decision makers.

Our students do not need classrooms where sarcasm and mediocre teaching are expected. This will cause them to shrink back, tune out and drop off. They need to be in classrooms where they will be encouraged to try, even if they fail, especially if they fail. They need to feel that their teacher has a passion for teaching and an interest in their success.

Our students have already experienced the kind of education that Pink Floyd sings about. They deserve something better, and it is our charge to give it to them.
ALEX’S CORNER

Thanks to the work of Dr. Stacia Reader, Assistant Professor, Department of Health, Physical Education and Wellness (HPEW), in coordination with the Office of Academic Affairs, BCC is launching a grant-funded enrichment program for students who are interested in healthcare careers. The enrichment program is called the Academy for Transitions to Health Professions (ATHP) and it is designed to create a pipeline to assist disadvantaged students with strong academic potential to excel at BCC, transfer to a four year institution, and from there to a graduate program in a health field (e.g., medicine, dentistry, physical/occupational therapy, nutrition, public health, exercise science, etc.). BCC received this grant as part of a broader coalition called the Bronx Health Opportunities Partnership-Einstein (Bronx Hope). ATHP will provide intensive mentoring, academic and career advisement, skill enhancement, and internship support in the summer and throughout the academic year. In addition to academic, career, and skills enrichment, each of the 20 students in the program will receive $1500 worth of support, including books, MetroCards, and more. Faculty will help identify students who are likely candidates for this program, which is designed for students in their sophomore year. If you know of one or more students who might be a good match for this program, please contact Dr. Reader at stacia.reader@bcc.cuny.edu.

ASSESSMENT NEWS

Last year was a fruitful time for assessment at BCC. All academic departments submitted course assessment reports; BCC’s Assessment Team & Office of Institutional Research presented four workshops to department/program directors as the College rolled out non-academic campus-wide assessment; a year-long comprehensive seminar that includes evidence-based methodologies was delivered to BCC’s new faculty; the assessment program gained a new staff member, Ms. Loida “Vicki” Cedeno, Academic Program Specialist.

The school year 2015-16 promises to be even more productive. In an effort to improve student learning and to increase retention and graduation at BCC, there are several assessment initiatives currently underway. The Assessment Council, a newly formed collective made up of a FT faculty member from each of the 15 academic departments, began having regular meetings in September. Assessment Council members will receive instruction in various forms of outcomes assessment, rubric design, assessment tools/measures, program assessment, as well as eventual training on Task Stream, an integrated software assessment program that BCC is currently purchasing. Scheduling for assessment council meetings will be a challenge for the Fall 2015 semester as teaching schedules were already in place when the council was formed; however, alternate dates and, if need be, private sessions will be offered. (Beginning Spring 2016, the assessment council will meet Tuesdays, 2-4 p.m.) Additionally, more assessment workshops are underway for all non-academic programs on campus. To introduce faculty to assessment basics and to support the widespread use of outcomes assessment across academic programs and courses, BCC’s own Blackboard course, “General Education and Outcomes Assessment,” will be offered again starting on October 14 and ending on November 18.

In his first convocation address at BCC, President Thomas A. Isekenegbe noted that “professional development” and “scholarship and assessment” are two critical areas the College must continue to deepen in order to build our community of excellence at BCC. Look for increased assessment activities across BCC the coming year.
SCHOLARLY WORKS

Dr. Anthony Gatto, Associate Professor of Music, collaborated with media artist, Chris Larson (Assistant Professor of Art, University of Minnesota) on WISE BLOOD, an opera exhibition based on the novel by Flannery O'Connor. The musical work was commissioned by the Walker Art Center and The Soap Factory, which held eight performances in Minneapolis, MN, this past June. For more on this project, visit walkerart.org.

Dr. Julia Miele Rodas, Associate Professor of English, recently helped organize a CUNY-wide disability scholars network with faculty representatives from almost every CUNY college in addition to the Graduate Center, SPS, and the Law School. She is co-chairing the 70+ group with SPS Academic Director Mariette Bates. The group will host an informal meeting on September 18, 2015 to include conversation about teaching disability studies and doing disability scholarship; faculty speakers will also share their work-in-progress. In addition, the CUNY Disability Scholars Network is organizing a one-day, first-ever, all-CUNY disability scholars conference at the Graduate Center on November 20, 2015. The conference theme will be “Disability Studies as Theory & Practice.” Interested faculty may subscribe to the group list-serv by connecting with Dr. Miele Rodas at julia.rodas@bcc.cuny.edu.

Dr. Prithi Kanakamedala, Assistant Professor of History, was one of four faculty recipients of the inaugural Gittell Junior Faculty Award. This CUNY-wide award is named after Dr. Marilyn Jacobs Gittell (1931-2010), a CUNY scholar and community activist committed to racial, gender, and education justice. The award was used to fund archival research this summer at the Massachusetts Historical Society, New York Public Library, Library of Congress, and National Archives. The research supports Dr. Kanakamedala’s book project, tentatively entitled, The DeGrasse Family of New York. It explores race, citizenship, community building, and South Asian-Black solidarity through the lives of the DeGrasse family who lived in Five Points, New York (today the area around City Hall, Manhattan) in the early to mid-nineteenth century. Professor Kanakamedala was also selected, along with seventeen other college faculty and museum professionals, to participate in an intensive four-week fellowship. The Fellows of the American Material Culture: Nineteenth Century New York, National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) spent the summer visiting historic homes, repositories, museums and other cultural institutions across the city.

Dr. Ahmed Reid, Assistant Professor of History, was appointed to serve the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, member from Latin American and Caribbean States. The Working Group (which is composed of five members from; Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and the Western group) studies the problems of racial discrimination faced by people of African descent worldwide. The Working Group will gather all relevant information from governments, non-governmental organizations and other relevant sources and submit recommendations on the design, implementation and enforcement of effective measures to eliminate racial discrimination against Africans and people of African descent. In fulfilling its mandate, the Working Group undertakes country visits and reports its findings to the United Nations Human Rights Council and the General Assembly. For more information please visit, http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Introduction.aspx
PUBLICATIONS


NEW FULL-TIME FACULTY ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Art & Music**
Assistant Professor
Deborah Lewittes

**Biological Sciences**
Assistant Professor
James Fuller
Assistant Professor
Rajendra Gharbaran
Assistant Professor
Enyuan Shang

**Business & Information Systems**
Assistant Professor
Harini Mittal
Lecturer
Sophie Francis

**Chemistry & Chemical Technology**
Assistant Professor
Julio Garay
CLT
Emmanuel Ankamah

**Communication Arts & Sciences**
Assistant Professor
Kevin Bozelka

**Education & Reading**
Assistant Professor
Edward Lehner
Assistant Professor
Kaemanje S. Thomas
Instructor
Minkyung Choi
CLT
Jean-Charles Garland

**Engineering, Physics & Technology**
Assistant Professor
Eugene Mananga
Assistant Professor
Syed Rashid Zaidi
CLT
Javier Perez

**English**
Assistant Professor
Joseph L. V. Donica
Assistant Professor
David J. Puglia
Assistant Professor
Jonathan P. Scott

**Mathematics & Computer Science**
Assistant Professor
Ivan Horozov
Assistant Professor
Parul Laul
CLT
Charisse Redwood

**Modern Languages**
Assistant Professor
Elena Borelli