Bronx Community College has embarked on a Middle States Commission on higher Education (MSCHE) comprehensive self-study that will take approximately two more years to complete. It will be the first for BCC under MSCHE’s new requirements and standards, all of which demand rigorous investigation and demonstration that BCC is meeting or exceeding the required goals. According to Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation, 13th edition (2014), the self-study process “ensures institutional accountability, self-appraisal, improvement, and innovation through peer reviews and the rigorous application of standards within the context” of the institution’s mission. At the core of the self-study is the mandate to prove campus-wide integration that demonstrates the College’s many programs and services are designed for student success and can prove their effectiveness. The revised standards cover not only the College mission, but also ethics, design and support of the student experience, educational effectiveness, planning, resources, governance and administration—with a campus-wide goal of institutional improvement in these areas. The criteria of the standards are designed to foster the attributes of “self-review and improvement” and require specific, detailed analysis to that effect.

Nota Bene caught up President Isekenegbe and asked him to tell us about the upcoming self-study. When asked if he viewed the organization and work as a challenge, the President replied, “It’s an opportunity for us to step forward, using the framework the Requirements and Standards that Middle States provides. The new Standards are concise, precise with a great deal of accountability. Assessment runs through them like a well-stitched thread, covering the purpose of the self-study.”

And as far as challenges go?
“You must deliver what you promise. Our promises are found in our mission, vision, and values statements at the front of the catalog and across the campus. They make clear our obligations to our students and ourselves, what we must do, we must deliver.”

President Isekenegbe, what is paramount for BCC at this point?
“Retention and graduation. They are essential. We must move the needle. For students and for the life of the College, to maintain our programs and services.”

As a Middle States evaluator, someone who has taken part in many visits to colleges under review, and studied numerous reports at your own and other MSCHE colleges, can you tell us in just a few words what is the essence of the self-study?
“Plan, Implement, Assess. That’s for both academic and administrative departments and programs. The key word is rigorous, and it has to permeate every element of our College.”

How do you think we’ll do on the self-study?
“We will do fantastic. We have talent in all four corners of the campus. We have the dedication and we have the determination. Everything is in place and it’s our time to go forward.”

“WE HAVE TALENT IN ALL FOUR CORNERS OF THE CAMPUS.
WE HAVE THE DEDICATION AND WE HAVE THE DETERMINATION.”
WAC FACULTY CERTIFICATION
PROGRAM IS OPERATIONAL

We are excited to bring back the Writing Intensive Faculty Certification Program to Bronx Community College. Sixteen faculty members will be participating in the 2017 Writing Intensive Faculty Certification Program, which will be offered in both face-to-face and online sessions. This will be the first BCC faculty development program to be offered in hybrid format. The program will help faculty design effective Writing Intensive courses, integrate writing into academic disciplines, and promote thoughtful pedagogy and curriculum design that transcends disciplinary boundaries.

New BCC WAC Website
Eleanor Luken and David Bridges, Writing Across the Curriculum Fellows, have developed a WAC website on CUNY Academic Commons: http://cuny.is/bccwac. The new website features comprehensive WAC resources for both BCC faculty and students and aims to become a premier hub for WAC pedagogy.

WAC Resources for Nursing Faculty
The BCC WAC program unveiled “Alternative Assignments for Nursing Faculty” (https://bcc-cuny.digication.com/alternative_assignments_for_nursing) on March 23, 2017. The resource was developed to help the Nursing faculty easily incorporate assignments based on WAC pedagogy into BCC’s nursing courses. WAC resources include writing objectives specific to the nursing field as well as samples of low-stakes assignments and scaffolded high-stakes assignments. Given that writing skills are embedded across CUNY Pathways’ Student Learning Outcomes, we recognize that more departments might be interested in integrating WAC pedagogy into their curriculum. The BCC WAC program has so far developed discipline-specific resources for History, Music, and Health, Physical Education & Recreation. We are happy to assist you in developing discipline-specific resources for your academic department as well. Please contact Swan Kim, WAC coordinator, for more information. Swan.Kim@bcc.cuny.edu.

COLLEGE READING AND LEARNING ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

On March 24th, the national College Reading and Learning Association held a day-long, North East Conference at Manhattan College. Eight members of the BCC faculty and staff were accepted for two presentations (of the 20 listed on the program!)

Presenters: Betty Doyle (English); Z. Ingram (Modern Languages); J. Juechter (Perkins Tutoring Center); Richard Martinez (CTLT), Jan Robertson (Writing Center); Jason Sanchez (History); Kenisha Thomas (Writing Center)

• Leveraging CRLA Training for Student Professional Development: At this BCC, approximately 1,400 tutors received CRLA training in the last 18 years. Minimally, four training workshops (including two Level I’s and two Level II’s or III’s) are scheduled annually. New professionals and BCC staff discussed how CRLA helped leverage training towards career paths and achievements.

Presenter: J. Juechter (Faculty and Perkins Tutoring Center); Fakhrul Alam (CLT Education & Academic Literacy)

• Developing High Octane CRLA Tutor Training Modules: Experimental Session: For 20 years BCC has delivered CRLA Tutor Certification at three levels to train the 150 – 200 Tutors on campus annually. Experienced trainers have tailored interesting, dynamic approaches particularly for critical yet static information needed by Tutors.
BCC FACULTY AWARDED CHANCELLOR’S RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

Four BCC faculty members were awarded a Chancellor’s Research Fellowship for the 2017-18 academic year. CUNY reviewers rated the proposals on the published program criteria:

1. Intellectual/academic/creative quality of the proposal
2. Quality and specificity of the project plan
3. Evidence the candidate has necessary resources to complete the research
4. Evidence of candidate’s ongoing commitment to research/scholarship/creative work

Award Winners & Proposals:

Susan Amper (English) will offer an alternative interpretation to contemporary criticism of the narration of Edgar Allan Poe’s “tales of terror,” arguing that the stories’ narrators are engaged in deliberate deception.

Giulia Guarnieri (Modern Languages) will examine the oral autobiographical narratives of Italian immigrants housed at the Ellis Island Library through a linguistic lens with particular focus on narrative structures and modalities of spoken language.

William de Jong-Lambert (History) will focus on the evolutionary synthesis of genetics and natural selection of the first decades of the 20th century for his book manuscript The Fly Room: the Invention of Genetics and the Science of Evolution.

Cormac O’Sullivan (Mathematics & Computer Science) will examine integer partitions in the area of number theory, clarifying how well a method formulated by 19th century British mathematician James Joseph Sylvester approximates partitions.

CUNY OFFICE OF RESEARCH BOOK COMPLETION AWARD

Book proposals by three BCC faculty were selected by the CUNY Office of Research Book Completion Award program. In what the award letter said was an exceptionally competitive year of “179 high quality applications,” Drs. Nelson, Rodas, and Hess will receive cash awards as encouragement to continue with their work.

Elissa Nelson (Communication Arts & Sciences) will examine how The Breakfast Club (1985) became a defining film of the era, youth culture, and the teen film genre through its emphasis on character types and generational conflict. Title: The Breakfast Club: Youth Identity and Generational Conflict in the Golden Age of the Teen Film

Julia Miele Rodas (English) will explore how a moment of violence from her childhood serves as an important connection between two Brooklyn families. By resisting labels such as attacker and victim, her project attempts to relocate the narrative of violence in a complex web of culture, race, disability, and geopolitics. Title: Fahrenheit 851

Jillian Hess (English) will complete her book, The Commonplace Method, which provides the first dedicated study of one of the most important manuscript forms of nineteenth-century England: the commonplace book (a personal collection of quotations and information) and its descendant, the scrapbook.

“May not music be described as the mathematics of the sense, mathematics as music of the reason? The musician feels mathematics, the mathematician thinks music: music the dream, mathematics the working life.”
- James Joseph Sylvester

“To impose any strait jacket upon the intellectual leaders in our colleges and universities would imperil the future of our nation.”
- Earl Warren

Chief Justice of the United States (1953–1969)

“If the crowns of all the kingdoms of Europe were laid down at my feet in exchange for my books and my love of reading, I would spurn them all.”
- François Fénelon
Charmaine Aleong and Stacia Reader (Health, Physical Education and Recreation) presented on “Integrating Inner-City Community College Students into a School Based Health Promotion Program” at the Society for Public Health Educators Annual Meeting, Denver, CO, March 30-April 1, 2017.


Jon Lewis-Katz (English) was recently shortlisted for the 2017 Commonwealth Short Story Prize for his short story, “Shopping,” and featured in the Trinidad and Tobago Guardian Paper, April 23, 2017.

Kevin Martillo Viner (Modern Languages) presented on the “Second-Generation NYC Bilinguals’ Use of the Spanish Subjunctive in Obligatory Contexts” at the 7th Annual University of Alabama Languages Conference, University of Alabama, February 17th, 2017. He also presented on “The Conditional Variables of Obligatory Spanish Subjunctive Use by Second-Generation NYC Bilinguals” at the Georgetown University Round Table (GURT) on Languages and Linguistics, Georgetown University, DC, March 11th, 2017.

Melissa Coss Aquino (English) was part of a panel, “The Bronx: ‘Book Desert’: Fighting Back Through Public Libraries and New Bookstores at the annual Bronx Book Fair, May 7th at Bronx Library Center. BCC student writers and editors of Thesis, Rebecca Perez, Oyindamola Shoola, and alumna Sasha Smith were featured readers.

Thomas Cipullo (Arts and Music) won the Dominick Argento Chamber Opera award for his opera “After Life,” honored through the National Opera Association annual conference, Santa Barbara, CA, January 2017. He also had his opera, “Glory Denied,” presented at the Anchorage (Alaska) Opera in Feb, 2017, and at the Nashville (TN) and Pensacola (FLA) Opera in November 2016.


Prathibha Kanakamedal (History) was selected as a faculty co-leader for the Mellon Seminar in Public Engagement and Collaboration Research, 2017-19, hosted by the Center for Humanities at the CUNY Graduate Center, working with an arts organization, doctoral students and faculty on an oral history project, public programming and an exhibit under the umbrella theme of “Archives.”

Stacia Reader, Elyse Gruttadauria (Health, Physical Education and Recreation), Victoria King (Health Services) and Seher Atamturktur (Biological Sciences) presented on “Creating a Health Professions Pipeline Program at an Urban Community College: Lessons Learned during the Pilot Year” at the Tri-State Best Practices Conference, Issues of Equity in Higher Education, Lyndhurst, NJ, March 4, 2017.

Timothy Sedore (English) presented his paper, “‘Words, Breath, Text and Landscape’: Virginia Civil War Monuments in the Context of Tennessee and Mississippi Monumentation,” at a symposium at the Library of Virginia in Richmond, VA, February 25, 2017.

The 217th 2YC3 Conference will be hosted by Bronx Community College from May 26-27. The goal of 2YC3 is to provide professional development opportunities for chemistry educators with the aim of enhancing student learning.

http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/2YC3/
- PUBLICATIONS -


Ortuño, Andrea. “Revisiting Allan Cunningham’s Cabinet Gallery and a Last Supper Once Attributed to Murillo.” Source: Notes in the History of Art 36, Fall 2016. 49-60.


Faculty Development

NUMERACY INFUSION FOR COLLEGE EDUCATORS (NICE)

NICE is a faculty development program where faculty will learn about strategies for infusing quantitative reasoning into their teaching. The program also offers the opportunity for participating faculty to be involved with a community of CUNY faculty who are committed to undergraduate education. This project is supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and faculty participants will receive $2,000 for their successful completion of an 8-unit predominantly online program during the summer of 2017 or the 2017-2018 academic year. A two-day introductory session will be held during the summer of 2017 and a capstone conference will be held during the summer of 2018.

The following faculty from BCC have been selected to participate:

- Emalinda McSpadden – Social Sciences
- David Puglia- English
- Monika Sikand – Physics and Technology
- Harini Mittal - Business
- Sharon Utakis - English
- Sibongile Mhlaba - History
- Tonya Johnson - Education
- Crystal Rodriguez - Criminal Justice
- Edward Lehner - Education
- Enyuan Shang - Biology
- Minkyoung Choi - Education
- Adijat Adebola - Biology

1957-2017

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
Dr. Jordi Getman-Eraso is an Associate Professor in the Department of History and ePortfolio Program Coordinator at BCC. He chairs the President’s Gold Standard Committee and is co-chair of the Middle States Self-Study Steering Committee. He joined BCC in 2003, has taught modern world history, Latin American history and First Year Seminar courses. He has served as co-coordinator of the Honors Program (2005-2011), where he introduced honors courses to the BCC curriculum and created the Honors Scholar certificate. In 2009, he created the ePortfolio program, which he currently coordinates. He is a faculty mentor in the New Faculty Seminar and serves on the CTLT Advisory Council. Nota Bene caught up with Jordi to discuss his role as Co-Chair of BCC’s MSCHE (Middle States Commission on Higher Education) Self-Study, now underway, and due to be completed in Spring 2019.

Jordi, you’ve been at the College for 14 years. What are some of the changes you’ve seen?

A great many changes. There’s been a shift, an evolution, really, from many faculty and staff who once worked in silos, towards integration. Of course, the goal, as always, is student success. We’ve seen many positive changes in technology, a burgeoning and continual effort to improve teaching & learning, assessment across campus, and innovative approaches to student service. Scholarship in one’s discipline is critical for staying active and engaged in one’s field, but there’s also been a fine upswing in faculty enthusiasm for scholarship in the practice of becoming expert teachers, finding and assessing new ways to foster success in our students. A great majority arrive with many needs and challenges, academically, personally. Many face daily challenges that can be overwhelming and our College community—staff, faculty, administration—is responding in new ways to address those challenges. It’s a positive time for BCC.

You’ve been involved with ePortfolio for many years now. What are its advantages?
The ePortfolio functions as far more than just a filing cabinet for the student’s papers and interests. Students can use it to develop a distinct academic identity, one that they can shape to broaden their ideas of who they are, who they might want to be. Students come to see themselves as authors, creators, scholars, as young people in the act of self-analysis, self-reflection. The ePortfolio can serve as a tool for self-exploration, as a means, perhaps, of re-calibrating ideas of oneself, and many students use it as the start of forging a professional identity.

Many colleges dread the comprehensive self-study required to maintain accreditation. What do you think is the “right attitude” for approaching the MSCHE Self Study?
The self-study is a 2 ½ year process and it runs the risk of becoming dreadful if we approach it simply as a way to check boxes and get re-accredited. It’s easy to get bogged down in checking those boxes, but the self-study offers us an unprecedented opportunity to look honestly at our institution and influence the direction of our College. The self-study will come to a close in 2019. We’ll have the opportunity to take what we’ve learned about ourselves and channel that knowledge into our 2020-25 Strategic Plan. What we’ll be doing for the next two years is not something to dread. It’s a time to recognize our potential, and for the many talented staff and faculty on campus to come forward and empower our students.

What about some thoughts for going forward with the MSCHE Self-Study?
I know everyone involved with the self-study is optimistic and enthusiastic. President Isekenegbe and VP Schrader are Middle States evaluators and they’re fully committed to drive the process forward. Going back to the earlier question, I think everyone would agree that the College is in the best shape they can remember. There are creative initiatives taking place all over campus. Look at the ASAP expansion, and how it’s changing the fabric of the College, the success of the pre-college programs ... these are busy, exciting times for BCC, and we have an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of our students and help them succeed.
In 2014, The College Discovery Program celebrated its 50th anniversary. College Discovery is the higher education opportunity program at CUNY community colleges. On the eve of BCC’s 60th Anniversary, Nota Bene caught up with the Director of College Discovery at Bronx Community College, Cynthia Suarez-Espinal.

How would you describe College Discovery to a new faculty or staff member who may not be familiar with the program?
The College Discovery (CD) program at Bronx Community College provides supportive services to selected students who show potential for success, but have defined educational and economic needs. College Discovery stimulates and supports the intellectual, personal, and professional growth of students through college orientation, tutoring, one-on-one counseling, supplemental instruction, financial support and transferring to other opportunity programs, such as SEEK, HEOP and EOP.

What do you hope to accomplish in your role as director? In what way do you want to leave your mark?
As I have told many, if it wasn’t for opportunity programs, I would not be seated as a director. Being a role model, an advocate, a shoulder to cry on or a cheerleader to our students is what brings me joy!

While I’m here I hope to keep collaborating with other programs, colleagues and staff to ensure that CD is improving, growing and changing to provide the best services to our students. More importantly, as BCC becomes an ASAP college, I want to be able to continue to be part of the BCC’s growth and vast opportunities for our program and even more so for our students.

As director, what has been your proudest moment?
It was my first year as director, with learning about the many aspects of the program and embarking on this new journey, Bronx Community College announced that Ms. Molaven Duarte was named the 2012 BCC Valedictorian. This was the first time CD had such an honor. I still remember when she first came to one of our information sessions, during the summer and she wasn’t quite sure if she was ready to join our program. Well, she did and did extraordinarily well while she was here. Ms. Duarte graduated with a perfect GPA of 4.0. She truly made me proud of the work, dedication and love I have and all of us in CD have for what we do.

Can you please share a student success story?
There are quite a few to share, but I have to mention one that is near and dear to my heart of a student who I knew from my previous institution and later came to Bronx Community College to enroll in our nursing program. Nicolle was a transfer student from Barnard College, I was her first academic advisor. I never thought I would see her again, but unfortunately she had gone through some personal issues and hospitalization that led her to pursue a nursing degree. Nicolle joined CD in 2010, in hopes to get into the nursing program. She did well during her first year, fulfilling the pre-requisites to get into the nursing program. During that year, she was interested in becoming a tutor for our Program, particularly to help students in the sciences and pharmacology courses. She truly enjoyed helping students, Nicolle made it into the nursing program in fall of 2012, but soon realized that it wasn’t nursing she was interested in, it was counseling and social work. Even though, she did well in her nursing courses, she decided to change her major to liberal arts with a psychology option. Nicolle graduated in 2014, with an overall GPA of 3.6 and a perfect 4.0 that semester and decided to attend Lehman College to major in social work. Because of her dedication and hard work, she was able to graduate from Lehman college in 2016. Now, I have to say it wasn’t easy for her, as she was living on her own, working as a tutor and taking care of her mother. Nicolle now will be attending Fordham University to earn her MSW and her plan is to graduate in 2018. She is still one of our best tutors and college assistants for our Program. I am so very proud of her. I am very proud of all of our CD students!
Submissions for the next issue are due no later than September 12, 2017 and should be sent to Ms. L. Vicki Cedeno, loida.cedeno@bcc.cuny.edu.

- All text should be submitted in Microsoft Word; Photographs as separate attachments
- Telephone and email should be included with content
- Accuracy is key: names, dates, awards, locations, titles should be clearly and accurately represented
- All submissions are subject to approval and editing