

**BRIDGING THE COLLEGES**

**The First Year**

**2005-2006**

Seminar Leaders

Linda Hirsch and Sondra Perl

Overview and Narrative Report

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## Introduction

Bridging the Colleges is a faculty development project funded by CUNY's Office of Undergraduate Education. It is designed to bring together faculty from CUNY's community and senior colleges in order to examine cross-campus issues related to curriculum, general education, and pedagogy. The overall goal is to provide a forum in which faculty can come to a fuller understanding of what transpires on its sister campuses in order to better meet the needs of students who travel among them, many of whom transfer from community to senior colleges.

During its first year, the project was located in the Bronx. Four faculty members from each of the three CUNY units in the Bronx participated in monthly seminars which were led by two CUNY faculty, Professor Linda Hirsch from Hostos Community College and Professor Sondra Perl from Lehman College. During that year, the project also had a documenter, Nancy Wilson, who observed the sessions, took notes, interviewed faculty participants, and wrote this narrative report.

Bridging the Colleges is designed as an inquiry. It is based on certain guiding questions which the group examines repeatedly and from different vantage points throughout the term. In addition to reading articles and engaging in seminar discussions, faculty also visit one another's classrooms in an attempt to understand how the various campus cultures are both similar and different. The questions, then, which guide this collaborative project are as follows:

What are the academic literacies students need to succeed at CUNY?

What are the broad purposes of courses in the General Education curriculum?

How can collaboration among faculty in the CUNY Bronx schools smooth the transition from community to senior college?

What can we learn from visiting each other's classrooms?

What can this collaboration teach us about the values we bring to our classrooms, the differences in our disciplines, and the ways we teach?

The twelve faculty participants who attempted to answer these questions in the seminar's first year included

Shylaja Akkaraju	Biology & MLT, Bronx
Timothy Alborn	History, Lehman
Bertrade Banoum	Black Studies, Lehman
Felix Cardona	Behavioral/Social Sciences, Hostos
James Carney	Journalism, Communications & Theater, Lehman
Matthew Crick	Communications, Bronx
Sandy Figueroa	Business, Hostos
Carl Grindley	English, Hostos
Eileen Kennedy	Early Childhood Education, Hostos
Clarence Perkins	Business, Bronx
Vincent Prohaska	Psychology, Lehman
Timothy Sedore	English, Bronx.

### The Values We Bring to Our Classrooms

We meet for the first time in October, in BCC's South Hall Conference Room, a comfortably old-fashioned space - wood table, wood chairs, few places to plug in computers - in a comfortably old-fashioned building. Sondra and Linda, the leaders; four faculty members from Hostos, four from BCC and four from Lehman; and myself, the recorder, more observer than participant. We are joined, for this first session, by Rob Whittaker, Coordinator of General Education for Lehman College, and Marcie Wolfe, Director of Lehman's Institute for Literacy Studies. Marcie and Rob, along with Sondra, had a hand in creating this project which is based on another CUNY-sponsored faculty

development project, *Looking Both Ways*, of which both Marcie and Sondra had been co-directors.

Linda and Sondra introduce the seminar as an inquiry, a journey, a first attempt to see what teachers from the three Bronx campuses of CUNY might learn from one another. Like *Looking Both Ways*, a collaboration between high school and college teachers, it will invite conversation among people whose paths don't often cross. They mention, among other things, that each participant will be asked to visit other campuses, to leave familiar spaces. "What do we learn," asks Sondra, "from looking across a divide?"

To begin the conversation, Linda suggests a topic for writing: "How would you compare the college you went to the college at which you now teach?" We write, then read aloud or summarize what we've written.

Reports cover community colleges, four-year colleges; public and private; urban and rural; colleges outside the U.S.

Clarence studied business at Baruch, which he says was "more academically challenging" than BCC, where he teaches, but in some ways easier for students. There was no tuition in those days, and books were not as expensive. "Nowadays kids have responsibilities, kids of their own; sometimes they come to school after working all night." Others murmur agreement. Many of our students, too, have children and work long hours.

Most - though not all - remember being full time students, or working only part time. Sandy, who attended Hunter in the late 1960s, says standards were high at the time: students were expected to do homework and spend large amounts of time on their studies. Linda, too, remembers CUNY in the '60s. "Like Sandy," she says, "I'm a CUNY baby. Studying was my major job. My students don't have that luxury."

There are exceptions – Jim, for example, who held three jobs while in college; Carl, who “worked like a dog” – but most remember having fewer responsibilities and more time to study than their students do today. Shyla, with an apology to Carl, reports that at her Christian college in Madras, “most people didn’t work. College didn’t cost much. You didn’t buy textbooks. You went to the library.”

Bertrade underlines the contrast. She attended university in Cameroon, she says, where students were expected to speak English and French as well as their own African languages, and to study full time. “On my first day at Lehman, there was a student with a baby in class. We love babies in Africa, but we don’t bring them to class.”

Several speak of the diversity of today’s student body, the mixture of ages, countries of origin, languages. Their own peers, they say, were much more alike. Eileen, who is white, attended college in farm country, where “there was no diversity.” Linda, a white, Jewish New Yorker, remembers CUNY as “not too diverse. We were all about the same age. Everyone looked like me.”

Sandy’s experience, however, was different. “Clarence and I are the only African Americans here,” she reminds us, the first generation to go to college. “We all went into business, nursing; we didn’t have the luxury of just looking around. It had to be attached to a career goal. The neighbors would say, ‘Who does she think she is? College is for white people.’”

At Hostos right now, says Felix, “we span the myriad of cultures. There are cultural interactions between students themselves, between students and academic work. There’s an assumption that there are skill deficits but in fact a wide range of skill levels among students. Some are ready to go on to Columbia; others struggle to pass the CPE.” At

private colleges, he observes, faculty assume students are prepared for college work, “so there’s not as much focus on teaching.”

After a break, we focus more directly on the students now in our classrooms. Linda and Sondra ask us to write again, this time in response to a quote from Mina Shaughnessy: “College both beckons and threatens students.”

We share responses in small groups, then report to the group as a whole. What beckons students, says Clarence, is “the aspiration to have a higher education, to get a better job”; also to make friends, maybe find a husband or wife. “To alter their life circumstances,” someone says, then adds, “but they don’t see just how.” “Sometimes,” says Bertrade, “it’s a whole family’s dream. The whole family is counting on you.” Sandy agrees, but adds, “It may be the family’s dream, not yours. Where you are at the time, you may not be ready for college.”

Several people mention students running out of money, worrying about money, dropping in and out of college for that and other reasons. “You may not follow a straight path,” says Clarence, and Sandy adds, “You don’t have to go to college to get an education.”

What beckons quickly leads to what threatens:

“The academic culture.”

“Coming into a new culture: ‘Oh my goodness, I’m out of place.’”

“Students who underestimate their own abilities, don’t know how much they have to offer.”

“All the testing.”

For the many who are the first in their families to go to college, fear of leaving friends and family behind:

“Higher status beckons, but on the other hand... you could lose your friends.”

“You could lose your friends, your marriage, everything.”

### Academic Literacy

We start the second session with a discussion of articles by Stephen Garger, Richard Courage and Mina Shaughnessy that raise questions about academic literacy: what it is, how it intersects (or doesn't) with students' home literacies, how best to teach it. Small groups meet, then report to the group as a whole.

Carl warns his group he's "about to rant." He had a strong negative reaction to the articles, he says, especially the one by Courage, who suggests, among other things, that professors help students new to academic literacy "identify their nonschool literacies and reflect on the resources hidden there" and "to see their existing literacy practices as 'cultural resources.'"

Carl describes himself as "a first generation college student, "like those he teaches at Hostos; at the University of Victoria, BC, however, he didn't learn "the sound research and writing skills" he wants to teach his students. He remembers "much feeling but very little thinking" in his classes. He's bitter about the "touchy-feely" teaching popular in his day: "Let's sit in the dark and listen to Pink Floyd."

The academy and the world outside it are separate places, he insists, with separate languages; they don't belong together. Referring to Janette, a student described by Courage, who used her experience writing sermons as a bridge to academic literacy, he

underlines the point. "I don't want to change the way my students speak, their culture, what they do at home, but it's not good to ask them to bring their home lives into the classroom. In writing, I don't allow them to use contractions. I spend hours seeing students in my office. They're all capable of learning, but sometimes life gets in the way.... If they don't have the right preparation, it's my job to teach them."

Jim sees Courage as "seeking a hook" to draw students in. "It's important to start somewhere." In many ways, however, he agrees with Carl. "In journalism class I let them write about sports, for example, but I don't let them tell me about their personal lives, or why they had to miss class. That's too much information."

Another member of the group asks Carl if he thinks students should leave "passion" out of their writing. To some extent, yes, Carl answers. "If you bring personal reactions into analyzing a poem, you won't be able to see it clearly; your involvement will get in the way. But even without writing directly about what you feel passionate about, you can still harness the passion to write about something with force."

Returning to the large group, we find that others, too, have been talking about whether or not "the personal" belongs in the classroom. Several mention Ethel, another student described by Courage, and her passionate essay about men. "She shouldn't have been writing about that subject," says Jim. "It was too personal; she was reaching too deep."

"You can't avoid being personal in writing," says Sandy. "Writing is your heart. As soon as you put something down in writing, you're exposing who you are."

"You have to embrace the personal first," says Eileen, "then say, 'This is where we're going to take it.'"

Bertrade agrees but asks, "How can we help Ethel use her experience to learn what she needs to know in college?"

"In biology," says Shyla, "some topics are valid for study, others not. If an obese person studies obesity, for example, her personal knowledge might enrich her academic work."

Vinny notes a problem: "How do you correct grammar when a student is writing about being abused?"

This leads to a discussion of surface error. Tim S. refers to Shaughnessy's description of writing as "a trap": it shows what you can't do. Sondra adds quietly, "... unless we know how to read it."

Clarence recognizes the fear of error mentioned by Shaughnessy. "I've seen students get stuck on exams, because they keep stopping to correct their errors." Linda remembers how she reacted herself when her math tests were returned with corrections: "I felt stupid."

Shyla, who teaches science, has noticed that in many student papers, even those full of errors, "there are thoughts here waiting to come out." She wonders what happens in basic writing classes. "Do writing teachers agree on the best way to teach writing?"

Those who teach English smile. We talk about the history of basic writing at CUNY, the upheaval caused by Open Admissions. Bertrade is amazed that administrators and professors were unprepared to teach their new students, "didn't know about multiple literacies." How could they make such a change without careful planning?

"It was a political decision," Linda answers. "There was no time to plan and study first." She and Sondra recall the early days when some older faculty saw Open Admissions

as “an insult to their academic training.” There was a big difference in attitude, Sondra says, between professors who’d been there before and those who came after.

But what, someone asks, do we do about Ethel, the student described by Courage, whose essay about men was passionate but unfocused and full of errors?

“A lot of what we’re doing here,” says Sondra, “is to answer that question: What do we do about Ethel?”

After a break, we put Ethel aside and turn to our own students’ writing. Each teacher has brought in a sample of student work; he or she is to explain the assignment to members of a small group. “Identify one thing the student does well,” says Linda, “an idea you want to know more about, one issue or problem and a way to deal with it.”

In the group I join, Clarence presents a paper on supercomputer clusters, a term unfamiliar to most of us. He reads it aloud, stopping to point out errors. He’s pleased with the student’s idea but worried about his grammar. “It’s a process,” he says. “Maybe by the time he finishes BCC he’ll be farther along.”

Jim presents a paper by a student still struggling with English. We find it hard to understand. It’s about a court case having to do with journalism, but we think much of it has been copied from the Internet. “I get the feeling she was just trying to write something, anything, in English,” says Clarence. We agree it’s hard to study in a language not your own. Jim says he didn’t know what to do with this paper; it was so far from what he’d asked for. “We need better ways of helping students educated in other languages,” he says, “so they aren’t seen as dumb but helped to transfer skills learned elsewhere to English.” “If students have capability in their native languages,” says Felix, “the transition should be easier.”

Felix presents an essay about law, pointing out that the student uses a mixture of her own experience and her reading. "She's doing a decent job of it." Clarence, looking over Felix's shoulder, points out errors. "I tend to read it more for how they answer the question," says Felix, "whether they're thinking critically" – unless the errors interfere with understanding a student's point.

No one says much about what the students have done well.

### Gen Ed on Our Campuses

Looking at student writing has raised complex questions. One response to these questions is the Gen Ed initiative. To examine the link between student literacy and Gen Ed, Linda and Sondra ask the teachers, grouped by campus, to conduct surveys at their home institutions.

In November they distribute questions: "What is Gen Ed on your campus? How is it defined? How does it operate?... Do your colleagues know what it is...?" When we meet in December, at Hostos ("a vertical campus," as teachers call it: tall buildings facing each other across a busy street), each group presents the results of its survey, including "relevant documents" and interviews of professors and students.

The group from BCC is well supplied with documents, some on paper, others in PowerPoint. Tim S. hands out copies of "'Gen Ed' Statement, Bronx Community College." Clarence, using computer and screen, shows excerpts from "Competencies, Connections and Context: Exercises for a General Education," an anthology of assignments created by BCC professors of chemistry, computer science, French, nursing, art and eight other

disciplines. Tim says every teacher on campus gets a copy; Clarence says maybe not. "But everyone can look it up on the BCC web site."

According to Tim, BCC is different from other campuses in that its courses are "proficiency-based." Gen Ed goals and activities, he says, are supposed to be "embedded" in all courses. Shyla explains: "Each course has a syllabus. The Gen Ed goals are worked into the syllabi, so even new teachers have access to them." Her own department, Biology, is restructuring courses to make the goals more central, though some worry that in discussions of Gen Ed "not enough importance is given to scientific literacy, mathematical literacy... Gen Ed might be swallowed up by the humanities!"

When they report on their interviews, they seem less sure that the message is getting through. Clarence mentions a young teacher who seemed familiar with Gen Ed concepts, but says older teachers struck him as less well informed. Several told him they already do these things; the Gen Ed goals don't add anything. Tim says full time teachers seemed more aware of Gen Ed requirements than part time teachers; he mentions, too, a teacher who said she had heard of Gen Ed but didn't know anything about it.

The report from Hostos starts with Sandy's summary of a series of interviews. Many teachers, she tells us, have strong opinions, but no memory of documents pertaining to Gen Ed; the person who knew most about it was an administrative assistant. Many students associate Gen Ed with orientation, which they hate, and liberal arts. Many of those in career oriented programs don't see either one (Gen Ed or liberal arts) as useful.

Carl confirms these observations with quotes from students' responses to a questionnaire. Using the questionnaire and his memory of a lively class discussion, he describes his students as "both ill-informed and ambivalent."

Sure enough, freshman orientation comes up often in the questionnaires, usually as “a waste of time.” Most see Gen Ed as a series of (often irrelevant) requirements, though their lists of these requirements vary:

“physical education, writing, reading, history, orientation, natural sciences, foreign languages and math”;

“English, math, biology, history, freshman orientation”;

“math, English, a second language and 1 or 2 electives.”

Some see value in the requirements:

“Math and English are required in every day life. How can I as a future nurse administer medication if I didn’t know the difference between a gram and a kilogram?”

“Gen Ed helps you know a little bit of everything.”

“Some of general education classes make students more interested in some topics more than others, helping them decide on their college major.”

“I think they are good courses because students learn how to socialize with people in other majors.”

Others see them as useless:

“I’m an accounting major: why do I have to learn about political science. A person should only take those classes that add to his or her major.”

“I think that we shouldn’t take classes that don’t necessarily affect our majors because we probably will never use the knowledge again.”

And some are just confused:

“I don’t know what Gen Ed is. I hate being told what to take.”

Felix mentions an issue that hasn't yet come up. Among the newer faculty at Hostos, he says, there's a strong connection between Gen Ed and testing. "Does testing swallow the whole concept of Gen Ed? Are we moving competencies toward testing rather than learning?"

Tim A. begins the Lehman group's report with a comment on distribution requirements. Until a few years ago, he says, there were only a small number of classes that fulfilled them; now there are many (he distributes a list), but most faculty don't seem to know whether or not the courses they teach are part of Gen Ed. He quotes a professor who referred to the courses as "nuisance requirements." The teachers he spoke to had a general sense of what Gen Ed was for, but not what courses fell under it; students seemed to know what the courses were, but not what they were for. He nods toward the Hostos group. "Our students don't seem to mind as much as yours do."

Vinny quotes from a student questionnaire. Gen Ed, the student writes, is "broad ed... what society thinks we should know." Vinny relates this to the LEH program of advanced interdisciplinary courses and describes an LEH course that draws on philosophy, psychology and English to explore what it means to be educated.

Bertrade quotes someone she talked to at Lehman: "It's a little bit of everything." She's on the Curriculum Committee; she reads us Lehman's definition of Gen Ed and a list of course requirements: English, sciences, etc., with the number of credits required in each, including requirements for "writing intensive" courses. At Lehman, she says, "we are in the process of developing goals in the different disciplines." A new Blackboard site will help teachers compare notes, "get a better sense of what's working and not working." The project is still in its early stages.

## Introducing Intervisitation

In the next few weeks, members of the group will exchange classroom visits.

Sondra introduces the project with a writing prompt. "Sit quietly for a moment... picture your classroom...." Sandy has a question: "Can it be on line?" We talk about logistics.

Sondra resumes. "Okay, picture your classroom, virtual or otherwise.... If someone were to come in, what would they see?"

We write for a few minutes, then Sondra continues. "What questions come to mind about what's going on in that room... about yourself, your students, your curriculum... about how you teach?"

A few minutes later: "Now imagine someone else's classroom, someone on another campus.... Ask yourself, 'What am I curious about? What would I like to know?'"

As the teachers stop writing and prepare to read what they've written to the group, Linda suggests listening carefully to other people's descriptions, "to get an idea of what you might want to see."

Sandy: "My students meet in groups. I'd like to know if they're really learning anything."

Vinny: "My classroom is packed, too many students in too little space.... You'll see me moving around a lot.... When I talk, what do they hear? ... What are the differences between us [Lehman] and community colleges? ... How do you teach the same course I do to students who have been determined to not be skilled enough to be in my class?"

Carl: "I never used to notice space, but at Hostos my classroom is ugly, stained... ceiling tiles covered with grime.... A lot of flirting going on. Some students bring me a can

of Pepsi. A and B students come to my office for conferences; D students don't, except for last-minute emergencies. Why do some people in a classroom care so much, and others care so little? ... Are students on other campuses like mine?"

Tim A.: "Dirty windows... people coming in late... sometimes a small child, next to her mother... . How far do students travel?... Does the reading I assign make sense to them? Are the students at the other colleges like the ones I teach?"

Tim S.: "Beautiful classrooms... views.... We do what we're doing here: write from a question or quote, then talk about what we've written."

Bertrade: "Students report on their reading, choose a chapter that speaks to them.... Are my methods appropriate? They didn't study Africa in high school; do they now know enough to go out and find information for themselves?... Am I getting the message across? Are they getting it right? Are they getting my accent?"

Clarence: "I'm teaching accounting, senior level. No journals; this one is advanced. It's held in a computer lab, because the classroom I was using I wouldn't want to eat in.... What's important: not only my discussion, but their discussion with each other.... But sometimes they'll be on the computer while you're talking.... Are they bored to death?... Sleeping with their eyes open?"

Felix: "Sometimes the room gets too warm; students get sleepy.... I start the class with questions, directly related to the chapter they've read, to make sure they read it.... Are the students understanding the main points of the lesson?... Am I giving them enough time to discuss and respond to it? Are they able, at the level they're at, to understand the material?... Are they engaged with it?"

Shyla: "I'm teaching nursing, advanced level. The course is writing intensive, so there are only twenty students.... It's a three hour class; I try not to talk too much.... How are other people dealing with writing assignments? Do they give more time for writing, or for rewriting?"

Eileen: "My classroom is crowded, full of equipment (projectors, etc.). I use a combination of lecture, discussion and writing.... I'm very concerned about my students taking their state certification exams... their level of competence.... Where do they go after they leave me?"

When everyone has read, Sondra says, "Write us some notes. Is there someone's classroom (on another campus) you want to see? Or don't you have a preference?" We talk about plans and assignments.

"I'm still trying to figure out what we're trying to accomplish here," says Clarence.

Sondra replies: "So are we."

### Perspectives on Gen Ed

The February meeting begins with discussion of a report (Harvard University Faculty) and three articles (Greenblatt, Murray, Vendler) distributed last time we met. Each, Sondra and Linda comment, provides "a particular take on Harvard University's Gen Ed model and the questions it raises about the undergraduate curriculum."

They explain the procedure for a jigsaw discussion: a small group meeting on each of the articles, then a reshuffling of groups so that, in a second round of meetings, each group will contain someone from each of the first-round groups.

In the first round, I sit in on a group from BCC, discussing “Reinventing General Education,” by biologist Andrew Murray.

Shyla refers indignantly to an example given by Murray, who compares analyzing the language of *Hamlet* to analyzing “the sequence of symbols in a long piece of DNA.” Murray, she thinks, takes the notion of interdisciplinary study too far. “Where’s the poetry, the passion in DNA analysis of Shakespeare?” Others demur – “He doesn’t mean to be reductionist; he’s just using the example to demonstrate how DNA analysis works” – but ask Shyla for a better example of interdisciplinary thinking. In response, she describes a course given at another college, in which she, a biologist, joined English and film professors to help students study issues of race, class and gender. “The students loved it.”

Was it “low-stakes”? someone asks. “Low-stakes” sets off alarm signals, as does “pass-fail grading.” Students don’t take non-graded work seriously, several agree, especially nursing students and students in other pre-professional programs. Tim S. quotes a student on “low-stakes” writing: “What do I have to do to pass this course? Really nothing.”

A focus on graded work, however, can narrow the curriculum. “Even in math,” says Clarence, “you can move away from the numbers and focus on what they mean in people’s lives. But when you have tests to prepare for, you can’t take much time for such things. Students don’t want to.”

Shyla admits her own students often don’t. She tells us about one who asked a question about genetics. Shyla began her answer with, “My grandfather...” She mimics the student’s response, tapping her pencil impatiently: “‘Let’s get on with it!’” Another

teacher imitates students rolling their eyes as he detours from the syllabus to take advantage of “a prime teachable moment”: “Will it be on the exam?”

Tim S. imagines how such detours appear to students. “If someone asks you how to get from here to there,” he says, “and you tell a story instead...” He tells an elaborate story, miming the frustration of the person who just wants to know how to get from here to there. We all laugh.

And yet... we’ve all been frustrated by students’ preoccupation with tests and grades. “Why do I teach English?” asks Tim S. “Not for the grammar. For language, for values...” He turns to Shyla. “... as you find value in biology.” “But how much of that value or beauty will be on the exam?” says Clarence. “That’s what students are focused on.”

How do our students see education? How do we? We are still on this subject when it’s time to shuffle the groups.

For the next step in the jigsaw, Linda joins Jim, Tim S. and me. Tim summarizes “Reinventing General Education” and, when Linda asks what his group found especially interesting, refers to a point made as we gathered our papers to move on: that it might be possible to work Gen Ed into the curriculum not by changing the curriculum, but rather by changing the way teachers think about Gen Ed. Murray, we agreed, focuses not so much on specific disciplines as on the way people learn, the way, as he puts it, we convert “data into information, information into ideas, and ideas into knowledge.” “Beauty and wonder,” he writes, “are our primary distractions from the shortness and struggles of life, and great teachers can find and transmit both from any subject.”

Jim reports on Stephen Greenblatt's "Cultural Mobility." "Most of our group," he says, "took exception to the idea that the example of physical mobility could lead logically to an understanding of cultural mobility. It might work at Harvard, but..." He mentions Lehman students who move from country to country but "take the village with them. They may go back to Dominican Republic in the summer, but they don't go to the city. They may live in New York, but they don't leave their own neighborhoods. It's true, however," he adds, "that cultural mobility doesn't have to be physical. Text messages reach beyond borders."

Linda reports that Helen Vendler, like Murray, wants to see an emphasis not on the content of courses but rather on "creating knowledge." She reads a passage aloud: "It matters less what the content is of a 'Harvard College Course' than the extent to which it provokes the detailed paying of attention to a limited corner of the intellectual universe...." "People in my group," she comments, "found her argument very hard to follow. You really can't see, from her, what this course is going to look like."

Can you separate knowledge from beliefs and attitudes? "You can talk about cochlear implants," says Linda, "but that gets you into a discussion of ASL and where you stand on that. You can't separate the information from the position. I think it's phony to pretend you can look at these things in isolation."

When we gather again to compare notes on the small group meetings, we talk, first, about teaching interdisciplinary courses, and especially about teaching in teams. Would team-taught courses be possible on our campuses? Desirable?

Vinny says he once tried an interdisciplinary approach with first-term students; it didn't work. "They didn't yet know enough to be able to relate one discipline to another."

Freshmen and sophomores don't know enough about science to be able to bring their knowledge to bear, adds Carl. "The science component of such a course won't have enough weight." Several agree: "The science gets watered down."

Someone raises a question: Do students understand what "interdisciplinary" means? Many think "that if you're teaching history, you're giving them facts," says Tim A. "If you're teaching biology, you're giving them facts. Do they understand that there are questions, different perspectives even within disciplines?"

Carl defends disciplinary boundaries. "They're necessary for depth," he says, "for understanding. The point of teaching within a discipline is to show students how a historian thinks, how a biologist does." Bertrade agrees.. "The walls aren't solid," she says, "but it's still possible to talk about a disciplinary perspective." "But even within a discipline," says Linda, "different historians may see things differently."

Tim A. describes the Freshman Year Initiative (FYI) program at Lehman: first-year courses, in various disciplines, taught separately but in blocks of four, so teachers in each block can meet, compare notes and coordinate their plans. He thinks the program may make it possible to teach advanced, interdisciplinary LEH courses, later, on a higher level.

When it comes to teaching in teams, several see practical problems. At BCC, for instance, "even the buildings work against collaboration." Departments are located on different floors, there's no budget for more than one person teaching a course.... "In our environment," says a BCC teacher, "if we could do a team-taught course, I'd love it."

Several mention territoriality: that we protect the boundaries of our disciplines. Maybe we don't want to let others get too close.

Sondra comments, "Interesting... that the architecture supports these divisions."

The talk takes another direction when Sandy says, “When students come to our schools, this isn’t the same as Harvard. If you mention names of academics, if you lecture and expect students to read masses of books, they can’t do it.”

Tim A., who once taught the core curriculum at Harvard, speaks with heat. “We’re doing better at what we’re doing than Harvard was at what they were doing. We have smaller classes. We give more attention to individual students – and more to teaching.”

Jim goes back to the students interested only in preparing for careers, not in what we think of as liberal education. Tim reports that Harvard students are just as interested in making money as students at Hostos, BCC or Lehman, but they tolerate Gen Ed. “They know how to behave. They’ve been taught how to behave.”

Linda brings the discussion to a close by repeating, to the group, a comment she says she made to Sondra: “The more I read about Gen Ed, the harder it becomes to pin down what it is.”

### Planning Cross-Campus Visits

At the end of the February meeting, Sondra and Linda divide the seminar into groups of three, each made up of one teacher from each campus; the groups meet to exchange teaching schedules and plan visits to each other’s classrooms.

Linda and Sondra show part of a video from *Looking Both Ways*, in which high school and college teachers exchange visits, and give some general instructions for visiting someone else’s class.

“An intervisitation is NOT an evaluation,” they explain in a handout used in Looking Both Ways. “It is a record of **your** thinking in response to being invited to visit a colleague’s institution and classroom....” They suggest questions:

What surprised you during your visit?

What did visiting another college highlight about your own school?

How did seeing another class affect the way you think about your own class?

How was academic literacy being addressed/represented...?

What new ways of thinking about our collective enterprise did you leave with?

Linda emphasizes the purpose of such visits: not evaluation, not giving advice.

“You are there to observe,” she reminds us, “to ask questions.”

Sondra suggests, among others, “Who are these students? What’s going on here?”

She quotes Kroeber, an anthropologist, on the advantages of an outsider’s perspective:

“‘It’s not the fish who can see the ocean.’ You will be entering another culture; in our next meeting we will ask you what you noticed.”

In March we meet at Lehman, in a formal, high-ceilinged room with tall windows and wood paneling. Anthony Garro, Provost at Lehman, joins us. He is accompanied by Rob Whittaker, Lehman’s Coordinator of Gen Ed, and Marcie Wolfe, Director of the Institute for Literacy Studies, whom we know from our October session. Sondra reintroduces them as “the people behind the scenes, who think through the project with Linda and me.”

Dr. Garro gives a presentation on the history of Gen Ed at Lehman. Starting in 1984, he tracks changes in curriculum, tells stories, raises questions, shows charts and diagrams and statistics. He discusses writing intensive courses, WAC, the CPE. Especially interesting to our group are his comments about transfer students, who first came to the attention of

the Lehman faculty, he says, because there were large numbers of them in LEH courses, and they weren't doing as well as students who had started at Lehman. Faculty and administration are still trying to find better ways to support such students.

When he taught an LEH course himself, he reports, he was surprised to find students who had passed the CPE but wrote badly and didn't know how to use the library. Many of them were transfers. He was clearly troubled by the experience.

Members of the seminar are troubled as well, especially teachers from Hostos and BCC. What does Lehman expect? they ask Dr. Garro. What level of skill or proficiency in writing? In research? What should they do to prepare their students adequately?

We are running late, so have to end the discussion. It never quite stops, however, but continues informally during the break and returns, in various forms, in the remaining sessions.

After the break, groups meet to discuss their visits to each other's classrooms. I sit with Sandy, Clarence and Bertrade, who are still in the process of completing theirs.

Sandy is teaching only on line this term, which presents some technical difficulties; today she gives the others the passwords they will need to visit her class from their own computers. The course, she says, is CIP 101, Introduction to Computer Systems; she teaches it through case studies and on-line discussion. Students create home pages as well, and PowerPoint presentations to introduce themselves. She enjoys teaching on line and recommends it. "I can meet the students in a way you can't in a classroom," she says. "They really talk." She invites the others to tune in whenever they want to. "I work at 2 or 3 A.M."

Clarence plans to visit Bertrade's African Civilization course, which she is teaching as part of one of Lehman's FYI blocks. It's not exactly a history course, she says, although she does start with history - "of mankind. And biology, archeology. A student may say, 'Oh yes, I heard that name Darwin,' but most don't have much background." "A lot of our students can't see past the Bronx," says Clarence. "I want to see how you bring Africa into their lives."

Clarence is teaching Accounting Information Systems, Spreadsheet Applications, Intro. to Computing and Programming. Bertrade describes, with pleasure, her visit to his computer lab.

The students, according to Clarence an unusually small group, were locating information on a complicated Excel program - "not just Excel," Bertrade reports, "but a U.S. government site, so they were learning about government too. Very hands on... learning by doing." The room was spacious and clean, the atmosphere soothing; she compares it to yoga or meditation. "Just being in that room was so peaceful," she reports. "Restful... restoring... conducive to learning."

When the groups come together to compare notes, people talk, first, about what surprised them.

A teacher from Lehman was impressed by the computer technology in a class at BCC: "It's more advanced than ours." A teacher from Hostos didn't expect to find, at Lehman, so many students who spoke English as a second language. Eileen, who teaches elementary education, is used to having more women than men in her classes; she was surprised to find the proportion similar in Jim's communications class.

Most classes at Lehman have a majority of women, say the Lehman teachers, though Tim A. says that's not true of M.A. classes in history, where men tend to dominate; this presents problems in mixed M.A./B.A. classes. Tim S, who observed a mixed class, agrees: some of the women didn't speak at all.

Women speak freely at Hostos and BCC, say the community college teachers, and the Lehman teachers say that's true in most classes at Lehman as well.

Are community college students more confident than those at Lehman? Some say yes, others no. Tim A. says that students who've gone through Lehman and end up in his classes seem to him more timid than transfers, who appear to bring with them some of the confidence they acquired at community colleges. The transfers haven't yet studied with older, more experienced students. "They may be saying nonsense, but they say it with confidence."

Felix, however, reports "a level of confidence" in an evening class at Lehman. The students, he says, were similar to those at Hostos, but at Lehman they seemed better prepared. "They felt they could interact with each other, with the teacher." After making a mistake, a student came back to the issue. This was an advanced course, Felix adds, which may have had something to do with it. "I thought their reasoning skills were advanced. They seemed to be engaged in the theory of the course, felt confident to engage the course, the instructor, each other."

After Vinny's class at Lehman, Shyla says, a student came up and said she didn't understand. She clearly felt comfortable doing that.

Jim reports that during Eileen's visit to Lehman, a former student of hers came up to say she missed the social support she got at Hostos. The comment doesn't surprise the

Hostos faculty, who describe their student body as “cohesive.” Most major in education or health services; they know each other.

Someone points out that the physical structure of Hostos is vertical, not horizontal: not spread out on a campus but centered in tall buildings on opposite sides of a busy street. Students pass each other in the halls, share common areas. Maybe that, too, makes a difference.

Carl, who visited both BCC and Lehman, had stayed after both classes. He reports noticing more talk, interaction among the students at BCC and on his own campus than at Lehman, but notes that at Lehman he attended an evening class, which may have had something to do with it. Tim A. points out that evening students often have to leave right after class.

Do teachers give students more support at the community colleges? Vinny, who teaches at Lehman, says Shyla’s class at BCC had “more scaffolding” than his usually has. Tim A., also from Lehman, says Carl, at Hostos, had prepared an enormous amount of information for his students and posted it on Blackboard; Tim calls it “a manual.” And Jim, also from Lehman, says Eileen’s class at Hostos is “a lot more structured than mine usually is.” Tim describes his own syllabus as “much more minimal: Here’s what you need to know. If you want more help, please come and ask for it.”

Linda says teachers at Hostos do lots of scaffolding. “Does that interfere,” she wonders, “with students learning to work independently?”

Carl thinks supplying information has to do with “transparency. Students should know what you’re asking for, how you will grade; they won’t know unless you tell them. And teachers at community colleges should know what Lehman wants, so we can prepare

them for it.” In his own classes at Hostos, he tries to anticipate the demands of a four-year college. He insists on citations from peer-reviewed journals – “no first-person, no Wikipedia” – and all the conventions of formal academic writing. Stung by Dr. Garro’s comments on ill-prepared community college students, he’d told Shyla, during the break, “I want it dull and boring, so that guy will have to give them an A.”

Sondra reviews themes mentioned so far. “I was listening for categories. Design of classrooms, campuses (how it affects learning)... focus on students (gender, confidence)... pedagogy (e.g. scaffolding)...” Then she raises a question that underlies all of them: “Should we be looking again at academic literacy?”

Linda reminds us of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual CUNY General Education Conference, scheduled for May. “Next month,” she says as we gather our books, “we will be talking about the presentations we’ve agreed to give.”

### Gen Ed at CUNY

In April the seminar meets for the last time, to look back on what we’ve learned since October and to plan the group’s presentation for the Gen Ed Conference. We are joined by Miriam Laskin, Coordinator of Instructional Services at the Hostos library.

Linda begins. “We hope to hear something about what’s been useful to you,” she says, “what you’ve learned, what you think might be useful to others if we continue the seminar....” She pauses to greet two late arrivals: Rob Whittaker, the Lehman Gen Ed coordinator, now familiar to the group, and Judith Summerfield, Dean for Undergraduate Education at CUNY.

Rob says he has checks for the teachers; someone says in that case he's welcome. There's laughter around the room, as there is during much of this session. We are relaxed, in tune, comfortable with each other. "I trust the people in this group," a teacher tells me. As Bertrade puts it, "The seminar has brought us together."

Judith describes an initiative at CUNY to study how students "move" from one institution to another; she mentions a group at Queensborough doing something similar to what we're doing in the Bronx. (She calls our borough "the mainland.") She's interested in our experiences.

We start with reports on classroom visits, some of which have taken place since last time we met.

Clarence reports on a visit to Sandy's Blackboard site. He calls it "rich." Students were discussing business case histories; at one point they engaged in a lively dialogue about barbecuing, to which Sandy contributed. Exciting, he said - "but how do you control it?" Sandy says she sets time limits, so discussion doesn't get out of hand.

Judith asks Clarence if Sandy's students sounded like his. Clarence says yes, he'd get similar responses from his own students: "short, but very passionate."

Linda reminds us of last month's discussion and asks if people again noticed differences between Lehman and the two community colleges. If so, what were they?

Carl reports on a visit to Lehman: "I couldn't tell the difference between students, couldn't tell which students had started at Lehman and which had transferred in."

Tim A. is working on "a statement of articulation" between junior and senior colleges. "I had a hard time telling whether I was in a junior or senior college, as regards expectations of students, but the size of rooms and number of students in a class affect the

way students interact. Classes are often smaller at Hostos and BCC, and classrooms are smaller as well; students sit close to each other and the teacher, which seems to create a sense of community. Classrooms are bigger at Lehman. Even when there are few students in a class, they spread out like gases.”

Jim says he’s noticed that some students who come to Lehman from BCC “have used more sophisticated editing programs than we have at Lehman.” Maybe, he suggests, we could coordinate such programs more effectively.

Another teacher comments that the classroom visits, and the seminar as a whole, have been “really helpful in establishing collegiality.” He’s not sure, however, where Gen Ed fits in.

Tim A. refers to the February meeting in which we talked about Gen Ed across disciplines. “We’re all interested in that. We lost the thread, however, when we went on to cross visitations.”

Carl says, “I don’t mean to be the voice of doom, but... unknown to me, there was a Gen Ed task force at Hostos, which has just come up with a document that until now was a secret. I wish I’d known about it before.”

He’s working on a portfolio project, wonders if the new goals will affect it. Judith speaks of people on various campuses working on portfolios; she names some of them. She refers to “seven competencies... new portfolios... value added...” and a larger project on assessment. She calls it “a messy process.”

“We started off yelling at each other,” she says. “We don’t even have the language.... We need to lay out goals of Gen Ed on each campus first.” Confirming the confusion we’ve encountered ourselves, she speaks of students who haven’t “bought” the

degree, leave without degrees, leave without having met Gen Ed requirements. "It is still a mess out there."

Carl refers to the Gen Ed task force he's just learned about and its naming of nineteen competencies; his tone suggests he finds the list useless.

Tim A. says he's frustrated. "You look at a catalogue listing, can't tell what's going on in the course, what students who've taken that course will have learned."

Judith responds, "We've just got to get better at transparency... at making it clear what students need and should have."

Felix notes that students often take courses because they are convenient or fit their work needs; it's hard to persuade them to take courses they don't see the use of. "Are we moving toward coordinating courses and standards across CUNY?"

Rob answers, "We struggle with the idea. Gen Ed should have some uniformity, but there's a tradition in each college. If you try to put all the traditions into a package, it's incredibly chaotic. It might be better to think of Gen Ed as skills and competencies common to the liberal arts... but that's not much of an answer. It's an unimaginably complex phenomenon."

Miriam, the visitor from Hostos, says she went to Hunter around 1967. "We had a core curriculum. Boy, how things have changed."

Judith sums up the history of curriculum change since then. In the late '60s, she says, requirements were thrown out, new courses and departments opened. "At the end of the '60s, the only thing left was Freshman Comp." There's a reaction, now, to the excesses of that time.

Tim A. is still concerned about the articulation between junior and senior colleges. "If the audience... if the student population is different... if you're going to give a transfer student credit for a course taught at a two-year college where half the students aren't going on... how do you handle that?"

It's a problem, Judith admits. "You can think of the colleges as nations; they don't talk to each other." There's no one in charge of scheduling Gen Ed. Departments tend to be concerned about courses in the major, not Gen Ed. Courses aren't available when students need them; there's "a traffic jam" at certain levels. Lehman, she says, is the exception.

She quotes a former student, a fireman who went to Queens College: "Queens calls itself a liberal arts college, but I went there for years, and graduated, and I still don't know what that means." "Competencies don't do it," she comments. "Every student and every teacher needs to know what Gen Ed is, what it means." She speaks again of transparency: "It's got to make sense."

After a brief break, we hear from Miriam, who has come to tell us about her work on information literacy - how she and other librarians are helping students navigate "the soup of information now available on line." "These skills," she says, "were never taught before." Her group is conducting a survey of what research skills are being taught, what different colleges are doing; they too are trying to find ways to make the transition from junior to senior colleges easier. So far, she reports, they've found that "some of the junior colleges have more highly developed information literacy programs than many of the senior colleges."

Clarence describes students familiar with computers, but not sophisticated about research: they use Google but don't know how to search data bases. Miriam points out that

even their teachers, some of whom forbid students to use Internet sources, may not know that most academic journals are now on line rather than in college libraries.

### Preparing To Present

Sondra and Linda go over the schedule for the group's presentation at the Gen Ed conference. Sondra has given it a title, Linda reports: "Border Crossings." She and Sondra will give a five- or ten-minute introduction (Jim, expressing the nervousness some feel, calls out, "Take fifteen or twenty!"); then each team will have about twelve minutes to give its report. "You might focus on one issue," says Sondra, "for instance, whether or not small rooms lead to greater intimacy." "Brainstorm," says Linda. "If you have a wild idea, let it go. You may think of something more interesting than anything we could come up with."

As teams meet, I rejoin Clarence, Sandy and Bertrade, who still haven't completed their round of visits. There are scheduling conflicts, and midterm exams and spring break are coming up; they won't be able to finish visiting and plan their presentation until after the break.

Their group has a different angle, they decide, since Sandy's class was visited on line. Using Sandy's password, the others were able to look in as she and her students discussed business case histories on Blackboard. Bertrade says she found her visit useful. "I'm a village girl," she says. "I haven't been willing to give up seeing students in person. But I'm beginning to understand what Sandy means when she says she can 'see' her students in a different way, sometimes more clearly, on line. Maybe one day I'll try it myself." Clarence reviews Sandy's assignments and requirements for students: "So that would be what we talk about."

Bertrade reviews her visit to Clarence's computer lab. "I noticed space," she says, "and cleanliness. When I left Lehman I was really tired. I got lost on the way. But I revived when I got there. I thought, 'These students are really blessed.'" She mentions students learning to handle huge amounts of data, but also learning about the government program that generated the data. Clarence is taking notes. "Should we put these points in bullets?"

When we return to the large group, Eileen reports on visits between journalism, communications and elementary education teachers: "We talked about similarities and differences. Storytelling was a theme in all three classes. Jim is going to work on a PowerPoint presentation." Tim A. suggests adding photos.

Tim A. says his group returned to a question mentioned earlier: How do the size of rooms and design of campuses affect the interaction between students and teachers? Visiting each other's classrooms, he reports he, Tim S. and Carl were struck by contrasts. "Rooms are bigger and the campus more spread out at Lehman than at the community colleges, especially Hostos. How do these differences influence the roles community college students take if they go on to senior colleges?"

And what about other differences? Some community college students transfer directly into 300-level courses at Lehman, which include graduate students; others, sometimes after years of study, come in without having earned AA degrees and therefore start as sophomores. How does that difference affect their experiences? Women are the majority in classes on all three campuses - but they weren't in an advanced history course at Lehman, which included graduate as well as undergraduate students. In that class the undergraduates, especially the women, were quiet: "They sat in back, as far away from the

professor as they could get.” Does the presence of graduate students in some classes change the way students relate to each another?

Vinny reports that Shyla, who isn't here today, is giving his group's presentation. The announcement is greeted by laughter. He, Shyla and Felix, he continues, will focus on the “socialization” of students. “At what point do they learn the behavior we expect in an academic community,” he asks, “that, for example, you don't get up and walk out in the middle of a class?”

Felix again mentions the feeling of intimacy the group had noticed at the community colleges. Vinny adds, “I'm not sure if we want to say this in public, but we all noticed that community college teachers seem to spend more time thinking about how to teach students than we do at Lehman.”

“You *should* say that,” says Linda. “Other groups have mentioned it as well.”

Tim A. comments, “When I came to Lehman from Harvard, I had to think more about teaching, because if I didn't it wasn't going to work.”

Shyla warns against drawing grand conclusions from a single round of visits: “With such a small number we can't generalize.” As to time spent on teaching, she and several others point out the pressure to publish, especially for senior college teachers. “It's not that they don't want to put more time into teaching, but that they won't be promoted unless they publish.” Later someone says that's true for community college teachers as well.

Clarence describes his visit to Sandy's on-line course and her visit to his classroom. More courses, he says, are now given on line, which raises another question: How is Gen Ed being delivered?

We talk about ways to complete plans for the presentation. Should we meet again as a whole group, or would small group meetings be enough? Linda says it might be enough for the groups to send plans to her and Sondra, so they can frame the separate presentations with their introduction.

“What about ending each presentation with questions?” she suggests. Everyone likes the idea.

### Crossing Borders

In May we meet for the last time, at the CUNY General Education Conference, held at Queensborough Community College. The conference runs all day and is well attended; the room for our session is full. “Border Crossings,” says the listing in the program: “Taking a Close Look at the Community College-Senior College Journey.”

Sondra and Linda give a brief description of the seminar. The four intervisitation groups report their findings, focusing on themes that emerged in visits to classrooms and a year’s worth of seminar meetings.

Jim and Eileen, speaking for Matthew, who can’t be here, as well as themselves, say they found storytelling in all three classrooms. “Education students tell stories, editors tell stories with visuals, sound and narratives....” They mention students’ “time issues” – jobs, children, gaps in continuity caused by family obligations and lack of money – but focus on “campus socialization,” which they found worked differently on “vertical” and “park-like” campuses. Eileen mentions the former Hostos student she met on the Lehman campus;

she'd like to know more, she says, about what happens to students who transfer from community to four-year colleges.

Tim S. and Tim A. report for themselves and Carl, who like Matthew is teaching today. Their presentation, which touches on students' academic lives and lives outside of school, on age, experience, gender and teaching styles, includes a lively dialogue about differences they observed in "teaching spaces" and "student interaction."

"The classrooms we visited at BCC and Hostos were small," says Tim A., reading from their script, "with very little space between the chalkboard and the back wall. It was our opinion that this dynamic made quite a difference. Students were almost literally in the professor's face. It seemed to us that, as a result, students were more involved in the discussion, even though the number of students was comparable to those in the Lehman classes.... "

Tim S. continues: "The Lehman classrooms we observed, in contrast, were large enough to hold 35 students, with the result that twenty students spread out to fill this space. The better, more verbally active students sat near or at the front. The less verbal, less-active students sat as close to the back or the window as they could get, where they were out of the line-of-fire.... Thus, although participation was lively enough in the Lehman classes, it was not as inclusive as what we observed at the community colleges."

Shyla, Vinny and Felix focus on "socialization": how students learn what is expected of them as college students, from behavior in class (come on time, turn off ipods and cell phones) to how to take notes or write a research paper. Vinny says he saw "more scaffolding" at the community colleges: a professor, for example, who stopped lecturing to

say, "Write this down!" Felix points out that many students at Hostos are recent immigrants. "Community colleges," he says, "serve multiple missions."

Sandy, Clarence and Bertrade give enthusiastic accounts of each other's classrooms. Clarence says that Sandy, by joining students' on-line conversations, shows them "there's a human being at the other end of the computer." "I still have reservations about on-line teaching," says Bertrade, but after visiting Sandy's class, "not as many." She describes the "huge amount of data" Clarence's students were handling, and how involved they were in the project. "Bertrade got me excited about African culture," says Clarence. And Bertrade relates the experience to the seminar as a whole, "a wonderful experience, from reading students' papers to visiting each other's classes."

### What Did We Learn?

At the end of the seminar, Linda and Sondra asked participants to answer a series of written question, among them, "Were your expectations met? ... What did you learn that you did not expect to learn? ... How has BTC enlarged your understanding of General Education? ... What, if anything, have you learned about the transition from community to senior college at CUNY?" In their responses, most mentioned the value of visiting other classrooms, comparing notes with other teachers, and thanked Sondra and Linda for bringing them together to talk to one another.

"I'd like to know," someone wrote after the first session, "that there are others out there who share my concerns." At the end, several came back to this theme.

Eileen: "I learned that many of my colleagues, even at senior colleges, are dealing with similar teaching problems and pleasures that I experience at Hostos. The experience

of meeting monthly with my colleagues and exchanging views and issues was my greatest pleasure. .. I came away with a great deal of respect for the quality of my colleagues on all the campuses who were part of BTC.”

Shyla: “I was pleasantly surprised to find a diversity (ethnic, academic, age, previous academic experience) of people selected to participate. During our first meeting, when we discussed our own college experiences, it was immediately evident that we came from such different backgrounds. It made for very interesting group interaction.”

Tim A.: “BTC exceeded my expectations mainly because of the rich interaction among the participants. This was especially the case with the intervisitations... but also shone through in the monthly meetings. I think we were extremely lucky to find twelve people who were so willing to share their experiences with each other and learn from each other....”

Even Carl, who at the end of May was still bristling at Dr. Garro’s “harsh but basically fair criticisms of [his] college’s transfer students,” stopped to say, “I enjoyed the chance to simply talk to other faculty.”

There was much warmth, excitement, and even passion when we wrestled with academic literacy, the “socialization” of students, liberal arts vs. career-oriented studies, students transferring from Hostos or BCC to Lehman – the stuff of our daily teaching lives; it was harder to get a fix on General Education and how to address its complexity on campuses with so many other pushes and pulls for students and faculty alike. It seemed as if Bridging the Colleges, in its first year, gave faculty an opportunity to raise questions that hadn’t crossed campus boundaries. It would be left to succeeding years to begin to answer them.



## Appendix A: List of Seminar Readings

- Courage, Richard. "The Interaction of Public and Private Literacies." *College Composition and Communication*, Vol. 44, No. 4, December 1993.
- Garger, Stephen. "Bronx Syndrome." *This Fine Place So Far From Home*. Eds. C.L.B. Dews and C.L. Law. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1995.
- Greenblatt, Stephen J. "Cultural Mobility." Harvard University Faculty of Arts and Sciences. *Essays on General Education in Harvard College*. Fall 2004.
- Harvard University Faculty of Arts and Sciences. *Harvard College Curricular Review: Report of the Committee on General Education*. November 2005.
- Kristof, Nicholas D. "The Hubris of the Humanities." *New York Times*, December 6, 2005.
- Murray, Andrew W. "Reinventing General Education." Harvard University Faculty of Arts and Sciences. *Essays on General Education in Harvard College*. Fall 2004.
- Shaughnessy, Mina P. Introduction to *Errors and Expectations*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.
- Sullivan, Patrick. "What Is 'College-Level' Writing?" *TETYC*, May 2003.
- Tetreault, Mary Kathryn and Terrel Rhodes. "Institutional Change as Scholarly Work: General Education Reform at Portland State University." *Journal of General Education*, Vol. 53, No. 2, 2004.
- Vendler, Helen. "On a Harvard Education for the Future." Harvard University Faculty of Arts and Sciences. *Essays on General Education in Harvard College*. Fall 2004.

Appendix B



**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual CUNY General Education Conference**

**General Education in the Disciplines and Professions:**

**New Approaches to Old Debates**

**Friday, May 5, 2006**

**Program Overview**

<p><b>8:00 - 9:00 a.m.</b></p>	<p><u>Registration - Humanities Building Lobby (Breakfast in front of the Registration Area)</u></p>
<p><b>9:00 - 10:15 a.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Humanities Theater</b></p> <p><i>Opening Ceremony - Welcome</i></p> <p><b>Dr. Eduardo J. Marti, President, Queensborough Community College</b></p> <p><i>Opening Remarks</i></p> <p><b>Dr. Mark McColloch, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Queensborough Community College</b></p> <p><u>A Welcome Message</u></p>

	<p><i>Dr. Selma Botman, Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, CUNY</i></p> <p><i>Keynote Address - “ Signature Pedagogies”</i></p> <p><b>Dr. Lee S. Shulman, President, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching</b></p>
<p><b>10:30 - 11:45 a.m.</b></p>	<p><i>Panel Session I (See next page)</i></p>

**Panel Session I - 10:30 - 11:45 A.M.**

**H = Humanities L = Library M = Medical Arts Bldg. MC = Medical Arts Bldg. (Basement)**

<b>Room</b>	<b>Title of Proposal</b>	
H-110	Gen ED? What’s Your Problem?	<b>KBCC:</b> L. Graziano-King,
H-144	Food for Thought: Expanding Horizons Across the Curriculum	<b>CityTech:</b> J. Pawluka
T-21	Border Crossings: Taking a Close look at the Community College-Senior College Journey	<b>BCC:</b> S. A. Perkins, T. Sedore; Figuroa,

		L. Hirsch, T. Alborn, B. Banour, Prohaska, R. Whitta
M-134	Information Literacy Across the Curriculum	<b>Baruch C:</b> Barnett; <b>Hunter C:</b>
LB-14	Composition Courses as the Foundation for General Education & the Evolution of a Writing Across the Curriculum Strategy	<b>John Jay C</b>
H-347	Round Pegs, Round Holes: Creating the Right Assessment Plan for a Proficiency and Core Based General Education Program	<b>BCC:</b> D. C
S-112	Tips on Implementing Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Strategies in General Education Courses for CPE Preparation	<b>Medgar E</b> Sparrow
H-349	Basic Skills Students Support Gen ED Curriculum	<b>QCC:</b> A.M Pantaleo,
L-117	An E-Portfolio Pilot Experience	<b>QCC:</b> M. I Lambert
T-22	But I've Got to Get to Waterloo: Coverage, Depth, and Writing in General Education	<b>CCNY:</b> C. M.Soliday
S-111	Renewing General Education for Students and Faculty Building Community: The First Step in the Integration of General Education and Professional Studies Caveat Emptor: The Dangers and Challenges of General Education	<b>Queens C</b> <b>John Jay C</b> <b>Hunter C:</b>
H-232	Academic Preparedness for the Gen Ed World	<b>QCC:</b> J. La

		Pincus
T-18	General Education and the Library: Using Information Literacy Standards to Facilitate Case-Based or Problem-Based Learning	QCC: S. M York C: S
T-19	The Role of Foreign Language Study in General Education	QCC: I. A
M-136	The Focus and Plans for the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)	Council f Benjamin
M-140	Electrifying, Entrepreneurial & Effective Approaches to Interdisciplinary Writing: E-3	QCC: B. B C. Mooney

11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.	<a href="#">Lunch at the Student Union</a>
1:00 - 2:15 p.m.	<p><a href="#">CEO/Presidential Panel - "The Impact of the Liberal Arts on Business"</a></p> <p><a href="#">Room M-136</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Eduardo J. Marti, President, Queensborough Community College</li> <li>- Dr. Kathleen M. Waldron, President, The Bernard M. Baruch College</li> <li>- Dr. Marcia Keizs, President, York College</li> <li>- Dr. Jeremy Travis, President, John Jay College of Criminal Justice</li> <li>- Mr. Peter Campanella, former President,</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Corningware Division of</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Corning, Inc. and former CEO of World Kitchens</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">- Ms. Charlene Prounis, Managing Partner of</p> <p><b>Flashpoint Medica</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">- Mr. Irwin Engelman, former Vice-Chairman and</p> <p><b>Chief Administrative</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Officer, Revlon Inc.</b></p>
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<b>2:30 – 3:45 p.m.</b>	<a href="#"><u>Panel Session II</u></a>
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[Panel Session II – 2:30 – 3:45 P.M.](#)

[H = Humanities L = Library M = Medical Arts Bldg. MC = Medical Arts Bldg.](#)

[\(Basement\)](#)

Room	Title of Proposal	Presenters
M-140	The Helix Model: A Planning Guide for Integrating Traditional Curricula through Non-Traditional Approaches to Reach New Millennium Goals for Student Success	QCC: A. Reilly
H-308	Anchoring General Education at CSI	CSI: D. I. Marcus-Delgado
M-143	The Gen Ed “Contract”: Explaining Liberal Arts to Career-Minded Students	Lehman Whittaker, S.Wyc
T-21	It’s About Time: Getting Down to Basics in Western Civilization	QCC: R.

		Tai
T-14	Curricular Support and the Gen Ed Ethos: The Bernard L. Schwartz Communication Institute and Communication-Intensive Instruction at Baruch College	<b>Baruch C</b> M. Gersh
S-112	The Fourth "R": Information Literacy in Program Assessment	<b>LGCC: L</b> M. Mark
H-347	An Analytical Framework for Organizing Course Structure and Achieving Student Deep Learning  The Honors and Learning Community Experiences as a Part of General Education: Two Students' Perspectives	<b>BMCC: Y</b>  <b>QCC: R.</b>
H-349	Assessing General Education at Medgar Evers College	<b>Medgar E</b> Edwards, I. Thomp
T-22	Defining General Education and Creating a Culture of General Education Assessment at Borough of Manhattan Community College	<b>BMCC: F</b> Pantoja, C. Stein, I
H-144	Fulfilling the Promise with Support that Enriches	<b>Hostos C</b> Cohen, K. Sanabr
	<b><i>PANEL SESSION II (Continued)</i></b>	
<b>Room</b>	<b>Title of Proposal</b>	<b><u>Presenter</u></b>
L-117	Digital Storytelling and General Education	<b>LGCC: E.</b> <b>Riker</b>
M- 134	Mutatis Mutandi: The Brooklyn College Core in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	<b>Brooklyn</b> Tenenbaum, M. Tomk

M-136	<p>Mathematics for Liberal Arts Students</p> <p>From Math Distress to Math Success: The Development of a Quantitative Reasoning Course to Motivate Student Learning</p> <p>Quantitative Reasoning: A Means of Communication</p>	<p>QCC: Ho</p> <p>BMCC: F</p> <p>QCC: M.</p>
T-18	<p>Promoting Competencies for Integrative Learning in General Education Courses:</p> <p>Building Communities of Practice at York College</p> <p>Conducting Chemistry Research by Community College Students: Its Benefits to the Students and the Department</p>	<p>York C: I</p> <p>QCC: P. S</p>
S-111	<p>Growing Aware: Framing Information Literacy in the Context of Student Professional Aspirations</p> <p>Plagiarism &amp; How to Avoid It: Using Turnitin &amp; Library Workshops to Combat Plagiarism</p>	<p>City Tech</p> <p>Hostos C</p>
LB-14	<p>Becoming Who You Are: Developing an Academic and Professional Identity</p>	<p>LGCC: M</p> <p>Rodriguez,</p> <p>A. Wu</p>
T-19	<p>Academic Program Review &amp; General Education Inquiry: A Two-Way Street</p>	<p>QCC: R. I</p> <p>Carroll,</p> <p>M. Chauh</p> <p>Goldenberg, B. M</p>



<p><b>4:00 - 4:30</b> <b>p.m.</b></p>	<p><i>Closing Remarks - Dr. Judith Summerfield, Dean</i> <b>for Undergraduate Education, CUNY</b></p> <p><b>Medical Arts Building (M-136 Well)</b></p> <p><i>Wine and Cheese Closing Reception</i></p>
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*Thank you for attending and participating*

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registration desk**

**Your comments will contribute to the planning of future conferences**