Empathy. It is a single quality, which when nurtured, can go a long way in ensuring student success and teaching satisfaction. Working from an empathetic perspective we (Drs. Abass Abdullahi, Shyla Akkaraju, Laura Broughton, and JordiEraso-Getman) designed a year-long New Faculty Seminar (NFS) that is geared towards enhancing strong self-efficacy in our new faculty. New faculty must juggle their tridimensional professional profile of teaching, scholarship, and service while adjusting to a new campus culture and organizational structure. To support them in this daunting enterprise, we designed an NFS that addressed three thematic threads - career development, pedagogy, and assessment - in a workshop format with a strong emphasis placed on mentorship and collegiality. The NFS, which began in fall 2014, meets once a month for a three-hour period during the fall and spring semesters and for three all-day workshops during the winter intersession. All seminar communication is conducted via email and a Blackboard site that was set up for this course. An NFS ePortfolio was also set up for the participants to upload their monthly reflections and year-end projects.

Dr. Laura Broughton led the career development sessions that dealt with work adjustment and career planning. Work adjustment was strengthened via a series of semester milestones such as important dates for grade submissions, COA, advising and registration, etc. that served as monthly reminders. This gave the faculty information as and when they needed it and not all at once, which we felt may overwhelm an already beleaguered faculty member. Dr. Broughton also walked the faculty through the BCC and CUNY websites and our numerous logins at various times during the fall semester. Career planning emphasized documenting teaching, service, and scholarship, and research planning including IRB requirements; the faculty were walked through their application for the 1st year re-appointment. At the end of the year, faculty were expected to submit a five-year career plan.

Dr. Jordi Eraso-Getman led the pedagogy portion of the NFS throughout which the importance of empathy in teaching was emphasized. Faculty were introduced to techniques like scaffolding and the flipped learning method along with pedagogical theories such as threshold concepts as well as instructional technologies such as Blackboard and ePortfolio. Faculty were expected to create a teaching ePortfolio based on their own teaching practices and philosophy for which they received plenty of guidance throughout the year.

Drs. Shyla Akkaraju and Abass Abdullahi each taught one year of the assessment portion of the NFS, which motivated faculty to explore meaningful assessment at the classroom level. We, as educators, often try new ideas to enhance learning but we don’t always document our efforts. This section of the NFS walked the participants through a Classroom Assessment Project (CAP) in a systematic way starting from listing desired outcomes to analyzing results and closing the loop by making decisions based on findings. Interestingly, such an experience can lead the instructor to become more empathetic towards students’ struggles in grasping difficult material. Faculty were expected to plan, execute and report one CAP by the end of the year.

At the end of the first year (2014-15) new faculty largely met or exceeded our expectations in their performance, which was assessed via a career plan, a teaching ePortfolio, and a CAP. Their response to the NFS was overwhelmingly positive. We hope to have similar results this year as well!

To read the Association of American Colleges & Universities’ feature article on BCC’s New Faculty Seminar, “Faculty Development for Student Success at Bronx Community College,” see https://www.aacu.org/campus-model/faculty-development-student-success-bronx-community-college
ALEX'S CORNER

Dr. Alexander Ott

BCC, like any college, has its strengths and its weaknesses. One weakness, I would argue, is communication across departments and divisions. This is not a weakness unique to BCC—it’s a challenge faced by any large organization: Distributing relevant information to the appropriate individuals efficiently is not an easy task. Several initiatives have been launched recently—including Nota Bene—in part to address this communication issue.

So what do colleges often fail to communicate? In my experience, I’ve found that changes to curricula and academic policy are often poorly communicated to all stakeholders. In an attempt to improve communication on this topic to both faculty and staff, I will be writing summaries in memo form (very exciting, I know!) of the changes going into effect each academic year. These summaries will generally occur toward the end of the spring semester, as changes to curricula and policy are almost always effective in the fall semester, when a new academic year begins.

Changes effective this fall 2016 include, but are not limited to:

1. Automotive Mechanics Certificate
   • Name change to Automotive Technician.
2. AS in Community/School Health Education
   • Name change to Public Health.
   • Modest curricular changes, including addition of a public health course.
3. AS in Therapeutic Recreation
   • BIO 24, Anatomy and Physiology II, is now an option, and not a requirement. A student can instead take any applicable four-credit Flex E course.
4. AAS Telecommunications Technology: Verizon
   • Program deactivated, effective June 30, 2016.
5. AAS Telecommunications Technology
   • Not accepting new students for the 2016 academic year.
6. AAS Energy Services and Technology
   • Not accepting new students for the 2016 academic year.

For the full memo on curricular and policy changes, including a "sneak peak" at items pending final approval, please see: https://goo.gl/MM8kub. Updates to this memo will be posted the AdvisorGram e-newsletter. AdvisorGram is the best way to stay up-to-date on all changes and issue relating to academic advisement, including curricular and policy changes. Please email me at alexander.ott@bcc.cuny.edu to be added to the AdvisorGram email distribution.

KNOW MORE AND DO MORE!
Get to know the other publications from Academic Affairs.

NIGHTS AND WEEKENDS
Evening and Weekend Services
Nights and Weekends offers articles on a range of topics aimed at helping evening and weekend students successfully navigate BCC. It is published three times a year and available in print and on-line. Contact Stephanie Marshall at x5703 for more information.

TRANSFERGRAM
Academic and Transfer Resources
Transfergram provides transfer advisement information for academic advisors. It is published six times a year and is available in print. If you would like to subscribe, please send Edwin Roman an e-mail at edwin.roman@bcc.cuny.edu.

TRANSFER TALK
Academic and Transfer Resources
Transfer Talk offers articles on transfer related topics as well as information on articulation agreements to students, faculty and staff. It is published three times a year and is available in print and on-line. Contact Edwin Roman at x5459 for more information.

NOTA BENE | SUMMER 2016 | PAGE 2
Course Assessment in Chemistry: Closing the Loop

What does an assessment report for a chemistry course look like?

Judging by the Fall 2015 packet of course assessment reports submitted by BCC’s Chemistry department of seven distinct courses—CHM 11, 12, 17, 18, 32 and ESE 11 and ENV 11—an assessment report is clearly integrated, linked to general education outcomes, and detailed in closing the loop on each outcome, thereby establishing a path for improving student mastery of outcomes.

Reports submitted by the Chemistry professors used the 8-point template developed by BCC’s Assessment Team, made up of four faculty members and the assessment manager. Like all assessment reports—course or program, grid or narrative, numbers and words—what matters most is what eventually happens with the data generated in the process.

Form is secondary to content no matter the format, data is simply numbers or words on a screen until it is interpreted according to its purpose; once interpreted, data can become valuable information for improving student learning. The Chemistry department’s reports contain detailed and specific comments on making changes in the next iteration of the course for each embedded question on its final exams. The crucial question for any assessment report remains: Going forward, what changes will improve the course or program?

The 100+ embed questions ranged in format and levels of intellectual thinking, reflecting a broad spectrum across Bloom’s cognitive domain. All questions required students to choose from five possible answers; the great majority of the questions required students to perform several steps of calculations to arrive at answers. All questions engaged Reasoning & Analysis, one of the BCC’s General Education Proficiencies. The Scientific Method, another of BCC’s GenEd proficiencies, was foundational throughout the embedded questions; Mathematical Methods, a third GenEd proficiency, was often required for students to arrive at the correct answer.

What was (and remains) most important in the reports was Interpretation of Results & Action Plan, column 8 of the report, representing completion of the assessment cycle. These included teaching approaches, class time spent on specific questions, students’ understanding of chemical notations, and the phrasing of the questions themselves. Below are a few examples of Closing the Loop, which normally take place in the next iteration of the course or program:

CHM 11: General College Chemistry I
Extra time will be assigned to reviewing correlation between ionic radius/charge to the electrostatic attraction and lattice energy. As in other cases, trends of properties in the periodic table such as radius (Increase/decrease) will be emphasized.

Students understand the oxidation-reduction concept but the problem seems to be the application of the concept to chemical equation. We will spend more time and solve more problems on applying the concept to variety of reactions.

CHM 12: General College Chemistry II
Must be certain to define a reducing agent and give several examples of reducing agents. Also discuss its counterpart, an oxidizing agent and their interrelationship in a chemical reaction. Have students work out problems during recitation class.

ENV 11: Introduction to Environmental Health
The benchmark was not met for this question. The responses were so similar that many students had difficulty deciphering the correct response. This question was taken from the author test bank and was labeled as in the “medium” category difficulty level. However, this is a fundamental concept of any Environmental Science course and it has to be more strongly reinforced by all lecture and lab instructors. The benchmark is at an appropriate level for this question.

Professor John Molina, assessment coordinator for Chemistry and member of the Assessment Council, went a couple of steps further as well in the department’s report. Each of the assessed courses received a general short summary about improvements since the department’s last report, and, for three of the courses, he constructed what he termed “Correct Answer” graphs, showing how their embedded questions reached or did not reach the benchmarks set by course professors. The graphs ranged as far back as the previous 5 semesters, providing a visual display of student achievement in the course’s SLO’s.

We congratulate Professor Molina, as well as Professors Kamal Ismail, Thomas Brennan, Nicolas Anuku, Soosairaj Therese, Sheldon Skaggs, Sunil Bhaskaran, Robert Lupo, and Neal Phillip, Department Chair, on their assessment report.

The entire report can soon be found on the BCC Assessment Website: http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/Assessment. In the coming months, we will be expanding and updating the website.
On April 15, the Committee on Instruction and Professional Development (CIPD), supported by the Division of Academic and Student Success and the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology, welcomed the campus community to the 4th Annual BCC Faculty Day. Faculty Day seeks to provide an interdisciplinary, campus-wide forum featuring faculty work in research, teaching, and performance. The event was a response to faculty requests for professional development opportunities on campus, and grew out of many conversations with faculty across CUNY. Brooklyn College’s advice was particularly valuable as it has held Faculty Day for twenty years.

This year’s BCC Faculty Day opened with a welcome by President Isekenegbe and Provost and Vice President Schrader. VP Schrader reflected on her own career from graduate school to Office of the Provost to recognize the various roles that faculty have as scholars, teachers, administrators, and mentors.

Award-winning poet, professor, and literary activist Maria Mazziotti Gillan then presented the keynote address entitled, “An Immigrant Poet’s Perspective: Community Colleges and the American Dream.” Mazziotti Gillan is the founder and director of the Poetry Center at Passaic Community College, the editor of the Paterson Literary Review; she also serves as the Director of the Creative Writing Program and Professor of Poetry at SUNY-Binghamton. Mazziotti Gillan peppered her keynote with her poems and personal reflections on growing up in a working-class Italian immigrant family in New Jersey to illustrate how words and poetry have “saved the lives” of community college students. She celebrated the work of community college faculty, but also called on them to “not just look inward” and to remember to reach out beyond the gates of the campus to build relationships with the community.
FACULTY DAY

With this broad, community-serving vision in mind, faculty then split into sessions on a wide range of topics. The titles from the first session alone illustrated the diversity of discussions; these included: “A Rainbow of Bodies: Theatre for Health Explores Bodies and Weight” (Teresa Fisher, Communication Arts and Sciences); “Health: Spiritual Intervention and Collapse of Public Domain in Post-Socialist Romania” (Gerard Weber, Social Sciences), “Breaking Down Critical Thinking” (Sharmila Mukherjee, English), “Lowering Costs, Increasing Engagement: Open Source Readers in History” (Seth Offenbach, Jordi Getman-Eraso, Elizabeth Hardman, History), and “Documenting the Invisible Labor of Black Professors: Andragogical Strategies to Improve Student Engagement” (Monique Guishard, Gregory Cobb, and Sayida Self, Social Sciences). Lunch at Gould Memorial Library Rotunda featured more than twenty traditional and digital poster presentations. Attendees could also experience dance, working up a sweat in the “Story Dance Workshop” led by Stephanie Boggs (Health, Physical Education and Wellness). Participants experienced the Sistene Chapel come to life through IGNUDI, a short dance choreographed by Florence M. Tanaka-Kuwashima (Art and Music), performed by MAD about Dance, with accompaniment by Renee Briggs (Art and Music). A full program is available on the 2016 Bronx Community College Faculty Day ePortfolio.

Thank you to the faculty, staff, and students who participated in the 4th Annual BCC Faculty Day. In total, over forty faculty members presented at Faculty Day and many more attended. CIPD looks forward to building on the experience of past Faculty Days and to expand faculty, staff, and student participation at future Faculty Days: the fifth one will be held in Spring 2017!

DR. MARA LAZDA
Department of History
Vice Chair, Committee on Instruction and Professional Development

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DELWAR SAYEED
Register for Writing Intensive courses
All students need to complete 2 Writing Intensive courses before graduation. When advising students, check DegreeWorks to see how many Writing Intensive courses students need to take. You can search for Writing Intensive courses by selecting "Writing Intensive Course" as a Course Attribute on CUNYfirst Class Search.

Teach Writing Intensive Courses
Do you want your students to better understand difficult concepts? Do you want them to turn in better essays? Consider teaching Writing Intensive courses. You will have smaller classes (maximum 22 students) and our Writing Fellows (advanced PhDs at the Graduate Center) can provide assistance with syllabi and assignment design and a number of other literacy-related activities.

Work with a Writing Fellow
Are you teaching a Writing Intensive course in Fall 2016? Apply for the Writing Fellow-Writing Intensive Faculty Partnership Program. Writing Intensive faculty can partner with a Writing Fellow to help you design the syllabus, develop low-stakes writing exercises, implement effective assessment tools, and improve the quality of student work. The Writing Fellow can also work with your students by offering in-class workshops, running small group sessions, and providing tutorial services. Please apply by emailing the WAC coordinator by May 31st. Writing Fellow-Writing Intensive Faculty partnerships are limited and priority will be given to faculty teaching a Writing Intensive course for the first time.

Faculty Certification Program
Faculty WAC certification program will come back for the upcoming academic year 2016-2017. Details will follow soon. For more information, contact the WAC coordinator Swan Kim at swan.kim@bcc.cuny.edu.

ENGAGING STUDENTS AT THE NCBA A SPRING CONFERENCE
The theme of the 2016 Northeast Region Conference of The National Council on Black American Affairs (NCBAA) was, “Changing Faces of the American Community College.” Organizers realized this theme by inviting college students for the first time. To address student interests, several round-table sessions were organized, with two being facilitated by BCC faculty and staff.

Gregory Cobb, Assistant Professor in the Social Sciences department, facilitated one session. He discussed recognizing the stressors affecting urban community college students. One of the key points that he noted was how vital it is for students to identify and address the causes of stress so that academic performance is not impacted. Professor Cobb also noted how important it is for students to be cognizant of the campus and community resources that can provide assistance.

Edwin Roman, Academic and Transfer Resources Coordinator, also facilitated a session on transfer planning and scholarships. He discussed how to research scholarships and write essays, utilizing the winning essay of a student he previously worked with as a sample. Students found the session engaging and kept Mr. Roman answering numerous questions well beyond the allotted 45 minutes.

Incorporating students not only engages them, but can also serve as a catalyst to help faculty, staff and administrators better understand matters that affect them directly. As Aristotle once noted, “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS
The 2017-18 Fulbright Canada – U.S. Awards for American Scholars is now open and closes on August 1st, 2016. Fulbright scholars gain international experience, meet and collaborate with Canadian colleagues, and participate in a prestigious scholarship program with a wide network. Excellence in scholarship, diversity, and community service are hallmarks of the Fulbright Program. The Canada-U.S. Fulbright Program strengthens binational collaborative research and promotes thoughtful public debate on topics that reflect the broad range of contemporary issues relevant to Canada, the United States, and the relationship between the two countries. Many scholars report their experience as life changing. All faculty are encouraged to apply where applicable. Please direct questions and intent to apply via email to Kyeanna.bailey@bcc.cuny.edu, or visit LH-16.

The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research encourages all faculty to visit their CUNY page to obtain information about ongoing research and funding opportunities through a variety of special interests related to: Entrepreneurship, Faculty resources, Postdoctoral development, Research compliance and policies, Student research and Women in science. For more information, please visit: http://www.cuny.edu/research.html.

Listing of all CUNY sponsored internal funding programs can be found at: http://www.cuny.edu/research/faculty-resources/internal-funding-programs.html
SCHOLARLY WORKS AND PUBLICATIONS

Deborah Lewittes, Assistant Professor of Art and Music, received a PSC-CUNY research grant for her proposal, “The Valley Section,” to study the eminent Scottish biologist and planner Patrick Geddes and his 1925 urban design theories. His writings, with their attention to history and regionalism, seemed to be at odds with contemporary, visionary modernist urban planning theories; however, Geddes’s thoughts resurfaced in London in the 1950s, were repackaged in new terms, and became integral to the thinking of the most vanguard architectural theorists of the day, into whose hands postwar reconstruction fell. For more information on this work, please contact, Professor Lewittes at, deborah.lewittes@bcc.cuny.edu.

Cynthia Tobar, Assistant Professor and Head of Archives in the Library, received a PSC-CUNY Traditional B Grant for “‘Cities for People, Not for Profit’: Gentrification and Housing Activism in Bushwick, Phase 2.” This renewed funding will support Prof. Tobar’s oral history research as she develops digital content for a community-based storytelling project about gentrification and housing activism in Bushwick that is capturing artist, activist, and local resident stories of displacement. She was also awarded the 2016 Create Change art fellowship from the Laundromat Project and the 2016 Engaging Artists Residency, to train in the practice of making socially-engaged art through volunteer opportunities with community organizations focusing on housing justice. For more information on this work, please contact, Professor Tobar at, Cynthia.tobar@bcc.cuny.edu.

Sunej Hans, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, was selected to participate in the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Visiting Faculty Program at the Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL) for the second year in a row. Two distinguished STEM students Moussadatou Sabi and Ellianna Diaz Perez were also selected to participate. The BNL Visiting Faculty Program seeks to increase the research competitiveness of faculty members and their students at institutions historically underrepresented in the research community in order to expand the workforce vital to the Department of Energy (DOE) mission areas. As part of the program, selected university/college faculty members collaborate with DOE laboratory research staff on a research project of mutual interest. Dr. Hans has developed a strategy to create a pipeline from Bronx Community College (BCC) to Stony Brook University (SBU) by using BNL as a research-training center thereby making her students very competitive and marketable. As a result, two BCC students, Ms. Rayzeline Diaz and Mr. Christopher Camilo, have completed the 2016 Spring Community College Internship (CCI) program with Dr. Hans and Dr. Minfang Yeh–who is a world-renowned scientist in the field of Neutrino and Nuclear Chemistry–and were accepted to SBU for the fall. For more information, please visit, https://www.bnl.gov/education/static/VFP/.

Thomas Cipullo, Professor of Art and Music, was honored and celebrated by the New York Singing Teachers Association with a full-length concert of his vocal works, chosen by the composer himself and assisted by six singers from the New York Metropolitan area performing 20 songs. The Concert and Birthday tribute (as he turned 60 this year) was held on April 17th at the National Opera Center in Manhattan. For more information, please contact Professor Cipullo at thomas.cipullo@bcc.cuny.edu.

Monique Guishard, BCC alumna and Assistant Professor of Social Sciences, Psychology, participated in a round-table discussion and instructed a professional development course at the 100th Annual Meeting of the American Education Research held on April 12th in Washington, D.C. As part of the round-table, “scholars of African descent from different backgrounds discussed the ways that their experiences and multiple social positions influence research, writing, interpretations, and re-representations of Black people’s experiences.” Professor Guishard also help lead a professional development course titled, “Public Science: An Introduction to Critical Participatory Action and Research,” providing a basic understanding of community research collaborations. For more information on these topics, please contact Professor Guishard at, Monique.Guishard@bcc.cuny.edu.

PUBLICATIONS


COMMENCEMENT 2016

HONORS CONVOCATION

Honors Convocation activities take place on Wednesday, June 1, 2016 with a reception for honorees and their guests beginning at 5:00 p.m. outside Philosophy Hall (PH). In the event of inclement weather, the reception will take place in Colston Hall (CO), Lower Level. The honors ceremony will begin promptly at 6:30 p.m. in Gould Memorial Library (GM), Auditorium.

COMMENCEMENT FRIDAY, JUNE 3, 2016
Please tell our readers about your national award for teaching.
The “Delmar-Cengage Jack Erjavec Innovative Instructor Award” is awarded by the North America Council of Automotive Teachers. One of the reasons that I was nominated for this award is that I was the first instructor to introduce on-line learning in the Automotive Program at BCC. I use Blackboard regularly in my instruction. In addition, I was instrumental in incorporating DATO (Delmar Automotive Training Online) to the Automotive Program. The award was presented at the annual NACAT conference in Tyler, Texas and all expenses for me to attend were paid for by Cengage learning. I have also attended The Consortium for Education in Renewable Energy Technology (CERET) Academy on Biodiesel refining and production and incorporate some of that technology in the diesel program.

What are your future goals here at BCC?
I hope to continue teaching, coordinate and expand the diesel and transportation program as we move it to the new facilities being readied in Paterson Garage. I also hope to develop new courses to reflect the ever changing automotive technology so that we can produce technicians who meet current and future industry demands.

What qualities do you think future automotive technicians should have?
Future technicians, in order to be successful, should be well versed in the use of electronic diagnostic equipment. They need to have extensive knowledge of electric and electronic principles, know how to navigate an electrical wiring diagram, and be proficient in diagnostic techniques. These are skills that are hard to obtain. Therefore a tech should also be patient and persistent. Automotive repair is an exact science, there are no guesses or maybes. A technician must be precise with his diagnosis and repair to prevent customer comeback and gain customer trust.

Describe for us your vision of the perfect automobile.
The perfect automobile? Okay, here it goes: it should be a mid-size automobile, 4 door, simple enough not to cost a lot of money, however, comfortable to drive. It should definitely have a manual shift transmission so that the driver still has an input on how the car is driven and an exhaust system that is somewhat audible. In other words the car should be fun and exciting to drive. The engine that powers it should be super-efficient and fuel-economical with very low emissions. It should not have very many frills like: dual-zone a/c, seats that remember who drove it last, and rear view mirrors that move when they sense headlights from behind. It should, however, be equipped with latest safety technology: Automatic braking systems, traction control, stability control, and air bags.

What advice would you give to an aspiring educator?
A good instructor needs to be confident in his or her skills. Confidence comes with experience. Anyone who plans to teach automotive technology must spend time actually fixing automobiles to gain the experience and confidence necessary that allows him or her to project that knowledge to the student. He or she must also have good verbal skills to be able to explain lesson content in a clear fashion.