

WELCOME BACK FALL 2023

Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2023 3:13 PM

Dear colleagues,

As we usher in the Fall 2023 semester, I want to extend a heartfelt welcome back to every one of you. It is with great anticipation and excitement that we look forward to the academic year ahead, and I am truly grateful for the dedication and innovation that you bring to our college community. As we embark on this new academic year, let us continue to collaborate, and strive for excellence in all that we do.

I want to share important resources and initiatives with you that are available as you prepare your syllabi and begin teaching your classes.

- **Syllabus template** - A course syllabus communicates expectations, policies, and resources to students, and sets the tone for a successful and productive semester. I encourage you to utilize our [syllabus template](#). By adhering to this template, you will ensure that all necessary information is included and presented in a professional and organized manner. I also encourage you to include the following statement in your syllabus to inform students with documented disabilities:

Hostos Community College is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to all students, including those with documented disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect your ability to participate in this course or that requires accommodations, you are encouraged to contact the Accessibility Resources Center (ARC). The Director, Raymond Perez, can be reached at RMPEREZ@hostos.cuny.edu or (718-518-4459) as soon as possible.

- **Blackboard:** I encourage you to upload your course materials to Blackboard for each class, regardless of modality. A Blackboard course site has been created for every CUNY class scheduled for fall 2023. This can help you identify accessibility problems using [Ally](#), a tool within Blackboard, and promote a more inclusive learning environment. Ally generates alternative formats that allow students to choose how they engage with the course's digital content. If you want to learn more about Ally, please contact the Office of Educational Technology, (EdTechSupport@hostos.cuny.edu). Don't forget to "activate" your Blackboard courses on the first day of class!
- **Succeed@Hostos** – Succeed@Hostos is an exceptional tool that allows you to complete progress surveys, display office hours, schedule appointments with students, track class participation, academic support referrals, and view student advisor information, all in one central location. To fully utilize the capabilities of Succeed@Hostos, I encourage you to take advantage of the [online tutorials](#). Together, we can empower our students to succeed.
- **Save the Date:** On September 13, from 2 to 4 pm in B401, Academic Affairs will host a forum to discuss "the Impact of Generative AI on College Academic Policies and Pedagogical Practice." Please [RSVP](#) by Monday, September 11.

- **Faculty Welcome Back and Staff Appreciation Social:** Drop by to say hello to colleagues and grab a snack on August 28, in Academic Affairs Conference Room (B401) between 3:30PM to 4:30PM.
- **Registrar Reminder:** The last date to add/change a course is August 31. The last date to drop without a grade of “W” is September 14. The last date to apply for Fall 2023 graduation is November 6. The last date to withdraw from a course with a grade of “W” is December 11.
- **Professional Development Opportunities:** The [Office of Educational Technology](#) and the [Center for Teaching and Learning](#) are putting together a full professional development calendar that will give you the chance to improve your teaching methods, add to your toolkit of instructional strategies, and adopt cutting-edge best practices like Universal Design for Learning (UDL), accessible and inclusive teaching, and more. To find out more about these resources and register for the next trainings, go to the [EdTech](#) and [CTL](#) websites.
- **D2L Transition:** CUNY is transitioning to a new learning management system called D2L, and Hostos is part of Phase I. With much more information to come, all Hostos courses will transition to D2L in Summer 2024. The transition of course materials will be automated, and Hostos’ EdTech and CTL, as well as Dept of IT, will provide support and training to faculty in preparation to this exciting transition to an LMS that offers students and faculty a more iterative learning environment.

There’s some other information that I think will be helpful.

- **Grants and Research:** The [Office of Grants and Research](#) (C-360A) is available to support faculty and staff to identify and apply for external grants. Please contact Grants Director Kelba Sosa (Ksosa@hostos.cuny.edu) for more information and keep an eye out for exciting upcoming events such as the Grants Office open house, workshops, and the kickoff of the Grants Office bulletin. Details to follow.
- **OAA Social Media:** As we welcome faculty back to the spring semester, I want to remind you of the various ways in which the Office of Academic Affairs celebrates the achievements of our faculty, staff, and students. One of the ways we do this is through our social media accounts on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) where we share information about campus activities, professional development opportunities, and divisional gatherings throughout the academic year. We encourage faculty and staff to submit information they would like shared with the community to Sarah Brennan (SBRENNAN@hostos.cuny.edu), so that we can showcase the accomplishments and contributions of our Hostos community on our social media sites.
- **Library:** Our library offers a wide range of materials and services to support teaching, learning, and research. From books and journals to databases and e-resources, the library provides access to the information and tools needed to succeed academically. I encourage you to take advantage of these resources and to explore the [library's website](#) for more information on the services available. The library staff is also available to provide assistance and support, so please do not hesitate to reach out to them for help.

I want to thank you for your ongoing commitment to student success and academic excellence, and all that you do to make Hostos Community College a great place to learn and grow. I plan to share more details about Academic Affairs' goals and initiatives this semester in a future communication. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to email me at Provost@hostos.cuny.edu. If we, or any member of the [Academic Affairs team](#), can be of assistance to you, don't hesitate to reach out. We are here to support you.

Wishing you a productive, fulfilling, and successful Fall 2023 semester.

Shiang-Kwei Wang, Ph.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Division of Academic Affairs