

November 16, 2023

Business Management Summit: With a Focus on Careers, Curriculum, Achievements and Opportunities

On November 16, 2023, Hostos Community College held a Business Management Summit. The summit was sponsored by Hostos President Daisy Cocco De Fillipis, the Hostos Community Advisory Council (CAC), and the divisions of Academic Affairs, and Continuing Education and Workforce Development. The Industry Summit brought together Hostos faculty, business leaders and members of the Hostos Foundation, as well as administrators from Lehman and Baruch campuses, to share their insights and recommendations on how to prepare for and enjoy successful careers in business management in any industry. The summit was chaired by Elías Alcántara, Chair of the Hostos Community Advisory Council, followed by a warm welcome from Hostos President, Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis. The tone was set for a day of insightful dialogue and knowledge exchange. Provost Shiang-Kwei Wang introduced the Academic Affairs Dean Babette Audant and Hostos Business Department faculty, highlighting the significance of an associate degree in Business Management. Professors William Baker, Eddy Garcia and Ruth Lewis emphasized the degree's role as a foundation for leadership roles and the importance of continued education. Andrea Fabrizio, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, moderated a panel discussion on "The Demand for Soft Skills: Aligning Education with Industry Expectations." Panelists from diverse backgrounds shared their perspectives on the importance of soft skills in business. They underscored the value of being well-rounded, staying curious, self-awareness, and the ability to effectively communicate and connect with others. The event also provided an excellent networking platform for students.



Elías Alcántara, Chair of the Hostos Community Advisory Council, and President Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis (left to right)



Business Department acting chair: Professor William Baker, Professor Ruth Lewis, and Professor Eddy Garcia (left to right)

The summit featured several roundtable discussions addressing the following topics: (a) effective communication of business curricula, emphasizing the importance of making students aware of various sub-fields and aligning them with career paths; (b) the clarity of learning outcomes in the Business Management degree, suggesting the inclusion of courses like Business Communication and modern business applications beyond Excel; (c) the in-demand soft skills, public speaking, and the impact of AI in education; and (d) the alignment of curriculum with industry standards.

The event culminated in a group discussion where students expressed gratitude for the insights gained. The summit not only provided a platform for knowledge sharing but also highlighted the need for curriculum alignment with industry needs, the importance of soft skills, and the evolving role of technology in business education. The discussions pointed towards several key areas for future development:

(1) Curriculum Enhancement: There's a clear need to integrate more practical, real-world skills into the curriculum, including advanced business applications, communication skills, and case studies that mimic real-world scenarios.

- (2) Focus on Soft Skills: The summit highlighted the increasing importance of soft skills in the business world. Courses focusing on public speaking, effective communication, and adaptability are crucial.
- (3) Integration of Technology and AI: The role of AI in business is growing. Incorporating AI into the curriculum could give students a competitive edge.
- (4) Experiential Learning: Emphasis was placed on the importance of internships and real-world experiences, suggesting that such opportunities should be integral to the degree program.
- (5) Career Pathways and Advisement: Enhanced advisement and clear communication about career pathways are vital to



Panelist: Esther Rodriguez-Chardavoyne, Julio Reyes, Stephanie Tkach and Ifeanyi Obinali (left to right)

help students make informed choices about their education and future careers.



Panelist: Amarilis Jacobo, Meisha Porter, and José Dios (left to right).

Evelyn Fernández-Ketcham, VP of Continuing Education and Workforce Development, shared with the audience the opportunity for students to apply credits for prior learning, which could potentially help them earn their degrees in less time. Colette Atkins, VP of Institutional Advancement, also updated the audience on Hostos' efforts to enhance students' financial literacy and help them acquire various financial skills. The Hostos Community College Industry Summit successfully bridged the gap between academia and the business industry. It provided valuable insights into the evolving demands of the business world and the vital role education plays in preparing the next generation of business professionals.

The discussions and recommendations from this summit set a roadmap for curriculum development, emphasizing a holistic approach that combines hard skills, soft skills, and technological advancements to prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of the modern business world.

The Business Management Summit is the third industry summit under President Daisy Cocco De Filippis' leadership. Our first summit, held in November 2022, featured the Nursing program and emphasized the strong health science workforce demands in the South Bronx neighborhood. Our second summit, held in June 2023, supported the development of our new Cybersecurity program, with industry partnerships such as the FBI, providing our faculty and students with recommendations on skills our graduates should possess. Our faculty members and students have benefited from these discussions and are working collaboratively with Career Services to strategize how to embed these soft skills into our curriculum and ensure that our curriculum aligns with industry standards. For questions or comments regarding the Hostos Industry Summit, please contact Provost@hostos.cuny.edu.

Business Management Summit Planning Committee: Provost Shiang-Kwei Wang, Chair; Vice President Evelyn Fernandez-Ketcham; Professor William Baker; Dean Babette Audant; Associate Dean Andrea Fabrizio, Ms. Sarah Brennan; Mr. Sam Byrd, Ms. Melanie Garcia; Professor Eddy Garcia, Professor Linda Ridley, Professor Ruth Lewis, Ms. Diana Kreymer; Ms. Estel Ortega Fredrick; Dr. Silvia Reyes

Facilitators and note takers: Professor William Baker, VP La Toro Yates, Ms. Lisanette Rosario, Professor Eddie Garcia, Ms. Eileen Will, VP Evelyn Fernández-Ketcham, Ms. Sarah Brennan, Associate Dean Andrea Fabrizio, Professor Ruth Lewis, Professor AJ Stachelek, Dr. Yana He