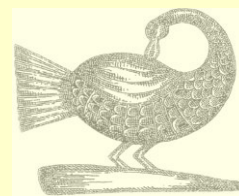


THE MULTICULTURAL FACULTY COMMISSION

NEWSLETTER

Volume 3, Issue 1
Fall 2009



The Sanfoka bird means to "return, fetch, and move forward." This embodies the charge of the MFC, which is to take responsibly the lessons from the past, apply and utilize the lessons today, and strategize a viable vision for tomorrow.

A Message From the Editor:



Karyn M. Usher
Assistant Professor of Chemistry

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As I reflect on my years at West Chester University, I begin to think about how I arrived here. Originally from a small country in Central America, that is quite a melting pot of traditions and ethnicities, I can remember growing up and being told to be proud of my heritage. For as long as I can remember we were encouraged to celebrate our differences. Every year at national celebrations we identified with the group that best represented us and tried to demonstrate what was unique about that group. This sense of uniqueness has followed me throughout the years.

Now I believe that in addition to celebrating our differences, we should also celebrate our similarities. Part of the purpose of this newsletter is to highlight the successes of multicultural faculty members at WCU. I feel that this is a wonderful way to do so. I also realize that in addition to highlighting the accomplishments of multicultural faculty members, we are truly highlighting the accomplishments of everyone that has contributed to the environment at WCU. By showing the vitality of the multicultural faculty, we are also showing that at WCU, the faculty, staff and administration as a whole are able to work together to foster the professional growth of all members of our community. It is a testament to the hard work that we as multicultural faculty have done, but also highlights the similarities between all the faculty members here at WCU. Our goal is to advance professionally, and to offer a high-quality education to our students. In the *Plan for Excellence*, this includes a commitment to serving the educational needs of a diverse student body. What better way to achieve these goals and to teach by example than to have a community of diverse faculty working together to achieve collective success.

"Return, Fetch and Move Forward"

For more information on the MFC, visit us at: www.wcupa.edu/mfc

Welcome to WCU!

New Faculty Spotlight



Marcos Campillo-Fenoll (Languages and Cultures)

Education and prior work experience:

B.A. Universidad de Murcia (Spain)

M.A. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Ph.D. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

I worked as a Teaching Assistant at the University of Illinois (2001-2009). I taught a variety of courses in Spanish language at all levels, Hispanic literature and service-learning.

Research interests: Latin American Literature, especially from Argentina and the Southern Cone region. My research focuses on nineteenth century literary works in connection with nation-building projects, but I also work on other periods such as colonial or contemporary literature.

Plans for first 2 years at WCU:

I plan to teach a wide variety of courses within the Languages and Cultures department, and continue exploring the ways to implement service-learning into our classroom bringing my experience from Illinois. I plan to continue publishing (I am currently working on some brief articles on Argentinean writers, for an Encyclopedia project I was invited to participate in), presenting at national and international conferences, and complete some of my field research in Argentina and Chile during the first two summers for a possible book project.

What is the most important thing you feel you bring to WCU:

Personally, I bring to WCU the greatest traits of Southern Spain! I care greatly about my students and their learning process beyond my courses, I try to be 100% positive and share smiles every day, and I work hard to create a positive impact around me. Professionally, I bring an energetic research agenda on nineteenth-century literary and cultural production in South America, with an emphasis on the Southern Cone; I have recently published an article on the connection of music and poetry in this period.

Life outside of WCU:

I love coffee and chocolate. I know, it's not a hobby, but it is an essential part of who I am. After I have had my coffee, I can dedicate some time to read the news (the first thing I do every morning), learn some new CSS/HTML tags (one of my hobbies is checking how some great webs are designed), and before coming to the East Coast I used to go salsa/bachata dancing and to play pool with friends whenever possible (I still need to learn about places where I can do all that around West Chester).

Two things that already stand out about WCU:

The first thing I am enjoying with pleasure is my Department's collegial atmosphere and the support of all faculty members, as well as our wonderful secretary Pat Brander. The second is the students' jovial attitude in class; they look really excited every day (and I hope this lasts well beyond the first week!).



York Williams (Special Education)

Education and prior work experience:

York Williams, Ph.D. conducts research primarily in gifted and special education and urban school choice reform. His work focuses on: (1) recruiting and retaining culturally diverse students in gifted education; (2) multicultural and urban education school choice; (3) minority student achievement and underachievement; and (4) family involvement. He consults with school districts and educational organizations in the areas of gifted education and multicultural/urban education. Additional interests include the intersection of urban school violence and achievement amongst African American males through the lens of social and juvenile justice. He was a public school teacher for over fifteen years and worked as an administrator and supervisor over special and gifted education programs. He is the founder of Children's Advocates for Social Justice (CASJ, 2003) and Young Urban Leaders Program (YULP, 2007) Dr. Williams' work has been recognized by various professional organizations: American Education Research Association (AERA); Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE); Temple Education Research Award (TERA); The Temple University Benjamin Verdile Alumni Association Award; and Whose Who Amongst America's Teachers Recognition Award. As a young scholar, he has written over two dozen research papers and articles and presented them at numerous conferences and workshops nationwide

Plans for first 2 years at WCU:

Develop a network for special education majors to work with urban schools and families from high needs communities and provide a culturally responsive and intervention research framework that includes pre-service teachers, teachers, families and students with identified special needs and those interwoven within the achievement gap. I am the founder of the Young Urban Leaders Program (YULP) and hope to widen that lens at WCU that recruits and retains young teachers to work with special needs youth in high needs and urban schools.

What is the most important thing you feel you bring to WCU:

I feel that my over seventeen years experience as a public school educator, school leader, child advocate, special and gifted educator and parent of young boys provides an important perspective to the University as we continue to work to identify best practices to recruit, retain and support students of color and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Life outside of WCU:

I am a member of an amazing church. I have four sons ages 9-21, a grandson age 2 and over twenty nieces, nephews and great nieces and nephews. I have a seven year old golden lab/chow mix – our baby. I am a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. I exercise and run and enjoy movies especially sci-fi and horror. I also love the Delaware Beaches. Originally from Pittsburgh, Pa, I have lived here in the Delaware Valley Region for nearly twenty years now.

Two things that already stand out about WCU:

Both the potential to support the diverse needs of our students and how successful we are at doing this as a medium sized teaching college is awesome! Our focus on improving the recruitment and retention of culturally and linguistically diverse students, students who identify with the LGBTQ community and those with disabilities is equally impressive and serves as a motivator for new faculty like myself to support that work.



Israel Sanz-Sanchez (Languages and Cultures)

Education and prior work experience:

BA in English Language and Literature (Universidad de Valladolid, Spain), MA in Spanish (San Diego State University), PhD in Hispanic Linguistics (University of California, Berkeley). I have taught all sections of elementary Spanish, and two semesters of an introductory course to literature in Spanish. My research interests include the history of Spanish in the United States, especially New Mexican Spanish, the archival heritage of the colonial presence of Spain in the US Southwest, and the linguistic ideological elements surrounding the use of Spanish and other languages in this country vis-a-vis English.

Plans for first 2 years at WCU:

I will be teaching elementary Spanish classes, and I also hope to develop courses on Spanish linguistics (including history of Spanish, sociolinguistics, and language ideologies). I am also interested in developing service learning programs within my department. I hope to continue my project on the history of New Mexican Spanish, as well as to start working in the development of a historical database of Spanish in the US.

What is the most important thing you feel you bring to WCU:

I think that I can really contribute to improve the understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures in this country among WCU students and faculty, both from my teaching and from my research.

Life outside WCU:

Quite simple! I spend most of my free time with Allen, my partner. We are moving into our new house soon, and we also plan on getting a dog sometime in the future (we still have not decided what kind, though). My parents and my sister live in Spain - I travel to visit them once or twice every year.

Two things that already stand out about WCU:

I really like the students - most of them seem ready to work and ready to learn, even though a majority of those taking elementary Spanish do it because of the requirements of their program. I have also had a lot of support from my department, including my chair, my colleagues and the staff - everybody has tried to help me in whatever they could to make this transition easier for me.



Francis Atuahene (Educational Development, Pre-Major Academic Advising)

Education and prior work experience:

I earned my Doctor of Philosophy degree in Higher Education Administration, a Master in Public Administration and International Affairs from the Ohio University, Athens. My bachelor's was in Political Science and Philosophy from the University of Ghana. Before coming to WCU, I worked at Ohio University's Retention Initiative Program as Student Success Advisor. I then move to Western Illinois University to work as Academic Advisor and International Student Advising Coordinator.

Plans for first 2 years at WCU:

First, I would like to get assimilated into this university – have a good grasp of the various disciplines and curriculum of the university to make my primary responsibilities effective and efficient. Second, I would like to actively get involved in one or two university committees, particularly in the areas of retention and

Francis Atuahene (continued)

student affairs, and globalization as it pertains to the mission and vision of this university. My research interest revolves around higher education finance, leadership, student success, and globalization (internationalization) of higher education in comparative perspective. I will continue researching on financing higher education in developing countries - with a keen focus on Africa.

What is the most important thing you feel you bring to WCU:

Considering my interest in higher education finance in developing countries, I strongly believe that this goal adds not only to the internationalization and diversity agenda of this university, but also it provides another dimension to the works of other faculty members who are already involved in various research projects with international focus.

Life outside of WCU:

I love soccer and would like to explore the possibility of working with the youth soccer team in West Chester community, particularly with the YMCA group. I strongly believe that the success of a man is not complete without a loving family. My goal is to have a family in the years ahead, but the next couple of years will determine which direction I will take this noble dream of mine.

Two things that already stand out about WCU:

It may be too early to judge, but I think the strategic location of this university is an indication of its uniqueness compared to other sister universities. There is also the feeling that, the university is a welcoming community – with a great enthusiastic support from old faculty and staff to new ones.



Patricia Swasey Washington (Communicative Disorders)

Education and prior work experience:

Completing my dissertation this semester, Temple University

M.S., William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ (1990).

B.A., Douglass College, Rutgers University (1987).

Speech-Language-Pathologist for over 19 years, serving children and adults in NJ and PA.

Plans for first two years at WCU:

1) Encourage my students to make theory to practice connections through community outreach in the area of speech-language pathology. 2) Partner with students in research with regard to speech-language development of Spanish-speaking English Language Learners.

What is the most important thing you feel you bring to WCU:

My expertise in research, evaluation, and treatment involving Spanish-speaking English Language Learners.

Life outside WCU:

I enjoy spending time with my family, playing the violin, learning foreign languages, traveling, and cooking.

Two things that already stand out about WCU

1) Commitment to excellence in teaching. 2) It is a dynamic institution, with people working together to effect positive change.

Office of Multicultural Affairs Mentoring Program

The purpose of the Office of Multicultural Affairs Mentoring Program is to assist first-year and new transfer students of African, Asian, Latino, and Native American descent in making a successful transition and to achieve academic and personal success at WCU. The program, which is open to all first-year and new transfer multicultural students, aims to empower individual student participants by providing them with a member of WCU's faculty/staff and an upper-class multicultural student who will guide, offer information, and support the student throughout his/her initial year of enrollment. Currently, we have 150 mentee students participating in the program. We are currently searching for great role models who are interested in serving as a mentor. Please call Tammy Hilliard-Thompson at 610-436-3273 if you are interested in being a faculty/staff mentor.

Brother to Brother Program

This summer WCU received a PASSHE Diversity and Equity Grant to address the low retention rate of African American and Latino males on campus. Faculty and staff involvement will be based upon intentional interventions with that cohort of students, which include many tasks you already engage in on a day-to-day basis such as:

- Providing academic and career advising,
- Encouraging student involvement in campus and/or student events,
- Sharing your knowledge, expertise, and experience with students.

Program Description:

The immediate goal of the Brother to Brother program is to improve the first-to-second year retention rate of African American and Latino male students at West Chester University. A further goal is to show a significant improvement in interim indicators (e.g. academic standing at end of fall, credits accumulated after fall, retention into spring, and identification by early alert system), as compared with non-participants.

Program Objectives:

- To build students' academic skills
- To provide academic and career advising
- To create opportunities for leadership development
- To enrich the students' academic and social experiences

Rationale:

For Fall 2008, at WCU the first-to-second year retention rate of African American (74.1%) and Latino (77.3%) men was significantly lower than that of the regular student population (84.4%), a statistic which mirrors that of previous years. Data from the Office of Institutional Research shows that a majority of the students who leave the university do so within the first semester. Therefore, we need to find innovative ways to reach out to this cohort of students to assist them in becoming acclimated with the University and prevent their leaving prematurely.

Steering Committee:

Tim Brown, Idna Corbett, Richeleen Dashfield, Shirley Grice, Ronn Jenkins, Allan Hill, Skip Hutson, Sally Hanson (graduate assistant)

MULTICULTURAL

**The
Multicultural Faculty Commission
West Chester University**
309 Main Hall
West Chester, PA 19383

Website:
www.wcupa.edu/mfc

Phone:
610-436-2970

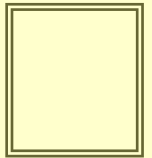
E-Mail:
ltaylor@wcupa.edu

Motto:
"Return, Fetch, and Move Forward"

FACULTY

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Multicultural Faculty Commission
West Chester University
309 Main Hall
West Chester, PA 19383