INQUIRER

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Introduction

The Inquirer 25 brings new voices and perspectives once again to the BMCC community. We have a solid group of contributors from the Science Department, which is a grand addition to recent issues of the *Inquirer*. A number of articles include emphasis on learning by doing, from Ewa Barnes's letter-writing project to marshal written ideas, to Katarina Mata's play-acting to teach photosynthesis. Revathi Iyenger stresses the importance of intentional physical space in the classroom. The interests addressed here range expanding our students horizons concerning career possibilities to how to read the Super Bowl through the lens not only of a critical politics, but from Plato's *Phaedrus*. We are also happy to share in the fruits of recent and ongoing initiatives, from the Teaching Academy to the Global Initiatives, as well as from this past spring's Balancing the Curriculum faculty/staff Seminar.

Here is a brief overview of the articles in issue No. 25:

Ewa Barnes recounts an experience in an ESL 095 class where students studied issues related to DACA students (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), which culminated in letters to President Trump or BMCC's President Pérez. In January 2018 they received a response, which is included here!

Miguel Castro Nunes Fiolhais shares how he gives students access to cutting edge research in particle physics, by means of his research and classroom activities.

Catarina Mata gives us a glimpse into her intro biology classroom where we find her students acting out the drama of photosynthesis, literally embodying the scientific forces about which they are learning.

Rose Gleicher once again contributes to students who want to pursue careers in Human Services, this time providing extensive resources for students who want to work with people with disabilities.

Saniye (Deniz) Gokicova shares the results of her rich experiences in the Global Initiatives working group, and offers sample assignments that will broaden the perspective of any classroom, regardless of subject matter.

Revathi Iyenger gives us a lively argument for paying attention to seating arrangements in chemistry classrooms. Through his participation in BMCC's Teaching Academy, he experimented with U-shaped seating arrangements, and has found that they improve teaching and learning.

Nicole Lopez-Jantzen offers a powerful call to arms for humanities professors, with trenchant advice about how to expand the curriculum, with an eye toward combating white supremacy.

In "Queering the Classroom," Stefanos Milkidis boldly explores the ways we can make our classrooms and the college community safe spaces for our students, interrogating what "safe spaces" might mean when we work for a vital and valid inclusivity.

Leigh Clare La Berge generously contributes a version of an article that ap-

peared in the blog of the *LA Review of Books*, "Time Stands Still at the Super Bowl: Trump, Rules, and the Banality of American Liberalism." Merging a look at sports, with a political and economic analysis of this period of the presidency, she includes Plato's *Phaedrus* in her discussion – which turns out to be one of the readings for all Eng 101 classes in the spring 2018 semester.

Anthony Naaeke offers a compelling book review of R. A. Heifetz's 1994 study of leadership, noting the author's important distinction between leadership and authority, as well as attention to adaptive and innovative changes –which he argues are vital issues for us at BMCC.

The Editors add a brief "Resources for Addressing Race and Diversity," which includes the most recent readings of BMCC's Balancing the Curriculum spring 2018 Seminar.

Page Delano
English

Elizabeth Wissinger
Social Sciences, Human Services, Criminal Justice

DACA, Reading Comprehension and Civic Engagement

Ewa Barnes
Academic Literacy and Linguistics

When early last fall President Trump announced that he would end DACA, an acronym for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, I knew I had to find a way to discuss the issue in the classroom. While I teach Academic Critical Reading (ACR), the activity I had in mind would not only challenge students to find main ideas and supporting evidence, but also to evaluate Trump's suggested policy, and to engage in a debate that, I knew, many of my students would relate to, either because they were DACA recipients, or they knew someone who was, or because they were immigrants, or simply because they were New Yorkers.

First, I assigned an article from the *New York Times* about DACA, titled "Trump Moves to End DACA and Calls on Congress to Act" (Shear, D. M. and Davis, Hirschfeld, J.), alongside BMCC President Pérez's message to the college community regarding "Reaffirmation of Commitment to Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion," written in response to Trump's announcement. Since the focus of the class that week was learning how to annotate, for homework I asked the students to make at least one annotation per paragraph on each of the two articles. In our next class, we discussed what students learned from the articles. "Mr. Obama created the DACA program to protect young, undocumented immigrants from deportation," one student said. "Thanks to Obama 800,000 young people who were brought to the U. S. illegally as children can work legally in the United States and not have to stress about getting kicked out of the country," another student added. "Trump wants to deport them, but President Pérez says BMCC's DACA students are good students, and they should continue their studies," yet another classmate summed up. The contrast between the two presidents' stance on DACA was shocking, and crystal clear.

Next, I showed two brief YouTube videos. The first video, titled "What is DACA?," provides an overview of the program. My students learned, for example, that to qualify for DACA, one must have arrived in the U.S. before age sixteen, be currently in school, a high school graduate or a military veteran (FWD. us). The second video, titled "Deferred Action," features several DACA recipients telling their stories. One DACA recipient says, "A lot of us are teachers. We are neighbors. We are parents. We are taxpayers" (the NYC Mayor's Office for Immigrant Affairs). In groups, students discussed the two videos. The point here was for the students to receive more logistical information about the program, as well as to relate to DACA recipients on a more personal level if they hadn't heard of the program before.

Next, in groups, students read stories of DACA Dreamers I'd found in the

New York Times "American Dreamers" article). While the newspaper featured hundreds of profiles, I randomly selected six, and distributed one profile per group. Each group had to present "their" Dreamer to the class. The rationale here was for students to gain a deeper understanding of the difficulties DACA recipients face, and to, again, remind the students that DACA recipients are just like them, like us. When students presented their Dreamer to the class, they expressed exactly this sentiment: one Dreamer also attended a community college, another held a full-time job while studying full-time, yet another one worked as a health aide in New York. DACA recipients turned into real people, all of whom had an important story to tell.

The closing activity was for the students to write letters to either President Trump or President Pérez in response to their stance on DACA. This was a group activity, as I wanted the students to have a chance to evaluate and possibly debate their own opinion on DACA. The results? Interestingly, about half the class wrote to Mr. Trump, the other half to Mr. Pérez. One group said to the American president, "By ending the program, you are hurting many families." Another group stated, "Everyone deserves a chance, it isn't fair to discriminate against people." To President Pérez, students wrote, "We appreciate your support for DACA people" and "BMCC's support for DACA shows that we are a caring community." Everyone defended DACA.

At the end of class, I collected the letters and said I would mail them to both presidents. A few students laughed, others expressed bewilderment. "Trump will never read the letters from us," one student explained, a sentiment that many, it seemed, shared. I explained that, while, yes, it was unlikely that Trump would read the letters, that shouldn't discourage us from speaking out. "If we never speak out just because it seems that no one will listen, then no one will ever listen," I said. Ultimately, I wanted to convey to the students that it's the act of expressing their voice that counts. And it's this act that is our civic duty. "Once your letter is out there, you have no control over who reads it," I added. "But you have the power to send it."

I mailed the letters to the two presidents. I also took a picture of the stamped envelope addressed to Mr. Trump at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. I then showed the picture to my students—as evidence. I wanted them to know that their opinions matter. While we are still waiting for a response, we know our voices are out there.

PS. And hear back we did. In early January, I received a letter from the White House, signed by Mr. Trump. In the letter, the president does not acknowledge our concerns about his plans to end DACA. Instead, Mr. Trump attacks Mr. Obama, and repeatedly tries to advertise his "Make America Great Again" agenda. I will be using the letter in class soon!

Works Cited

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 9, 2018

Ewa Barnes
New York, New York

Dear Students,

Thank you for taking the time to express your views regarding Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).

We are a Nation of opportunity because we are a Nation of laws. From my first day in this office, I have understood that my most important obligation as President is to uphold the laws and Constitution of the United States.

In June 2012, President Obama's Department of Homeland Security (DHS) bypassed Congress and the Constitution to create its own immigration law from whole cloth, authorizing work permits, the issuance of Social Security numbers, and other Federal benefits to illegal immigrants. DHS is winding down the illegal program in an orderly and minimally disruptive manner over the next few months.

Immigration law, and any reforms to immigration law, must serve Americans first. As I work with Congress on meaningful, pro-American immigration reform for the first time in decades, we will focus first and foremost on improving jobs, wages, and security for Americans and their families. I look forward to achieving real results on immigration issues that are worthy of our exceptional Nation.

Thank you again for writing, and showing your interest in our future. As President, I am committed to upholding the rule of law, pursuing the reforms necessary to restore fairness to our immigration system, and Making America Great Again.

Sincerely,

Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at BMCC

Miguel Castro Nunes Fiolhais
Science

The LHC at BMCC offers students a rare opportunity for discovery. What is the LHC? A particle accelerator that helps us understand the nature of subatomic particles.

The field of particle physics, also known as high energy physics, studies the fascinating world of subatomic particles which formulate the basic ingredients of matter. Everything in the universe is made of matter, matter is made of atoms, which in turn are made of electrons orbiting around a nucleus. Atomic nuclei are made of protons and neutrons, and these are made of elementary particles called quarks. The list of fundamental elementary particles also includes another class of particles, called leptons, which can be divided into two kinds: charged leptons (such as the well-known electron) and neutrinos, which are extremely hard to detect. To the best of our current knowledge, quarks and leptons make up a total of twelve particles, but many of these particles only existed for a fraction of a second right after the Big Bang, when energy was transformed into matter. Additionally, there is another type of particle, known as gauge bosons, which mediate the fundamental forces of nature. The photon is perhaps the most well known of these particles, corresponding to the quantum (particle) of light.

The world of elementary particles and their interactions are well described by a fundamental theory called the "Standard Model" of particle physics, which brings Einstein's special relativity and quantum mechanics into a common mathematical framework to explain the building blocks of matter and their interactions. This theory has been so successful that some of its predictions have been confirmed to a precision of one part in a trillion. No other natural science has ever reached such a feat. Over time, through many high-energy physics experiments, the Standard Model has become the most successful and well-tested scientific theory developed by mankind. On a more personal note, I would even claim that this is perhaps our greatest intellectual achievement as human beings. The success of the Standard Model implies that, for the first time, we are extremely close to a full theoretical understanding of part of the universe. As a result, the development of this theory has led to sixteen Nobel Prize awards since the 1950s.

In order to test the theoretical predictions of the Standard Model, or any alternative particle physics theory, it is necessary to build huge and costly facilities of particle accelerators. The Large Hadron Collider (LHC) is located at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva, Switzerland and it is the largest and most powerful particle accelerator ever built. It spans seventeen miles in circumference and sits several hundred feet underground. At the LHC, protons and heavy ions are accelerated and made to collide with each other at nearly the speed of light. The huge amount of energy released in

each collision allows for the production of heavy and highly unstable elementary particles, such as the top quark, therefore recreating the conditions of the early universe just after the Big Bang. Two main gigantic particle detectors, the size of cathedrals, known as ATLAS and CMS, are located along the LHC ring and are designed to collect data from these extremely high energy particle collisions. Each of these particle detectors is run by a collaboration of about three thousand physicists and engineers from institutes scattered all over the world.

The discovery of the famous Higgs boson in 2012 at the LHC by both ATLAS and CMS collaborations brought us perhaps the ultimate missing piece of the Standard Model. This explains how elementary particles acquire mass. Nevertheless, despite the success of this theory in predicting the existence and interactions of all subatomic particles discovered to date, it does leave some observed physical phenomena unexplained. For example, it does not incorporate Einstein's Theory of Gravitation, or account for the accelerating expansion of the universe. It is clear that the Standard Model is not yet the final theory of all fundamental interactions, thus the search for new physics effects is the cutting edge topic of particle physics today. Therefore, the next phase of data that will take place at the LHC, and furthermore the next generation of particle accelerators, will naturally demand a huge supply of physicists and engineers.

While the training of a particle physicist may take years of intensive training in order to obtain a variety of analytical skills, it is possible to attract young students into the world of particle physics experiments at an early stage in their studies through an international program called "Hands-on-Particles." In this activity, aspiring scientists have the opportunity to analyze real data from the LHC, using dedicated software with simulations of particle detectors, allowing them to experience life at the forefront of fundamental research. I have carried out a local incarnation of this project at BMCC over the past year, in the physics classroom and in undergraduate research projects. Both have shown extremely encouraging results. After a general introduction to particle physics and data analysis, students were quickly able to perform several measurements with real data recorded by the LHC experiments. By analyzing the products of high energy particle collisions, a wide range of study tasks are available in which the students can engage. For example, students can rediscover a heavy gauge boson, study the sensitivity to new hypothetical particles, reconstruct "strange" particles, study the structure of a proton, and measure the lifetime of an unstable particle.

One of my favorite exercises is the rediscovery of the Z boson, which has triggered a lot of enthusiasm from students. In this activity students begin by playing with the ATLAS event display HYPATIA, which resembles a three-dimensional camera, as it records the particle tracks emerging from a collision between two protons. This allows them to identify different particles and physical processes resulting from proton-proton collisions. After getting acquainted with collision visualizations in HYPATIA, I introduce the students to some physics and statistical data analysis techniques which allow them to not only identify the decay products of the Z boson, such as an electron and a positron, but also to measure important properties, such as the invariant mass. As students plot the invariant mass spectrum, they immediately recognize an accumulation of data

points, commonly known as resonance, which corresponds to the presence of the Z boson. If their result is statistically significant, they just rediscovered one of the most important elementary particles in nature! But if they truly get a kick out of rediscovering an elementary particle, the real fun is yet to come. The data sets provided for this exercise may contain the simulation of a hypothetical heavy neutral particle that has yet to be discovered. Much to the students' surprise, they are able to detect this unexpected particle in the invariant mass spectrum, with a much larger mass than the Z boson. They often say, "did we just discover a new particle?" Well, not quite yet, as they are looking at simulated data. But if nature is kind enough to bring us new particles and interactions beyond the Standard Model, we will be able to capture them in what could potentially be the scientific discovery of the century! But most importantly, undergraduates at BMCC can be part of it. The LHC is now present at BMCC and everyone is more than welcome to join in this wonderful adventure.

Acting to Learn Photosynthesis

Catarina Mata
Science

Photosynthesis is a notoriously difficult and complex topic to teach. The dreaded concept comes loaded with long and difficult words with numbers in the middle, and often a bunch of diagrams and equations, parts that need light and others where light is not but was needed. Often students are scared and give up before they even give it a chance.

I found that by acting the essential parts of major pathways I can teach the whole class instead of just the few most motivated. If they are part of the molecule, they will know how it works and what happens to it. They get up and become agents of their learning. It is also a way to break up a long lecture. Acting is not the most common way to teach difficult science topics, but when the traditional methods fail, we have to try new approaches. This one works for me, and may very well work for you too if you have to teach concepts that are hard to grasp. Getting physically involved appears to improve learning—by doing. I think this idea can easily be transferred to other disciplines. If students can act as atoms and molecules and pass on electrons to each other they can likely play almost any topic. A few objects can be useful, even if not essential: we use bouncy balls, flash lights, small wrapped candy when I remember to have them, paper balls when I do not, or we improvise.

I always start by trying to make my students care about photosynthesis, something that they and possibly you have not thought much about. They need to understand how crucial it is for their survival before anything else. I ask what they ate for their last meal and have the other students trace all that food's components to a photosynthesizing organism, most often a plant. We do this until students get it, that no photosynthesis means no food, not ever burgers.

From there I ask what they think plants need to fix carbon, what goes in and what comes out, and then we sort ins and outs on the board.

Carbon fixation in photosynthesis is done by plants and algae which have ability we animals do not, of capturing the energy of the sun. For that they use a variety of pigments. Chlorophylls a and b (green) are the stars, other pigments such as xanthophylls and carotenoids (yellow to orange) play support roles. Once the pigment is hit by light, the photon excites the chlorophyll b, sending two electrons to a higher energy level. The electrons are replaced by two low energy electrons from water, causing the release of oxygen. The two excited electrons are passed on to a series of protein acceptors on the green membranes inside the chloroplasts, the thylakoids. It is there that the energy needed to make sugars in the form of ATP is made. The energy from the electrons is used to create a proton gradient, and the flow of the excess protons out of the green membranes through ATPsynthase, an enzyme channel, catalyzes the phosphorylation of ADP into ATP, eventually powering the sugar making.

Scene 1. Capture the photon, create the proton gradient to make ATP

I use the flashlight representing the sun, as a source of photons (particle/ware that is light) and use the red ball to represent the high energy electrons that come out of the chlorophyll after being hit by the energy of the photons and are passed on to proteins in the membrane of the tylakoids giving energy along the way to throw protons inside the tylakoid and make ATP.

A student holds a flashlight representing the sun pointed at a leaf – as a source of photons. As the light hits the leaf a red ball representing high energy electrons that come out of the chlorophyll is tossed up, and passed from student to student, tallest to shortest (representing the electron transport chain on the thylakoid membrane), as the ball moves along the Electron transport chain. Other students throw protons, wrapped candy (or small paper balls), across the standing electron transport students, creating a proton gradient. Another student then throws the protons across the ATP synthase, represented by a funnel that produces ATP.

After this acting exercise what happened is discussed in pairs and then by the whole class, and written down.

The ATP produced during the light reactions of photosynthesis that the students just enacted will allow for the making of sugars by giving the energy to adding the carbon dioxide we breathe out, now in the stroma (space between membranes) of the chloroplast) to a starter molecule and thus eventually producing sugar. These are the light independent reactions.

Students are encouraged to say the full name of the most abundant and important enzyme in the world, RuBisCO. After they agree that the name sounds like a breakfast cereal, they are told the full name, Ribulose-1,5-bisphosphate carboxylase/oxygenase. Student already noticed by now that RuBisCO does not end in -ase like other enzymes, but there are two -ases in the full name. They are told that carboxylase is the part that matters to us, as in, get CO_2 from the air to make sugars, not oxygenase, that uses O_2 and releases CO_2 and can be wasteful.

Scene 2. Carbon Fixation

Five students are holding hands as RuPB (Ribulose-1,5-bisphosphate), a five carbon sugar, RuBisCO, usually me, will capture another student playing CO_2 and connect his/her hand to the five playing RuBisCO. They will then break the six carbon (people) chain in two three carbon sugars and form the precursor for the three-carbon sugar made in this part of photosynthesis, the Calvin Cycle. Again, we discuss in pairs and the whole class what was acted and write it down.

At this point we look at some PowerPoints with the full details of the process and watch a little movie that ties it all together.

When we have enough time left we divide in groups and review what we learned with clicker questions playing in small groups for 1 extra credit point to the group that gets more points.

The concepts covered in this class are hard to understand, because they are complex for students taking their first biology class. Acting it has improved the whole class level of understanding of the material by at least 30%. It also makes it more fun for everybody, even if there are always some paper balls or candy left

over to pick up. Students may be reluctant to participate, as they did not sign-up to act in Biology class, but there are always enough volunteers.

Will you consider of giving acting it out a go for your next difficult topic?

Encouraging Our Students to Pursue Paths to Master's and Doctoral Degrees: A Guide for Students Seeking Careers Working with People Who Have Disabilities

Rosalie Gleicher
Human Services

"Few graduate students start at 2-year colleges"(Smartbrief Education, 2017). This was the subject line of a recent email that I received which grabbed my attention. This referred to results of a study which found that only 20% of students graduating with a master's degree, and 11% of doctoral graduates, began their higher-education journey at a community college, and argued that community colleges need to do more to help students pursue a path to graduate school (Fain, 2017). In addition, the literature points out that when students pursue higher education and obtain master's and doctoral degrees, they earn higher salaries (Lu, 2014) and have a higher lifetime earnings potential (Longley, 2017), especially in the sciences and social science fields (Burnsed, 2011).

As a professor in the human services department, teaching a course in disabilities, many students contact me with an interest in working with people who have disabilities, but they are not sure which direction to go. I thought about this information and felt inspired to write the following article to assist our students. This paper draws on my social work experiences with the wide range of professionals who work in the disabilities field, as well as my personal experiences as a parent of a child with special needs, who has received various types of therapies and services.

This paper begins with a brief overview of people with disabilities and contemporary issues in NYC. Second, professions requiring a bachelor's degree for licensure will be discussed; for example, child life specialist, and special education teacher. Third, professions that require a master's degree for licensure will be discussed; this includes social work, rehabilitation counseling, speech therapy, and occupational therapy. Finally, professions requiring a doctorate for licensure will be discussed, such as psychology, physical therapy, and audiology.

Who are people with disabilities?

People with disabilities are a diverse population consisting of people with mobility, visual, hearing loss, intellectual, developmental, cognitive, and/or health-related disabilities, who share a similar history of discrimination and fight for civil rights. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (2009, para 4) defines a disability as a "...physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of a person's major life activities (walking, speaking, seeing, hearing,

breathing, learning, working, self-care); or a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having an impairment..." In NYC there are approximately 890,000 individuals with disabilities, which is 11% of NYC's population (Center for Independence of the Disabled, 2011) (CIDNY).

What issues do people with disabilities encounter?

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 aimed to ensure that 43 million Americans with a physical and/or mental disability have legal protections to obtain full rights to society in the areas of education, employment, housing, public accommodations, education, transportation, communication, recreation, health services, voting, and access to public services (Americans with Disabilities Act, 2009). However, more than 25 years later, one in five Americans or 57 million people have a disability and the number is growing (US Bureau of Census, 2012), and people with disabilities continue to face a combination of challenges in these same areas of life that often results in high rates of poverty and unemployment (CIDNY, 2111; Fessler, 2015; O'Leary, 2015).

BACHELOR'S LEVEL OPPORTUNITIES

Child Life Specialist

Child life specialists (CLS) give support and education to hospitalized children and adolescents with severe medical problems, and to their families. Based on a child's age, they conduct play therapy and/or counseling to reduce fear or anxiety. Most jobs are at pediatric hospitals (BLS, undated), and employment outlook is good (BLS, undated). This profession requires a bachelor's or master's degree in child life, child and family studies, early childhood education, human development, or psychology, a clinical internship, and passing a national examination. For more information contact:

Association of Child Life Professionals: http://www.childlife.org/child-life-profession

Childlife of Greater New York: https://www.clgny.com/

Selected Child Life Internships in NYC
Children of Bellevue: Bellevue Hospital: http://childrenofbellevue.org/child-life/

Child Life at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center: https://www.mskcc.org/pediatrics/experience/life-pediatrics/child-life-services

Cohen Children's Hospital- Northwell Hospital (formerly LIJ): https://childrenshospital.northwell.edu/for-professionals/child-life-internship-program

Kravis Children's Hospital at Mount Sinai: http://www.mschildlife.org/intern_cl.html

List of all Children's Hospitals: https://www.childrenshospitals.org/Directories/Hospital-Directory

Phyllis and David Komansky Center for Children's Health at NewYork-Presbyterian, Weill Cornell: http://www.nyp.org/pdf/komansky/CLS-Internship-2014.pdf

Teacher, Special Education

Special education teachers work with students who have a variety of disabilities in early intervention, preschool, schools, middle schools, and high schools. They develop individualized education plans (IEP's) with families to develop individualized goals that aim to adapt the curriculum and educate children in the least restrictive environment. SEIT (special education itinerant teacher) and SETSS (Special Education Teacher Support Services) help children with special needs to learn within a general education setting. They work in schools, homes, and childcare, but most work in public schools (BLS, undated). In public schools, a bachelor's degree and a state-issued certification or license are minimum requirements (BLS, undated).

Bachelor degrees in special education
BA in Childhood/Early Childhood Special Education at Medgar Evers:
http://www.mec.cuny.edu/schoolliberal/education-dept/

Master's degrees in special education
Childhood Special Education-Behavior Disorders at Hunter: http://catalog.hunter.cuny.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=33&poid=6646

Early Childhood Special Education at Hunter:
http://catalog.hunter.cuny.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=33&poid=6668

Students with Disabilities at City College: https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/specialed/

Special Education-Childhood/Adolescents: College of Staten Island:
https://www.csi.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/admissions/grad/pdf/Education%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf

Special Education at Lehman College:
http://www.lehman.edu/academics/education/special-education/index.php

Special Education at Queens College: http://www.qc.cuny.edu/Academics/Degrees/Education/Programs/Pages/MastersPrograms.aspx

Teacher of Blind and Visually Impaired at Hunter:
http://catalog.hunter.cuny.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=29&poid=5587

An alternative to "traditional" teaching programs is the *NYC Teaching Fellows Program*, which trains college graduates to become teachers and obtain teacher certification, even though they did not originally pursue education in teaching. Special education is one possible area of concentration. Website: http://nycteachingfellows.org/

Human Services and Social Work

Social workers help people with disabilities to address personal and societal challenges to become independent, productive, and included in society, which is a very rewarding career. Social workers use counseling, collaboration, and advocacy on the individual level, and political advocacy and education on the macro level. They are employed in a wide variety of settings, such as early inter-

vention, schools, day treatment, pre-vocational programs, job training, mental health centers, residential services, colleges, and more. Many work settings in this field are set up as a multi-disciplinary team setting with vocational rehabilitation counselors, nurses, physical therapists, speech therapists, psychologists, medical doctors, psychiatrists, and recreational counselors. Bachelor's level social workers coordinate services. A master's degree is needed to do diagnosis and treatment. The job outlook of social workers is expected to grow due to increased demand for healthcare and social services (BLS, undated). Being bilingual is an asset. A driver's license is helpful for home visits. More information is available at:

Bureau of Labor Statistics: https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/social-workers.htm

Council on Social Work Education: https://cswe.org/

National Association of Social Workers: https://www.socialworkers.org/

Schools to study Human Services and Social Work
BA in Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences: Disabilities Studies Concentration/

BS in Early Childhood Education: Co-concentration in Disabilities Studies.

City College, Center for Worker Education (new programs: 2015. Face-to-face.) Website: https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/cwe/concentrations

BA in Disability Studies: (online) at CUNY School of Professional Studies (SPS) https://sps.cuny.edu/academics/undergraduate/bachelor-arts-disability-studies-ba

BS in Human Services at City Tech/CUNY: (in Brooklyn) http://www.citytech.cuny.edu/human-services/

BSW at Hunter College/CUNY: (in Manhattan) http://sssw.hunter.cuny.edu/ssw/programs/bsw/

BSW at York College/CUNY: (in Queens) https://www.york.cuny.edu/produce-and-print/contents/bulletin/school-of-health-and-behavioral-sciences/social-sciences/social-work-bs

BSW at Lehman College/CUNY: (in Bronx) http://www.lehman.edu/academics/social-work/

BSW at College of Staten Island/CUNY: https://www.csi.cuny.edu/academics-and-research/departments-programs/social-work

BSW at Medgar Evers College/CUNY: (in Brooklyn) http://www.mec.cuny.edu/schoolliberal/dept-of-socialwork-behavior/

BSW programs at SUNY--The State University of New York-Albany, Brockport, Fredonia, Plattsburgh, Stony Brook: https://www.suny.edu/

MA in Disability Studies at CUNY School of Professional Studies (SPS): http://catalog.sps.cuny.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=1&poid=37&returnto=36

MSW at College of Staten Island/CUNY:
https://www.csi.cuny.edu/academics-and-research/departments-programs/
social-work

MSW at Hunter College/CUNY: http://sssw.hunter.cuny.edu/ssw/admissions/

MSW at Lehman College/CUNY: http://www.lehman.edu/academics/social-work/

MSW programs at SUNY: https://www.suny.edu/

MSW programs with concentrations/electives/specializations in disabilities.

NYU: http://socialwork.nyu.edu/academics/msw/course-descriptions.html

University of Georgia: http://www.ssw.uga.edu/academics/certificate.
html#disability

MSW at University of Maine: http://umaine.edu/socialwork/graduate-programs/
continuing-education-certificate-programs/

MSW at University of Connecticut: http://sped-transition certificate.uconn.
edu/?utm_source=Dis%20Scoop&utm_medium=Dis%20Scoop&utm_
campaign=Dis%20Scoop

Rehabilitation Counseling
Vocational rehabilitation counselors (VRC's) are master's level professionals who help people with a physical and/or mental disability to become independent by coordinating a wide range of services leading to independent living and employment, such as intake/assessment, counseling, job training or college, transportation, assistive technology, home modifications, resume and job placement services. VRC's work in a settings such as the state rehabilitation agency, non-profit organizations, outpatient clinics, for-profit agencies, and more. Working with the state rehabilitation agency is particularly challenging because of a big caseload, and being in charge of the counseling and funding decisions. However, there is a great feeling of accomplishment and to help people to obtain employment. The employment of VRC's is projected to grow due to the increase in elderly, veterans, and people with disabilities (BLS, undated). More information can be found at:

Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification:
https://www.crccertification.com/

The Bureau of Labor Statistics: https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-
service/rehabilitation-counselors.htm

Schools to study Rehabilitation Counseling
Hofstra University: https://www.hofstra.edu/academics/colleges/health-human/
msedrehab/index.html

Hunter College: Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling: http://catalog.hunter.
cuny.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=29&poid=5663&returnto=6343

NYU: Master's in: Guidance and Counseling; Counseling for Mental Health and Wellness: http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/programs/#search:masters

Speech Language Pathologist

Speech-language pathologists (SLP's) are master's level professionals who work with people who have disabilities to evaluate and treat communication and swallowing disorders due to stroke, brain injury, hearing loss, developmental delays, Parkinson's disease, a cleft palate, or autism (Bureau of Labor Statistics, BLS, undated). SLP's work in hospitals, rehabilitation centers, health-care agencies, private practice, early intervention (home based), and schools, but most work in schools or hospitals (BLS, undated). The NYC Early Intervention program, provides in-home SLP's to eligible children to help with speech and/or feeding issues. It is very rewarding feeling for SLP's to hear children say their first words and/or progress from one-two word answers to full sentences. Employment of SLP's is projected to grow (BLS, undated). For more information about SLP's:

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS): https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/speech-language-pathologists.htm

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association: https://www.asha.org/

Schools to study Speech Pathology
Bachelor's degrees at: Brooklyn, City, Lehman, and York Colleges

Master's degrees at
Brooklyn College: http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/academics/schools/socialsciences/graduate/speech_sciences/information/pathology.php

Hunter College: http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/comsc

Queens: https://www.qc.cuny.edu/Academics/Degrees/DAH/LCD/Pages/MA-SLP.aspx

Teacher's College at Columbia University: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/biobehavioral-sciences/communication-sciences-and-disorders/

OCCUPATIONS REQUIRING A DOCTORATE
Some of the occupations that require a doctorate for licensure are: Psychology, Occupational Therapy, and Audiology. Each will be discussed.

Psychologist
Psychologists are important to the disability field. They do counseling and psychological evaluations, such as intelligence testing that can determine whether or not someone is eligible for services or what type of accommodations someone might need. They help people to improve socialization, activities of daily living, and independent living skills for home and community. They work in day/vocational programs, group homes, schools, mental health clinics, doing research, and private practice. In the NYC public school system, students with an individualized education plan (IEP) receive a psychological evaluation every three years to determine current needs and eligibility for services. A doctoral degree in psychology and a state license are needed for private practice, but a master's degree is sometimes sufficient for some positions (BLS undated).

Employment of psychologists is projected to grow, especially for those with a doctorate (BLS, undated). For more information:

Bureau of Labor: https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/psychologists.htm

Schools to study psychology
An undergraduate psychology major is available at almost every CUNY college. http://www2.cuny.edu/admissions/undergraduate/explore/programs/

Master's in Psychology at City College: https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/psychology/psch-masters-general

Doctorate in Psychology at CUNY Graduate Center: https://www.gc.cuny.edu/Page-Elements/Academics-Research-Centers-Initiatives/Doctoral-Programs/Psychology

Occupational Therapists
Occupational therapists are master's level professionals who work with people who have disabilities to help them improve the skills needed for independent living (BLS, undated). OT's work in homes, schools, nursing homes, hospitals, and home health care. Children can get assistance from OT's with eating (holding fork/spoon), hand-eye coordination (throwing and catching balls, using a balance beam), handwriting (using thick pencils), getting dressed (learning to do buttons, zippers), and grooming (combing hair). OT's work in schools, nursing homes, hospitals, and home health care. The job outlook of employment of OT's is projected to grow (BLS, undated). More information can be found here:

Bureau of Labor Statistics: https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/occupational-therapists.htm

American Academy of Occupational Therapy: https://www.aota.org/

Audiology
Audiologists are doctoral level professionals who diagnose, manage, and treat a person's hearing, balance, or ear problems for people of all ages (BLS, undated). They work in hospitals, physicians' offices, audiology clinics, stores, and schools. For people who wear hearing aids, audiologists play an important role in training the person how to use hearing aids properly, so they can communicate with others at home, school, or work. Employment of audiologists is projected to grow due to the rise in the aging population (BLS, undated). For more information about audiologists, see:

Bureau of Labor Statistics: https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/audiologists.htm

American Academy on Audiology: https://audiology.org/

Schools to study Audiology
Adelphi, Hofstra, and St. John's Universities: http://audiology.adelphi.edu/

CUNY Graduate Center at Brooklyn and Hunter Colleges:
https://www.gc.cuny.edu/Page-Elements/Academics-Research-Centers-Initia-tives/Doctoral-Programs/Audiology-(Au-D)

Physical Therapists
Physical therapists (PT's) are doctoral level professionals who aim to help people of all ages to improve movement and/or manage pain by working on gross motor and fine motor skills. Gross motor skills includes balance, coordination, strength, and endurance, and involves the larger muscles of the body, like rolling, crawling, walking, running or jumping, while fine motor skills use the smaller muscles, such as the ability to hold a spoon. PT's work in private offices, clinics, hospitals, nursing homes, and people's homes. The employment of PT's is projected to grow due to a rise in the elderly population, and people with mobility issues from chronic conditions, such as diabetes or obesity (BLS, undated). More information can be found here:

https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physical-therapists.htm

American Physical Therapy Association: http://www.apta.org/

Miscellaneous Internships
Child Mind Institute: Summer Internship Program:
https://www.cc-seas.columbia.edu/preprofessional/opportunities/clinical/32336
The Child Mind Institute provides a 13-week summer internship for undergraduate students interested in careers in child mental health, pre-medicine, education and special education, public health, speech and language, neuroscience, and other related areas.

NYC Mayor's Office Internship Program- the NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities:
https://a002-oom03.nyc.gov/nycmointernship/index.html
The Mayor's Office Internship Program provides a unique opportunity to gain experience and develop the capacity to solve New York City's most pressing issues at a particular city agency. The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) provides information on accessible programs, accessible transportation, employment, health services, activities and other resources.

NYU Summer Internship:
http://www.med.nyu.edu/rusk/educationtraining/health-career-opportunity-program
The Health Career Opportunity Program at NYU-RUSK consists of internships that provide students with a hands-on clinical experience and exposure to the diversity and variety of health professions. Eligible applicants are in college, have just recently graduated college, and who are at least seventeen years old and seniors in high school.

Employment
Due to a wide variety of funding sources, there is no complete list of all

disability-related social service organizations in NYC. There are a wide variety of government, non-profit, and for-profit organizations in NYC. A list put together by Prof. Gleicher is available by email at: rgleicher@bmcc.cuny.edu. A few websites are listed below.

Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities: http://www.nyc.gov/html/mopd/html/specific/specific.shtml

Developmental Disability Councils: Brooklyn: http://www.brooklynddcouncil.org/#!family-support-services-guide/c1xc7

Queens:http://www.qcddny.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Queens-FSS-Guide.pdf

New York City Early Intervention Program: http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/early-intervention.page

New York State Education Department, Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES-VR): http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr

NYS OPWDD: http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd_careers_training/home

New York State Commission for the Blind: http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/hr/currentemploy.asp

New York State Early Intervention Program http://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention/service_providers/

NYC Dept. of Education http://schools.nyc.gov/Careers/default.htm

CUNY, Offices of Accessibility: http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/sa/services/disabilities.html

Idealist: www.idealist.org

Social Service: http://www.socialservice.com

Indeed: http://www.indeed.com

Conclusion

This article discussed higher educational options for students interested in pursuing a career in the field of disabilities in New York City. Please share this article with interested students. Please contact Prof. Gleicher for more information about specific agencies for pursuing employment: rgleicher@bmcc.cuny.edu

Summary chart of career paths to working with people who have disabilities

Degree	Bachelor's degree job	Master's degree job	Doctoral degree job
Social Work	Case Manager, Social Work Assistant, Habilitation Counselor, Community Training Specialist	Social Worker, Psychotherapist, Quality Assurance *Obtain license, to do independent work	Advanced Clinical Skills, Researcher or Professor

Rehabilitation Counseling	Job Developer, Vocational Counselor	Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Mental Health Counselor *Obtain certification, to do independent work	Advanced Clinical Skills, Researcher or Professor
Speech Therapy	Speech therapy assistant	Speech Language Pathologist, *Obtain license, to do independent work	Advanced Clinical Skills, Researcher or Professor
Occupational Therapy	Occupational therapy assistant	Occupational Therapist. *Obtain license, to do independent work	Advanced Clinical Skills, Researcher or Professor
Physical Therapy	Physical therapy assistant/aide	Physical therapy assistant/aide	Physical Therapist, *Obtain license for independent practice, Researcher, Professor
Audiology	Audiology assistant	Audiology assistant	Audiologist, *Obtain license for independent practice, Researcher, Professor
Psychology	Psychology Counselor, Case Manager, Residential counselor	Applied Behavior Science Specialist (ABSS), Behavior Technician, Applied Behavior Analyst/ Therapist, (ABA)	Psychologist, *Obtain license for independent practice, Researcher, Professor
Education	*SEIT:* Special ed. itinerant teacher. *SETSS:* Special Education Teacher Support Services. *ABA* teacher. elementary, middle school, HS. *Take license.	Special Education Teacher, Staff trainer, Curriculum director, School Administrator, *Some school positions require taking an additional exam	Researcher, Professor

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Restructuring a Basic Writing ESL Course at a Community College: Asking the Right Questions

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With increasing pressure placed on higher education institutions to accelerate students from remedial classes to regular credit bearing courses, getting students excited about writing and providing a culturally-relevant curriculum have become the major objectives of many developmental programs (Dee and Penner, 2017; Venezia and Hughes, 2013). There is a growing trend to skip developmental education by mainstreaming students or to use the "co-enrollment model," placing students both in developmental and college-ready courses.

Community college students join the college with diverse backgrounds. Gender diversity, ethnic diversity, linguistic diversity, and academic diversity are just some differences among students. Radencich (1998) states that in a "culturally responsive instruction" educators should be sensitive towards this diversity and adopt a culturally sensitive curriculum to include most learners' experiences in their communities. In this context, students are empowered intellectually and become much more sensitive to differences, thereby gaining awareness of equality and injustice in society. Thus, they become critical thinkers and socially responsible citizens in a rapidly changing global society.

The student population at BMCC is highly diverse; ESL students include both immigrant and international students from several different countries, the top ten of which are: the Dominican Republic, China, Bangladesh, Jamaica, Guyana, Haiti, Ecuador, Mexico, South Korea, Trinidad, and Tobago (BMCC, Fact Sheet). Coming from a wide variety of diverse backgrounds, ESL students provide an international perspective in classes and at their work if they hold a job. Teaching at one of the most diverse community colleges, professors need to shy away from the deficit model of teaching and include culturally relevant pedagogy in their classes so that students will be able to acquire the necessary skills and competencies for a global world.

In the fall of 2015, I had the opportunity to take a faculty enrichment program which included a series of seminars with my colleagues at BMCC, the focus of which was "Cultivating Global Competencies in a Diverse World." As a result of this experience, I have enhanced ESL 95 curriculum to include objectives of Global Competencies.

ESL 95- Intensive Writing is a course that is designed to prepare nonnative speaker immigrant and international students to write academic papers and be familiar with the North American style of writing. Specifically, they learn to write a response and build an argument by stating a thesis and providing evidence for

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their argument. In the workshop I learned how to build global competencies in this curriculum.

The workshop is part of BMCC's larger institutional mission to globalize the curriculum and provide faculty with educational tools and opportunities to integrate these competencies while teaching. The global competencies refer to four different but related domains which help individuals to be global citizens in the 21st century: a) cultural understanding, b) responsible citizenship, c) effective interpersonal communication, and d) integrated reasoning. The first domain is cultural understanding. **The specific Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)** related to cultural understanding are: a) to understand the influence of history, economy, politics, geography, religion, gender, race, ethnicity, and other features of identity; b) to recognize the similarities, difference, and dynamic relationships existing among people and cultures; c) to explore explicit and implicit forms of power, privilege, inequality and inequity. Similarly, the SLOs for integrated reasoning are: a) to understand how one's place in the world is related to historical, geopolitical, and intellectual trends which are influenced by geographic, socio-cultural, economic, and ecological conditions; b) to perceive the world and one's own life as a constantly interdependent and dynamic system; c) to understand how different disciplines contribute to one's knowledge of various global processes (e.g. identities, security, environment, trade, and human health), and how these processes are closely interconnected and mutually influential.

The presence of ESL students enriches the student community; however, most students have limited understanding of world politics, changing world population and related issues that affect life. The following are some classroom practice activities for an intensive advanced writing ESL class that cultivate global competencies, especially components of cultural understanding and integrated reasoning.

Paper #1 – A definition essay:
Related to these SLOs, I designed an essay on the meaning of race: "What does race mean?" Students start reading MLK's *Three Ways of Meeting Oppression* to become familiar with his ideas of acquiescence, violence, and non-resistance violence, and to see a good example of a classification essay. For each essay, read in class or at home, students keep a free-writing journal and share it with each other in groups. In order to get students interested in the topic, I ask students to look at faces of people from different ethnicities and have them predict what "race" or ethnicity they might represent. These faces depict individuals with mixed backgrounds; one is self-identified as white, Asian, Chinese and Filipino because she has Filipino, Chinese, Spanish, Indian, Hungarian and German-Jewish background. Through this exercise, students realize the difficulty of predicting the race of individuals with mixed backgrounds.

Besides discussing the physical characteristics, students in groups write about the positive and negative aspects of being non-white. I ask students to do a small ethnographic study by giving them a set of questions:

1. What do you think are the major races in the U.S.?

2. How are these races different from each other?

3. What abilities do you associate with members of different races?

4. What are intellectual differences between races?

5. When walking down a street, how do you decide which racial group a person belongs to? They ask these questions to members in their community and share their answers with the whole class in groups.

Another source of discussion we use is *The Black List*, a collection of interviews by black celebrities. After reviewing each interview, students answer a specific question about what the celebrity has mentioned in his/her talk about race. For example, ESL students watch an interview with Toni Morrison and learn about why not educating black males in the family was a way for survival for the black community. Similarly, Serena Williams says that she is surprised when people always attribute her success to her strong muscles but not to mental strategies she uses in playing tennis.

The main essay we use is Teja Arboleda's "Race is a four-letter word." In this essay, Arboleda, who has a mixed-race background, indicates that he is tired of asking himself who he is. His father was Filipino-Chinese and African-American, and his mother was Danish-German. Since he grew up in different parts of the world, it is difficult for him to define who he is. Wherever he goes, he is called different names. Despite the various aspects of Arboleda's background, the place in which he was brought up and his mannerisms, seem to be most important. My ESL students find some connection with Mr. Arboleda since they are not in their native country and go through similar experiences. Some of them were born in the U.S. but still are perceived as an individual from another background or country.

We start discussing the essay by selecting quotations and reacting to them through free writing exercises. I also include group work activities to motivate them to think about the complicated topic of race: They also ask individuals in their community questions, and share the responses with each other in groups.

Another important source I share with my students is a PBS documentary, *Race: The Power of an Illusion*, which explores the topic of race from a scientific perspective. By watching parts of it, students learn that the concept of race is a myth, and it is a socially constructed rather than biologically established entity.

As students compose their essays, they give feedback to each other. One student composed her introduction in the following paragraph:

When we talk about race, we may think of skin color, body shape, hair form and so on. Do we really understand what race is? We usually look at people's appearance to separate them into different races, and define them by their outlook. Sometimes exterior looks cannot really represent a person. In my opinion, race is not the exterior of people, but it is how individuals think about each other.

The race essay engages students and makes them aware of the preexisting beliefs about race categories, but it also helps them find answers to a presumably

easy-to-answer question. Students learn that race is a socially constructed entity; it is not a biological fact when they watch the PBS documentary *Race: The Power of an Illusion*. They learn that there are more variations within one characteristic, and not between, "races."

Working on topics of race, ethnicity, and discrimination creates enthusiasm among students. When sharing their stories about discrimination and rights violations, they bond with each other and listen to each other's stories. A Stanford study (Dee and Penner, 2016) found that 9th grade at-risk students who enrolled in an ethnic studies course performed better compared to their counterparts who did not study culturally relevant curriculum. Their attendance increased by 21% and their GPA by 1.4 points. Thus, they earned more credits than the students who did not enroll in this pilot program. Similarly, I can tell that my students had more enthusiasm and were eager to share their experiences with each other, when they engaged with these materials.

Paper #2 – Cause and Effect essay:

The second question we work on is the topic of discrimination. I ask my students to work on a cause-and-effect essay as we read and discuss Brent Staple's "Black Men and Public Space" and Maggie McGuire's "Growing Up with Two Moms." Before reading takes place, I share examples of different types of discrimination by providing the students with short YouTube videos or Facebook news feeds to have an awareness of unconscious bias. I give examples of discrimination based on a foreign accent using for examples as follows: a) the story of a Canadian art history professor's Nicaraguan husband who was discriminated against based on his accent; or based on religion b) the story of a NYPD's Muslim Chaplain and how he is stereotyped at customs; or based on skin color c) National Public Radio reports on a study showing how pre-school instructors discriminate against black students, showing less empathy towards them and d) the story of a black woman who has been discriminated against by a white cashier.

Group work: I also ask students to engage in free writing and group work on the events that happened to them regarding individual rights, discrimination, and prejudice. Although this is a delicate topic, most of them are intuitively aware of their rights. This is evident when they work on an activity called ***Someone's rights were violated.*** They are asked to share an event when they experienced discrimination by telling a) who was involved, b) what happened, and c) the outcome. Some students mentioned the amount of time they needed to wait to get an interview for a job, or the time they were silenced when they were with their children.

Even the quietest student shared how her family was asked to remain at the airport for eight hours when they first emigrated from China. As a child, she remembered the event and shared it with the group.

I also ask them to consider the question, *What happens when people don't discriminate?* in order to have an opposing point of view, and look at the positive aspects of integration. At this stage of their experience of the topic of race, students watch a news feed on welcoming Syrian refugees through faith in Germany. In

this video students see how a young Syrian immigrant family is sponsored by a German couple. By watching this video, students become aware of some of the positive aspects of integration and cultural understanding.

One ESL student wrote the following conclusion paragraph in their discrimination essay:

As soon as every society gets access to better information and education to stop stereotyping, maybe one day "we will all be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to sail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will all be free one day."

Finally, we work on an oral presentation based on a visual text. I ask students to think of social problems or problems that violate students. Each student discusses a TV commercial, a magazine, or a community poster with a social injustice message

As they become aware of these diverse social injustice problems, students get a better understanding of what is happening in society and the unconscious bias that surrounds them. Since our ESL classes are composed of diverse groups, students are encouraged to share their own stories and analyze them and maybe see themselves in some of the stories. They see the characters in these stories as mirrors, and recognize the similarities between them and the characters and persons in the stories, whether the person is a cashier or a person at the restaurant. Reading essays and hearing other people's racial experiences can be liberating. It can help our students to have a better future for themselves as they get an education and become aware of the circumstances and situations surrounding them.

Integrating global issues such as race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, challenges students to think about their identity, society and history in a broader and more complex way. They need to be able to see the interconnectedness of their lives with current events happening in life. As they put their thoughts in writing, they gain confidence in their critical writing and self-expression skills and stand up for their beliefs and challenge established ideas in society.

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Effect of Classroom Seating Arrangement on Student Participation

Revathi Iyengar
Science

Introduction

After teaching large classes with 300 to 400 students in a large auditorium at Hunter College I have been exploring how to get the most out of the small class setting at BMCC with 15 to 25 students. I teach second year courses in General and Organic Chemistry. The syllabi for these courses tend to be vast, and covering it in a 14 week period can be quite challenging. Even in a small class setting, too large a fraction of students don't make it to the finish line (i.e., really get the concepts covered). The level of understanding of concepts was assessed via written tests with open ended questions. This paper reports on my Teaching-as-Research project as part of the Teaching Academy: Could the classroom seating arrangement help?

Circular and semi-circular classroom seating arrangements have been studied in earlier works. Onge and Karla[1] explored circular arrangements in science classrooms. They suggest that being on the same eye-level with students creates a relaxed environment for learning. Multiple instructors participated in these experiments and noted that students were more willing to share ideas, especially the reserved students. Wall[2] suggests that the circle formation encourages student discussion since they can hear each other clearly. He also suggests that the teacher move diagonally away from the student asking a question since this will force the student to talk audibly, enabling class participation in that question. Gunter et al.[3] refine the U shaped seating arrangement by ensuring that seats are far enough apart to reduce student distractions.

The Experiment

In the Fall 2017 semester, from the first day of class, I rearranged the chairs / tables to create a U shape in my General Chemistry and Organic Chemistry classes (both in the Fiterman Building). The original seating arrangement was rows and columns. I would sit at the back in the U at the start of the class. I

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1. St. Onge, Justin and Eiterl, Karla (2017) "Increasing Active Participation and Engagement of Students in Circle Formations" Networks: An Online Journal for Teacher Research: Vol. 19:Iss1 Article 7.
2. Allen Wall, "How Teacher Location in the Classroom Can Improve Students' Behavior" Journal: The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues, and Ideas, Volume 66, 1993, Issue 5, Pages 299-301.
3. Philip, L Gunter, Richard, E Shores, Susan L Jack, "On the Move Using Teacher-Student Proximity to Improve Students' Behavior" TEACHING Exceptional Children, Vol. 28, Issue 1, 1995, pages 12-14.

asked students to recap what was discussed in the previous class. However, as the semester progressed both courses required me to be at the board a lot more either by myself or with a student. But I kept the U formation throughout the semester even if I was not always sitting in it.

There were some practical problems with creating the seating arrangement. When there are 27 students it is difficult to create the U shape while maintaining some distance between the seats. Some classrooms in the Fiterman building have tables which makes it harder to rearrange. Also, with the U arrangement, students who are not tall enough end up scrambling to the seats near the board. So I converted the "U" shape to the "V" shape. The seats in the two arms of the V can be slanted as a compromise between facing each other and facing the board so that students don't have to turn their heads to see the board.

Results

Some students had visible expressions of shock or anxiety on their faces when they walked into the U shaped seating arrangement on the first day of class. Later it became apparent that the somewhat "shocked" students were the especially shy ones, who would rather sit behind others. But as the semester progressed the U seating arrangement created a community among the students to the point I had to make sure it was not causing too much distraction. Towards the end of the semester, when I tried to make the seats face the board completely, the students changed it back to face one another.

An objective evaluation of this seating arrangement was done using an anonymous voluntary survey towards the end of the semester. Fourteen out of twenty two students consented and participated in the survey. The survey was kept simple to reduce the burden of participation, but allowed students to express their thoughts in their own words. The questionnaire was as follows:

1. Was there any negative impact on your ability to learn because of the U-shaped arrangement of seats in the classroom?
2. Was there any positive impact on your ability to learn because of the U-shaped arrangement of seats in the classroom?
3. Based on your experience do you suggest the teacher
   a. Continue
   b. Discontinue
   c. Hard to decide

   using the U-shaped arrangement of seats in the classroom?

Twelve out of the fourteen survey participants recommended that I continue this U-shaped seating arrangement. The remaining (2 out of 14) were undecided. The positive and negative comments are paraphrased and listed in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. The number of students associated with each comment is also provided.

Table 1. Paraphrased positive comments with counts

Positive Comments	Count
Improved interaction / engagement between student and teacher	6
More discussion among students	3
Felt more accountable / could not hide behind another student	3
Harder to get distracted or be inattentive	3
Positive impact on ability to learn	2
More comfortable volunteering / participating	2
More comfortable asking questions	2
Teacher had better control of class	1
Could hear everybody properly	1

Table 2. Paraphrased negative comments with counts.

Negative comments	Count
Might not be comfortable for shy / introverted students. One student specifically indicated feeling better later in the semester.	3
Strain / twist neck to see the board	2
Could be distracted by other students if they intend to be disruptive	1

The very positive response of the survey participants was also echoed in the comments of the faculty observer during this semester: "was held in a classroom with chairs conveniently arranged in the U-shape to facilitate both the ease of Dr. Iyengar to clearly draw structures on the blackboard as well as to walk around and access each student's work while making constructive comments."

Discussion

The voluntary student survey provides encouraging comments to refine and continue this seating arrangement. Having the chairs facing the board in an open jaw arrangement will address the issue with students having to crane their necks. The survey will be given earlier in the semester so that students who dropped out are not excluded from the voluntary feedback.

Determining the impact of this seating arrangement on student performance is more challenging for many reasons. Subjectively, I felt that it was particularly helpful to 6 or 7 students out of the 40 students enrolled at the start, considering both classes. This subjective determination was based on multiple factors. Many students expressed their fear of Chemistry at the start of the semester. The level of connectedness due to this seating arrangement seemed to alleviate the fear of this subject for some. For some students in the middle of the class, based

on performance, it translated to higher letter grades. Even some top performing students benefitted and ended up with a deeper understanding of the conceptual material. When studying the impact of a small change, such as seating arrangement on students' performance and engagement, one might wonder how bigger issues such as academic mindset[4] etc factor in. The survey sample size at this point is too small to quantify objectively the impact on performance. The pilot studies usually start with small population sizes and one needs to consider all confounding factors as suggested in the paper by Delfes and Jackson.[5] The plan is to introduce more controls as the size of the study progresses over the next few semesters.

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5. Delfes, P., and Jackson, B. (1972), Teacher-Pupil interaction as a function of location in the Classroom. Psychology in the Schools, 9:119-123. Part of Master's Thesis submitted to Department of Education, Dalhousie Univ., Nova Scotia.

Whose Past is it? Teaching an Inclusive Western Civilization to Combat White Supremacy and Sexism

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When I ask students to describe a Roman, they almost always describe a white man in a toga. They are shocked to learn that the Roman empire encompassed the Middle East and North Africa, and contained people with a variety of skin tones. Nor did Romans or other pre-modern peoples have the same ideas about ethnicity that we do today – they have different socially constructed ideas of what defined a person as a Roman and what defined someone as 'other', and generally lesser. So why do most people still think of Romans as white men, and who does the past belong to? Addressing these issues, as well as asserting the presence of people of different religions, genders, sexualities, and disabilities, creates a classroom environment where students not only feel included, but also are allowed to have equal ownership of the past. Although Western Civilization as a topic may have been created essentially as the history of white men, showing the existence and importance of others and analyzing different ideas of alterity allows students to address and dismantle white supremacy, racism, and sexism.

Historians are often expected to teach a broad range of courses, which means learning a lot of new information, but it also presents us with the opportunity to create anti-sexist and anti-racist course materials. One of the serious issues in history and other disciplines is that we are taught problematic master narratives, including about the history of our disciplines. In teaching broad survey courses, which include many elements outside of our research specialization, but also usually build on the narrative that we learned in our studies, it is much easier to just go along with the grand narrative, and maybe including some highlight points that problematize it and add more nuance. The problem is that that these narratives are usually not explicitly anti-racist and anti-sexist, and the traditional fix of adding women and minorities on the margins of the master narrative only highlights their lack of centering. In order to be anti-racist and anti-sexist, we must de-center the experiences of elite white men, which often involves research outside of our general areas of expertise. For those of us teaching an array of classes, or even just thinking about the traditional sequences, we must ask how these serve students: what gaps do we have in our narratives, and how can we empower students to connect with our disciplines? We should be cognizant about the ways in which our disciplines and other structures – the university, housing, etc., have alienated our students, and how we can bring them back by centering their experiences. These efforts will contribute to the overall project of combatting white supremacy and sexism that, unfortunately, are more urgent than ever.

Queering the Classroom Space: Towards a More Inclusive Education

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The discourse of "safe space" on the campus environment is becoming increasingly important in terms of both creating and maintaining a culture of greater acceptance and tolerance. Understanding the concept of safety in higher education signifies, first and foremost, that which promotes the formation of a collective sense of belonging within a community of difference and that which protects from any kind of discriminatory or abusive behavior. For queer students and faculty at the Borough of Manhattan Community College—where queer functions as an umbrella term that encompasses the whole spectrum of non-normative identities and sexualities—the creation and maintenance of safe space is part of the institution's Safe Zone program, which is also part of the larger Student Support Services in our college community. This endeavor, according to the literal and figurative signification of its own intent, aims to address "the needs and concerns of individuals that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, as well as the concerns of the ally campus community. It is a mode of outreach to LGBTQ students to make them feel welcome in all areas of the college."

So what, then, is this safe space of which many now acknowledge and speak as a necessary precondition for a more inclusive education? How can we encompass more holistically the multiplicities of queer identities and expressions within both the micro-scale of the classroom space and the macro-level of our larger academic community? Is it really displacing the very idea of fear and shame towards different sexualities as the key for ensuring safety? Or is it challenging directly such negative and oppressive feelings by devaluing, on the one hand, their dependence on highly problematic notions of "normative" sexuality, and valuing, on the other, self-determination and a celebration of difference? These questions are particularly challenging when considering the forms and meanings of praxis confronting the connection between heteronormativity—a widely circulated as well as contested term—and the binary constructions of sex and gender in our post-marriage equality society. Answers may lie in restructuring dominant sociocultural norms, many of which pertain to specific problems and spaces, such as the de-genderism of bathrooms and locker rooms in and outside of college communities. Indeed, these issues are at the core of LGBTQ politics for a more equal and just world that activists are trying to create.

In my exploration of safe space, however, I would suggest a different approach. By recognizing the diverse body of the student population in our college, I discuss the meanings and potentialities of the "safe space" paradigm more broadly; that is to say in terms of its underlying investment in metaphorical associations by which we apprehend our own subjectivities. Furthermore, by

introducing the topic of queering the classroom space as a practice that seeks to place emphasis on discourses of difference, to which students relate one way or another through their various experiences and identifications, I aim to explicate the main factors for the creation and fortification of safety that begins and ends with the personal. It is a question, then, of pedagogy and knowledge as much as or even more than on institutional initiatives (such as our college's Safe Zone program) that occur within the standard processes of teaching and learning.

There are, of course, clear connections between ensuring safety and diversity within BMCC's campus environment and queering the classroom space as a self-initiated pedagogical practice. The advantage of this relational approach is that it reconfigures the reception and protection of queer students in the context of higher education and the long-term strategies to attain this goal. Negotiating and achieving a climate of safety, access, comfort, community and belonging is often the subject of discussion and reinterpretation. As social and cultural beliefs about gender and sexuality change, so too educational institutions address the complex relationships between gender and sexual identities and their expressions within the nation's college communities. Scholars often conceive safe space as both an indispensable strategy toward equalization and tolerance, as well as a set of meanings, practices and significations, which are nonetheless variously organized and utilized. By placing greater attention on the spatial conditions necessary for the formation of an unambiguously enhanced feeling of safety, new ways of existing, learning and growing shape the discourse of transformative education. Margaret Lepp and Cecelia Zorn, for example, convincingly argue that "safe space is essential for learning to occur and education to be empowered" (2008). Whether as a form or a resource of empowerment, safe space is indeed the constitutive condition that allows interactions and encourages more open and inviting forms of engagement. This represents a more direct experience with the institution, faculty, and students in it. Nevertheless, it is crucial to recognize that safe space is above all a metaphor for the symbolic and actual erasure of multiple forms of oppression, out of which the ideal of safe space reemerges, renews, and determines itself.

To get a sense of the metaphorical invocations of safe space in the context of pedagogical practice and research, it would be most useful to discuss some of the recent critical contributions to our understanding of the subject. Notably, Robert Boostrom was one of the first scholars to argue that the metaphor of safe space is based on four key principles. These, essentially, tell the same story without reproducing the same narratives about safety or by exclusively focusing on the urgency of LGBTQ institutional inclusion. The first principle, Boostrom argues, is that "we are all isolated," and, for that reason, less safe. This in turn implies that any space outside our immediate communities is figured as a space of possible isolation and disconnection. In this regard, Boostrom's second principle enables us to understand that "our isolation is both physical and psychic" (1997, 98). More so even than the material reality of physical space, which is commonly thought of in terms of the immediacy and directness of social reality, Boostrom is equally concerned with the psychological dimensions of space as an essential and deeply-felt experience. Indeed, such an analogy asserts the poten-

tial ramifications a systematically implemented isolation can have on us when we are forced to confront the effects of our physical isolation on a psychic level. Then, in his third principle, Boostrom argues that "we can become less isolated by expressing our diverse individuality" (1998). While this may reasonably be taken as a suggestion that assumes a sense of universal quality, Boostrom uses it as a vantage point to introduce his fourth principle precisely within the context of education, stating that "students thrive in a classroom in which individuality is freely expressed" (1998). This is already built upon the fact that individual freedom is not only to be found in the ability to resist any form of oppression, but also in the ability to be overtly and fully expressed, and thus validated.

In a similar vein, scholars Lynn Holley and Sue Steiner offer a conceptualization of safe space within which students "are able to openly express their individuality, even if it differs dramatically from the norms set by the instructor, the profession, or other students" (2005). Such a narrative suggests, however, that there is an overarching assurance of safety that goes beyond the metaphorical: the ideal of inclusion and tolerance as structurally protected and geographically defined values. Yet Boostrom notes that "if critical thinking, imagination, and individuality are to flourish in classrooms, teachers need to manage conflict, not prohibit it" (1997,98). The purpose of doing so is to prevent situations in which certain discourses remain unchallenged and thereby falling into the fallacy of assuming that safe space should be a place free of contestation and/or critique. As educators, therefore, we also need to consider an additional dimension in this delicate dynamic: the construction of the classroom environment in which students are, on the one hand, comfortable expressing their voices, and, on the other, necessarily uncomfortable when questioning and challenging their very own voices, views, and ideological positions. This is, in fact, a significant precondition in the process of teaching and learning. Boostrom insightfully argues that "problems can occur when students or instructors take safe space to mean a classroom environment where all ideas are accepted equally, and where no one is challenged or made uncomfortable" (1998). In this respect, homophobic and other discriminatory overtones may safely be expressed within a problematic assumption of safe space that nullifies the very meaning of safety itself. This makes it then all the more important to challenge and argue with these positions in order to inform and educate. For Holley and Steiner the question remains whether "instructors [can] create an environment in which students are encouraged to honestly share their views, yet the views shared do not harm other students in the class" (2005).

One way to address this important question, particularly with regard to LGBTQ students, is to understand how safe the classroom space is by identifying strategies and specific interventions to protect and support vulnerable identities within our college community. I am, therefore, calling for queering the classroom space, not only for ensuring the cultivation of safe space as an important part of our own pedagogical practices, but also for raising awareness, suggesting ways to engage with those students that are somewhere in between the normative and non-normative spectrum, and cementing a sense of solidarity with the ones perceived to be different. In other words, I use queer in its verb state to advocate

for a practice whose aim is the articulation of a truly syncretic approach that brings us back to the very purpose of the safe space discourse.

Queering the classroom space is still an idea in the making, rather than a well-established existing practice. In short, it means building a tolerant and emancipatory culture, which could and should be embraced from multiple standpoints in order to bring the change it aspires to establish. As early as the emergence of queer theory in the American academy, education scholars Christopher DeSurra and Kimberly Church (1994) conducted a study on LGBTQ undergraduates with respect to their internalized sense of marginalization in the college classroom. With this aim in mind, they interviewed participants alone and in groups, whose responses were categorized along two continuums. The first continuum describes a *marginalizing-centralizing* model. On the one end of the continuum, *marginalizing* exposes two layers of narrative, ranging from "explicit marginalization" to "implicit marginalization." The degrees by which students experienced marginalization move across an overt demonstration of sexism and homophobia—either from the part of instructors or other students—to the deliberate avoidance of conversations around homosexuality within the classroom. On the other end of the first continuum, *centralizing* refers again to a range between "explicit centralization" to "implicit centralization," echoing planned or unplanned inclusion of LGBTQ students' views on gender and sexuality issues during classroom discussions.

According to the second continuum, students' responses are categorized within the *self-assured* and *self-conscious* model. This continuum discursively develops in direct response to the marginalizing-centralizing continuum. In short, it refers to those "coping strategies employed [among LGBTQ students] to contend with feelings of marginalization." On the one end of the continuum, students' responses display a self-assured agency by actively speaking out during class discussions, for example against homophobia or on behalf of LGBTQ rights, or by retroactively writing a letter or taking further action. On the other end of the continuum, self-conscious responses offer alternative ways of action while staying in the closet. These students, as DeSurra and Church inform us, may not have responded in the classroom or campus environment but either remained preoccupied with the theme of identity and the burden of homophobia, or dropped out of school, in some cases. Thus, the classroom space inevitably constructs the cultures in which various forms of otherness are either valued, protected and respected or vehemently abrogated. So then, we understand, the urgency of queering the classroom to defend and protect individual freedom beyond the metaphorical scope of the safe space discourse. It is therefore imperative to highlight some key points of reference for educators to queer the classroom space towards a more inclusive education.

By way of a conclusion, I summarize five main points:

Queering the Classroom Space Guidelines
- We need to find ways to circulate a dialectics of safety that moves freely between the micro-scale of the classroom space to the macro-level forces that shape this dialectic, from the top tiers of the CUNY system to the ad-

ministrative hierarchies of BMCC that go all the way down to the classroom.

- As educators, we need to understand the power relationships that operate between students' subjectivities, which often reflect larger societal misconceptions about gender and sexuality, and, consequently, identity.

- In opting to create a culture of individualism, tolerance and respect, we take, in fact, the first step to resist and subvert the socio-spatial contexts responsible for the production of both physical and psychic isolation.

- We need then to foster and preserve the spirit of individual expression by transforming conflicts into manageable challenges. This requires that we pay attention to people's voices, while carefully addressing hegemonic beliefs through which normative notions about gender and sexuality are constructed and reproduced. As educators, let us become reflexive of our own pedagogical practice and use it to effectively debunk stereotypes and reduce prejudice and biases.

- We need to approach *queering the classroom space* as an ongoing project of dealing with the affective dimensions of explicit or implicit marginalization, both of which are equally unacceptable not only at BMCC but in every educational setting.

This list can of course be enriched and expanded in many different directions. The practice of *queering the classroom space* should be creative, student-focused, broadly consistent with the goal of inclusivity, and, above all, responsive to the views of those we teach. It is my hope that in this essay I was not only able to call attention to the need of appropriately making educational spaces safer and more inclusive, but also to assist my readers in envisioning how queering the classroom can provide a sympathetic and supportive environment for those who seek refuge from their experiences of oppression.

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Time Stands Still at the Super Bowl: Trump, Rules, and the Banality of American Liberalism

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English

This article originally appeared in the Blog (BLARB) of the Los Angeles Review of Books 02/09/2018. The Composition Committee of BMCC's English Department assigned Plato's Phaedrus as one of its two readings for the department final exam.

With two minutes remaining on the game clock in the surprisingly hard-fought Super Bowl LII, the Philadelphia Eagles — underdogs by five points according to the Vegas spread — were behind by one point. A touchdown and extra point would place them 6 points ahead. On 3rd down and 7, with the ball on the Patriot's 12 yard-line, Philly quarterback Nick Foles completed a short pass to tight-end Zack Ertz, who ran it into the end-zone. Or did he?

As Ertz crossed into the plane of the end-zone, he hit the ground. As he was turning over, the football came loose from his hands. For a second, the ball was airborne above his body and, just as quickly, he grabbed it and pulled it back toward his chest, securing its possession as he came to a rest. Touchdown!

Of course the play would be reviewed. In 2016, out of some 40,000 plays, league-wide, 345 were reviewed. For TV audiences, the review means an endless loop of the play in question, with multiple camera angles provided while commentators dive into the hermeneutics of NFL rules and regulations, themselves a series of shifting codifications and contradictory interpretations. Did the ball cross the goal-line? Was the receiver in control of the ball? Were both feet in bounds as the receiver took and maintained control of the ball? These are questions one hears during most reviews. The commentators know the rules, of course, and are usually eager to dissect them, which dissection then becomes the sport on view.

Sunday's Superbowl's climatic ruling concerned what the Bleacher Report calls, "the worst rule in sports," the NFL's "catch rule:" Here one has to define at what point a receiver maintains his position as receiver and at what point he has become a runner, running with the ball. This question's answer mattered in the Super Bowl because, as the ball momentarily floated above Ertz, it may have invalidated the touchdown. If he were a receiver, that is. But if he were a runner, then all that mattered was that he cleared the plane of the goal line with the ball.

How could the receiver not have been a runner? He got the ball and ran. At the same time, how could someone who received the ball not be a receiver? But football rules have their own hermeneutics, without a corpus of jurisprudence for guidance and consistency. As Socrates argues in the Phaedrus "you must learn how to define each thing in itself and, having defined it, you must divide

it into kinds until you reach something indivisible." The NFL fails at this Socratic imperative time and time again. But by failing at being Socratic, they do succeed in doing something else; they regularly produce micro-allegories of American liberal impossibility. In fact, the NFL's hermeneutics of procedural unfolding give the sport its identity, as much its soaring passes and brutal hits.

What kind of a sport is this? We know about the concussions, the racist culture, the misogyny, and the politics of NFL owners, who overwhelmingly supported Trump. But what of the fetishization of rules — some of which might have been culled from Kafka's *The Castle* or Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* — how do viewers experience them? And why? Football dramatizes banal proceduralism like no other sport, with its obsessive time management and its series of obscure regulations always available to be introduced into the game's diegesis. At the moment of maximum intensity in an NFL game, you can almost be guaranteed that the least dramatic, most procedural and legalistic of hermeneutics — when does one thing become another? — will take center stage. At the Super Bowl, the question became: was Ertz a runner running, or a receiver who had become a runner, or a receiver who was still a receiver and happened to be running?

Narrative time — what organizes any football game — quite literally stands still as the game clock is paused and a New York-based committee interprets the evidence; the league reports that the average replay lasts 2 minutes and 25 seconds. But time stands still often in football, as 60 minutes elapse over roughly 3.5 hours. Football is organized so that the most consequential plays are often reduced to their most inconsequential dimension; a touchdown hinges on the definition of a run vs. receive, with few if any participants understanding precisely the distinction — this according to the players themselves. The word is given from on high, from the NFL review committee. It's a kind of police procedural without the police. Without the protagonists even: "a senior designated member of the officiating department will make the final review on the decision," the league explains.

Compare this sport to, say, professional soccer, in which the game begins and runs mostly uninterrupted for 90 minutes; penalties and substitutions take the least amount of time possible; there is no official review. At the game's end, all time lost, several minutes are usually added back to the game clock as overage. Fewer ads. Less time for commentary. No showcase for the interpretation of rules, within soccer's temporal organization. One team wins by scoring goals, not by negotiating rules.

Sports contain within them the ideological marks of their historical moment. But what, precisely do NFL games offer? This season has brought news of both the NFL's racism, and refusals of it, in the career of Colin Kaepernick. Each season has also brought more news about the effects of repeated head trauma to players' bodies. We were already aware of the league's violence and misogyny, and even its imbrication within the US Military state apparatus. Yet one of professional football's most outstanding contributions to our liberal imagination is its ability to showcase organizational proceduralism as integral to sport.

What are people watching when they watch the NFL delve into its own rules, in secret, and then hand down rulings that can change the course of a game?

The answer, of course, is the liberal imagination itself, the liberal imagination of American democracy in particular. Liberalism is a drama of procedure in which one rule might always be updated or reinterpreted in order to newly organize ever smaller sites of political power. The breadth and definition of the rule becomes a site of focus, as the rule's very legitimacy fades from collective conversation and imagination.

Meanwhile the Socratic imperative to divide until something becomes indivisible goes awry when it trains its focus on the wrong object — as much a critique of Plato as of liberalism. Let's think back to some of our more theatrical political moments: Hanging chads, remember those? The still-attached perforated paper that dangle off a paper ballot? They became one of the stars of the 2000 presidential election. How do we know a vote is a vote? If there's an indentation? Partial perforation? ¾ Perforation? In impeachment news, questions that have required definition include whether oral sex is sex? Or is it a precursor to it? That matters if a president is to be tried by the congress for high crimes and misdemeanors.

I was at a conference in Europe two years ago talking with the late Mark Fisher. He was trying to understand how the voting worked in the democratic primaries. Would Bernie win, he was curious? It depends, of course. Voting districts, absentee ballots, voter identification laws, registration deadlines, party delegates, super delegates — these rules, not voting preference, inform the outcome. At our conversation's end, his question — who will people vote for? — seemed utterly beside the point.

Now we have President Trump and an ongoing investigation into whether Russia interfered into the 2016 presidential election and, perhaps, whether Trump himself "obstructed justice" as he sought hide that fact. Trump has undoubtedly done some illegal things on his way to becoming real estate mogul and now politician. But certainly the real scandal is that most of them were perfectly legal, perhaps occupying that odd ontological space of "loophole." Certain commentators — Glenn Greenwald comes to mind — have pointed out just how absurd the Democrats' psychic investment in the Russia investigation has become. Last week The New York Times reported that Mueller has zeroed in on a meeting aboard Air Force One in which Trump, his son, and a spokeswoman crafted a response to a news story about a meeting with Russians in Trump Tower. The Times reports that "rather than acknowledge the meeting's intended purpose — to obtain political dirt about Hillary Clinton from the Russian government — the statement instead described the meeting as being about an obscure Russian adoption policy." Muller, the Times reports, has trained his focus on this instance because Trump himself was involved "in real time" and "without a lawyer present."

This particular news story, in many senses, now operates as both political critique and possibility. It's not just an example of liberalism getting the little things right and the big things wrong — it is that, too — but of the inability of public discourse to represent or respond to a structural problem. Here, NFL games provide a wonderful staging ground of procedural narrative and imagination: those who best interrupt little-understood rules win.

I'm not sure we're able to locate here the utopian, Frankfurt-school like sports reporting that Dave Zirin regularly provides in *The Nation*, in which individual teams and players become sites of resistance against an all-powerful National Football League. Rather we seem more in an Althusserian moment of structural critique in which ideology "represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence." The NFL represents and materializes the impossibility of democracy itself. Go team!

Book Review: *Leadership Without Easy Answers*

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This book about leadership and authority is grounded in the central argument that leadership is a complex reality that should challenge people to face and seek answers to problems "for which there are no simple, painless solutions – problems that require us to learn new ways" (Heifetz, p. 2). For problems with fixed or already made solutions, a leader who operates like a technician would easily apply the already known answers or responses, whereas for problems for which there are no known answers, new ways or adaptive approaches will be called for.

Heifetz identifies problems such as "uncompetitive industry, drug abuse, poverty, poor public education, environmental hazards, ethnic strife, budget deficits, economic dislocation, and obstacles to constructive foreign relations" (p. 2) as examples of problems that require more of an adaptive approach rather than a technician's approach to leadership and problem solving.

To begin with, Heifetz acknowledges his biases. First, Heifetz is a physician who believes that "many problems are embedded in complicated and interactive systems" thereby calling for more complex consideration and analyses in order to approach a worthy response or resolution. Second, Heifetz goes along with the assumption that "much of behavior reflects an adaptation to circumstances" (p. 3). Third, Heifetz conceptualizes authority in terms of service in the sense of helping people to solve their problems (p. 4). Fourth, Heifetz believes that "many adaptive and communicative processes are unconscious" (p. 5), and we often learn about them by inference. As far as the audience is concerned, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* is primarily addressed to people in a democratic society, such as the United States, although it may also be beneficial to people outside of a democratic society. The book is also addressed to economic institutions that must compete in the modern world.

The book is divided into four parts. In Part One, Heifetz conceptualizes leadership, paying particular attention to concepts such as adaptation and authority. In Parts Two and Three, Heifetz focuses on "strategies of leading with and without authority," while Part Four provides "practical recommendations for leading and staying alive" (p. 8).

For Heifetz, leadership is something that must be grounded in values because, for him, the "term leadership involves our self-images and moral codes" (p. 13). Yet, the term leadership is often used to define all categories of people, including people such as Pablo Escobar, the head of drug cartel, and Nelson

Mandela, a human rights activist. By using the term leadership to reflect a set of abilities exhibited by a person, "regardless of the values they represent" (p. 13) Heifetz thinks our "talk about leadership betrays confusion" (p. 13). In other words, Heifetz does not subscribe entirely to the traits approach to leadership. Instead, he sees leadership to be essentially connected to values, passion, service to humanity, and the ability to adapt to the changing circumstances of life. For Heifetz, "leaders mobilize people to face problems, and communities make progress on problems because leaders challenge and help them do so" (p. 15). Conceptually, Heifetz believes that the definition of leadership should be inspired by four criteria: the definition must sufficiently resemble current cultural assumptions, it should be practical, should point toward socially useful activities, and must offer a broad definition of social usefulness (p. 19). Based on these criteria, Heifetz thinks that leadership is more of an activity rather than a position of authority or a set of personal characteristics (p. 20). In other words, people with or without legitimate authority can exercise leadership in the way that Heifetz conceptualizes the term. For Heifetz, leadership entails "adaptive work" consisting "of the learning required to address conflicts in the values people hold, or to diminish the gap between the values people stand for and the reality they face" (p. 22). Heifetz does not intend to reject the visionary role or perception about leadership, but only to "place emphasis on the act of giving clarity and articulation to a community's guiding values" (p. 23). By stressing the importance of leadership in elevating the needs of followers rather than simply meeting their needs, Heifetz hopes to have explained why a person like Hitler wielded power but was not a leader. For Heifetz, Hitler may have had authority but did not exercise leadership, two concepts that are often used interchangeably, but are indeed different in meaning and practice. In fact, Heifetz sees authority as an impediment to leadership. To have authority means that a person has access to resources while at the same time placing a person squarely in the realm of what Heifetz calls dominance structures. In primate societies, for example, the dominant animals dominate and serve as a point of reference for the other animals. Dominant animals also control and establish norms of behavior within the group. Although a direct analogy cannot be drawn between the dominant structures of the primate societies and human societies, some lessons about the function and dangers of leadership as authority and dominating others can be perceived. For Heifetz, "authority is given and can be taken away." It is "conferred as part of an exchange" and "failure to meet the terms of exchange means the risk of losing one's authority" (p. 57). So, one can see how the conferral of authority in exchange for some expected outcome can result in a leadership that seeks to do what the people want rather than elevating the needs and mobilizing the community to find adaptive ways in addressing situations. Additionally, by resorting to authority rather than adaptive work, people push the responsibility of solving problems or giving direction onto the designated figure whom they can then blame if he or she is unable to address the problem or do their bidding.

In distinguishing adaptive from technical work, Heifetz outlines three types of situations. In type I situations, the problem definition is clear and the solution and implementation is also clear. The primary focus is on the designated

authority, and the nature of the work is technical. In type II situations the problem definition is clear but the solution and implementation requires learning. This type of situation requires both technical and adaptive work. However, in type III situations, the problem definition is not clear and requires learning and the same is true for solution and implementation. To illustrate these situational types, Heifetz uses the example of a physician-patient relationship whereby under type I situation the patient's ailment is clearly defined and the solution is also known, thereby making the physician perform a technical duty of diagnosing and prescribing the solution already known. Under type II situations, the nature of the patient's ailment is clear, but the solution is not well established and this would call for a creative/adaptive process between the physician and patient in order to solve the problem. In type II situations, the patient's condition is not clearly defined, and neither is the solution. This again calls for an adaptive work between physician and patient in order to solve the problem. To further illustrate these situational types, Heifetz uses examples of Buchman's and Connie's illnesses and analyzes the roles that physician and patients play under each situation. Heifetz then draws a lesson from these examples, stating that in situations where there is no known answer to a problem, "the authority can induce learning by asking hard questions and by recasting people's expectations to develop their response ability" (p. 82). In adaptive work, "authority must look beyond authoritative solutions" and "this requires a shift in mindset" (p. 87).

To further buttress the need for adaptive work in type III situations, Heifetz uses the example of how William Ruckelshaus handled a problem involving the American Smelting and Refining Company (Asarco) in Tacoma, Washington in 1983, insisting that Ruckelshaus "recognized that the Asarco situation represented an adaptive challenge rather than a technical problem" (p. 95). The recognition of the complex nature of the situation, according to Heifetz, led Ruckelshaus "to engage people in facing the challenge" (p. 96).

Heifetz then distinguishes between formal and informal authority. He states that "*Formal* authority is granted because the officeholder promises to meet a set of explicit expectations… whereas *informal* authority comes from promising to meet expectations that are often left implicit (expectations of trustworthiness, ability, civility)" (p. 101). Formal authority comes with powers that go with the job description, whereas informal authority has more to do with personal values, charisma, and ability to inspire people. Presidents, for example, hold formal authority and Heifetz takes time to analyze the decision-making approach of presidents such as Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Jimmy Carter. For examples of informal authority, Heifetz cites Gandhi, Lech Walesa, Martin Luther king, Jr. and Margaret Sanger.

In the final chapter of the book, Heifetz gives "practical suggestions for bearing the responsibility that comes with leadership… (1) get on the balcony, (2) distinguish self from role, (3) externalize the conflict, (4) use partners, (5) listen, using oneself as data, (6) find a sanctuary, and (7) preserve a sense of purpose" (p. 252).

In reviewing this book, I can attest that in *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, Heifetz successfully and convincingly argues the place of values and

circumstance in contemporary leadership. Without dismissing the traits theory in formal leadership, Heifetz expertly uses concrete examples of people who held formal and informal authority to show the strengths and weaknesses of formal and informal authority in leadership, while also showing why in every situation a leader should be one who motivates and elevates a group to see and address problems. The book is written in an easy to read manner, although it addresses important, complex, and significant issues in leadership and authority. The book continues to be relevant in the complex society of our time, more so in academic institutions such as BMCC where leaders, at various levels, juggle commitment to institutional mission, adaptation to innovations and change, and ability to forge partnerships with stakeholders.

Resources for addressing and teaching diversity

Note: we have not vetted these links – rather, our intention is to suggest some of the material that is out there
—Inquirer Editors

Race and Pedagogy Working Group at University of Chicago
https://uchicagoraceandpedagogy.wordpress.com/resources/

Resources

Teaching race

- Tressie McMillan Cottom, "When Your Curriculum Has Been Tumblrized," tressiemc.com, January 6, 2016.

- Derald Wing Sue, *Race Talk and the Conspiracy of Silence: Understanding and Facilitating Difficult Dialogues on Race*. Hoboken: Wiley, 2015.

- Tanya Golash-Boza, *Race and Racisms: A Critical Approach*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.

- Sally Haslanger. 24.236 Topics in Social Theory and Practice: Race and Racism, Fall 2014. (Massachusetts Institute of Technology: MIT OpenCourseWare), http://ocw.mit.edu (Accessed 28 Dec, 2015). License: Creative Commons BY-NC-SA

- Jane Halley, Amy Eshleman, and Ramya Vijaya, *Seeing White: An Introduction to White Privilege and Race*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011.

Critical race theory

- Michelle Alexander. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press, 2010.

- Chandra L. Ford and Collins O. Airhihenbuwa, "American Journal of Public Health. 2010; 100(Suppl 1): S30–S35.

- Maurice Olander, *Race and Erudition*. Trans. Jane Marie Todd. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009.

- Edward Taylor, "Journal of Blacks In Higher Education," 19 (Spring 1998), 122-24.

- Charles Mills, The Racial Contract. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997.

- W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*. Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1903.

Effective teaching in racially diverse classrooms

- Teaching in Racially Diverse Classrooms — a guide produced by the Derek Bok Center for Teaching at Harvard University

- Asao B. Inoue, *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for a Socially Just Future*. Fort Collins, Colo.: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press, 2015.

- Linh Nguyen Littleford, *Understanding and Expanding Multicultural Competence in Teaching: Faculty Guide*. Galveston, TX: Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology, 2005.

- Claude M. Steele, "Thin ice: Stereotype threat and black college students." Atlantic Monthly, August 1999.

- bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education and the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge, 1994.

- Beverley Tatum, " Talking about race, learning about racism: The Application of Racial Identity Development Theory in the Classroom." Harvard Educational Review 62:1 (Spring 1992), 1-24.

Experiences of students and faculty of color

- Beth McMurtrie, "How Minority Students' Experiences Differ: What Research Reveals," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 03, 2016.

- Conditionally Accepted, "an online space for scholars on the margins of academe." https://conditionallyaccepted.com

- Tressie McMillan Cottom, "The Discomfort Zone," *Slate*, December 3, 2013.

- Eve Ewing, Syllabus: Racism and Educational Inequality in the Lives of African-American Youth (A111-M, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2015).

Working groups and initiatives

- *National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity*

- The Futures Initiative: Advancing Equity and Innovation in Higher Education at CUNY Graduate Center

- Race and Pedagogy Initiative at the University of Puget Sound

- The Social Justice Pedagogy Working Group at UCLA

- Racial Justice Working Group at Loyola University Maryland

  - Racial Justice Working Group (Loyola Marymount University Maryland)
  - http://www.loyola.edu/join-us/racial-justice/resources
  - Race & Pedagogy Institute (University of Puget Sound)
  - https://www.pugetsound.edu/academics/academic-resources/race-pedagogy-institute/

University of Michigan Law School resources:
https://www.law.umich.edu/careers/Pages/Diversity-Resources.aspx

At CUNY (perhaps a work in progress)
Diversity Action Plan at CUNY: http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/ohrm/diversity/DiversityActionPlan.html

Statistics: student diversity data:
https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/ira/ir/data-book/current/student.html

Miscellaneous:
Inside Higher Ed: How to write a diversity statement: https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2016/06/10/how-write-effective-diversity-statement-essay

From Diverse Education: Columbia Univ. will spend millions…..
http://diverseeducation.com/article/105976/

At BMCC
Readings for the Balancing the Curriculum Spring 2018 Seminar—the focus this semester was on immigration, DACA, a macro and micro exploration, and how we think of our teaching in light of these issues.
(Chaired by Patricia Mathews-Salazar, Soniya Munshi, and Page Delano)

Session 1:

- "The Mercy," a poem by Philip Levine
- "Letter from Perpignan," March 11, 1939, Janet Flanner (a brief article from *The New Yorker*)
- "The Political Refugee: 35 Years Later," Gunther Beyer (1981) *International Migration Review*
- "Trapped," Jonathan Blitzer, *The New Yorker* January 1, 2018, about the MS-13 gang, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/01/01/the-teens-trapped-between-a-gang-and-the-law

Session 2:

- Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects* (Chapter 2 "Deportation Policy and the Making and Unmaking of Illegal Aliens" and Chapter 4 "Braceros, "Wetbacks," and the National Boundaries of Class")
- Juan Gonzalez, *Harvest of Empire* (Chapter 4 "Puerto Ricans: Citizens Yet Foreigners")
- on DACA/Dreamers:
    1. A basic overview: https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/sep/04/donald-trump-what-is-daca-dreamers

2. From the Nation:https://www.thenation.com/article/a-new-clock-starts-for-a-daca-deal-but-times-already-running-out/ and https://www.the-nation.com/article/with-daca-gone-black-immigrants-find-themselves-in-the-crosshairs/

3. Websites/Reports/Resources:
https://www.cunydreamerss.org/deferred-action-daca;
https://newyork.edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/05/Safe-Havens_DIGITAL_5-17.pdf;
http://www.maketheroad.org/article.php?ID=4589

Session 3:
For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood. and the Rest of Y'all Too: Reality Pedagogy and Urban Education, Christopher Emdin, Beacon Press, 2016 writings, political analysis, life testimonies, conversations, and artistic works by Africans that engage with the struggle for LGBTI liberation.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Inquirer is a journal devoted to teaching, learning, and scholarship at BMCC. The editors welcome manuscripts on any number of topics for Issue 26, including but not limited to the following:

• Successful and innovative classroom activities
• Special teaching themes and units
• New pedagogies in theory and practice
• Ways to enliven the classroom
• Teaching challenges faced and resolved
• Disciplines and skills across the curriculum
• Classroom-based research
• Assessment and evaluation of students and teachers
• Impacts of syllabus, curriculum, and policy changes
• Teaching about race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class
• Teaching about globalization and global citizenship
• Teaching about sustainability and environmental awareness
• Fiction, poetry, and narratives related to teaching
• Book reviews
• Proposals for Teachable Moment Symposia (four or more papers on a shared theme)

Please submit a 250-500 word proposal or working manuscript to the editors by February 10, 2019.

The deadline for completed manuscripts is April 10, 2019

Authors should aim for a finished manuscript of roughly 2500 words, though the editors will consider longer and shorter submissions. Works in Progress will also be considered for our new section on this topic.

All submissions should be in Microsoft Word, double-spaced and in 12 point font, with text, notes, and references formatted in a recognized style (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago) or in the conventional style of the author's discipline.

Page Delano will be on sabbatical.

Send inquiries and articles to Elizabeth Wissinger ewissinger@bmcc.cuny.edu and/ or Holly Messitt hmessitt@bmcc.cuny.edu