



# The Futures Initiative

Advancing Equity and Innovation in Higher Education

## ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

THE  
GRADUATE  
CENTER  
CITY UNIVERSITY  
OF NEW YORK



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**Statistics Icon (p. 12 and 16):** Ecem Afacan from the Noun Project.

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## Executive Summary

The Futures Initiative's second year brought renewed opportunities to advance equity and innovation in higher education. Working closely with students, faculty members, librarians, and staff members at the Graduate Center and across CUNY, the Futures Initiative focused on using innovative approaches and student-centered pedagogy to develop structures of equality in higher education and to use technology thoughtfully to connect with others who share these goals. Because the program is housed within the Graduate Center, our key focus is on the prismatic roles of graduate students as they learn, teach, conduct research, and form new paradigms of engaged knowledge as they become the next generation of intellectual leaders. Faculty at the Graduate Center and CUNY provided crucial leadership and intellectual vision to support and carry out these aims.

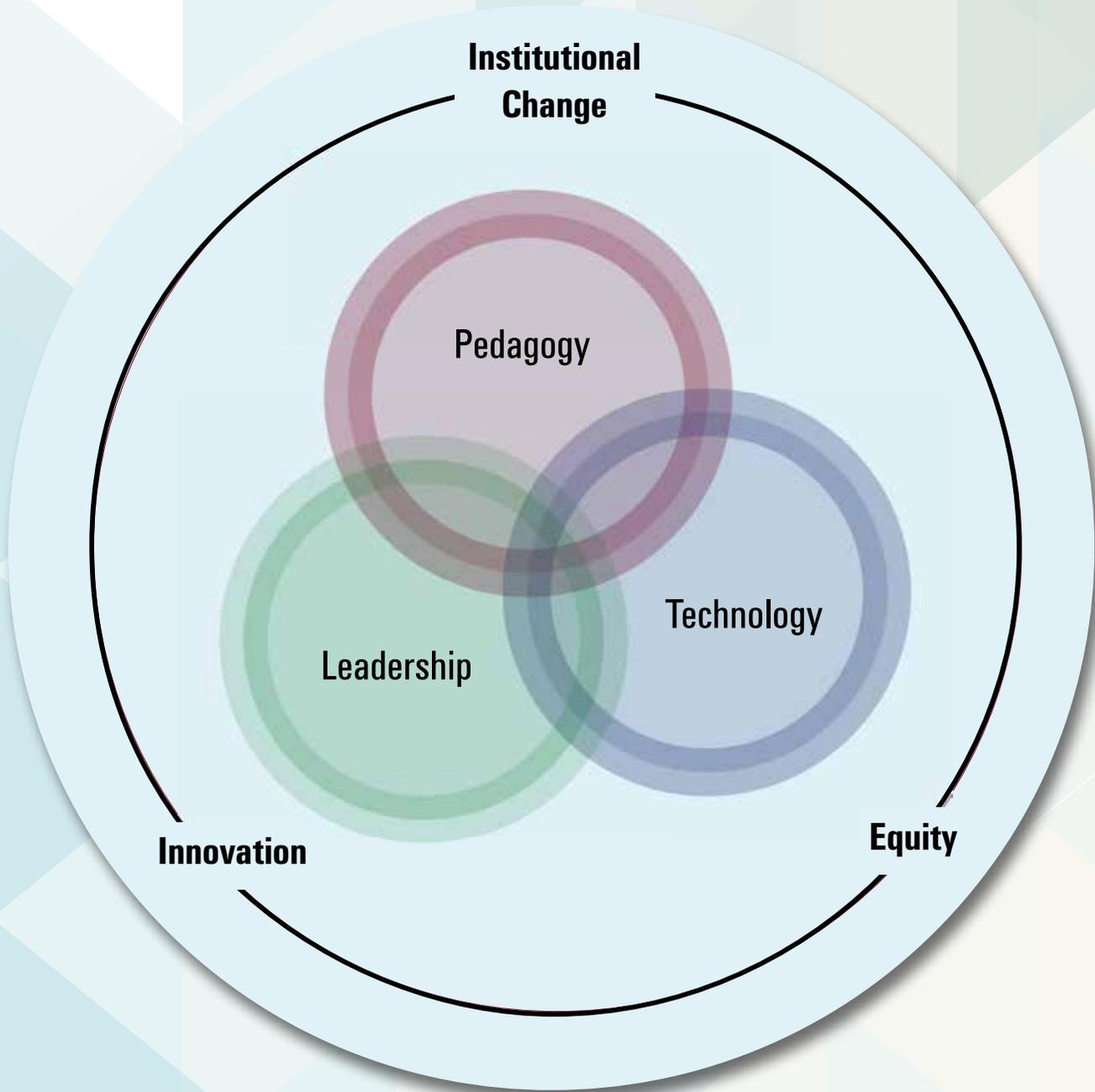
While pursuing their own specialized research, Graduate Center students typically teach our CUNY undergraduates. With that in mind, the program devoted particular attention to teaching so-called "non-traditional" college students who are not often depicted in the mainstream media's representation of collegiate life, and yet in fact represent more than half of all students pursuing post-secondary education in the U.S. today. Unlike the popular representation of college students as young adults attending elite, private institutions as full-time residents, the "new majority" of college students typically live in urban environments and commute to school, and many come from traditionally underrepresented minorities, are immigrants or the children of immigrants, are the first in their families to attend college, or are returning to school after years away. Many attend community college before moving to a four-year college or university. Many have limited financial resources and often attend classes as part-time students while working multiple jobs and caring for children or other members of their families. Because the characteristics of CUNY's student body are in keeping with this national portrait, the outcomes of the Futures Initiative's teaching, research, and community building hold important lessons for broader structural change in higher education.

The Futures Initiative's work in the 2015–2016 academic year clustered around four overarching goals:

1. Strengthening opportunities for diversity, equity, and interdisciplinarity in teaching and research for Graduate Center and CUNY faculty;
2. Supporting the next generation of college professors and intellectual leaders;
3. Structuring equality in the classroom and supporting the new majority of college students; and
4. Advocating higher education as a public good.

The program's key achievements in the past year include:

- Collaborating on a major \$3.15 million grant from the Mellon Foundation to support humanities teaching and learning at community colleges and beyond, with a special partnership between the Graduate Center and LaGuardia Community College;
- Securing a grant from the Teagle Foundation to support peer mentoring across all the CUNY campuses and to design other structures of equality and community for teachers and learners;
- Developing a new series of monthly public, livestreamed events called the University Worth Fighting For;
- Facilitating the creation of a book on student-centered pedagogy written, edited, and published by Graduate Center students in Cathy Davidson's course, in collaboration with CUNY undergraduates;
- Sponsoring an interdisciplinary course taught by Ofelia García and Carmina Makar that resulted in a special journal issue on language diversity, equity, and teaching written and edited by Graduate students;
- Conducting continued research and outreach on matters related to equity, diversity, technology, and public support in higher education.



**The Futures Initiative advances greater equity and innovation in higher education.**

**Leadership:** Equipping graduate students to expand career horizons and connect their learning to the wider world.

**Technology:** Using network and communications tools to build community, foster greater access, and share work beyond the classroom.

**Interdisciplinary teaching:** Facilitating engaged, collaborative pedagogies that emphasize peer learning, mentorship, diversity, equity, and student agency.

**Research:** Conducting high-level research and connecting it to local and global audiences in creative, meaningful, policy-relevant ways.

**Advocacy:** Promoting institutional change, social justice, and the reinvestment in higher education as a public good.

## Goal #1: Strengthening opportunities for diversity, equity, and interdisciplinarity in teaching and research for Graduate Center and CUNY faculty

### Key Activities:

- Team-taught interdisciplinary graduate courses addressing issues of equity and diversity
- Building bridges with other institutions, programs, and individuals

**Action:** In the 2015–2016 academic year, the Futures Initiative offered five team-taught courses in different disciplines bringing together a diverse team of faculty members from the Graduate Center, Brooklyn College, City College, LaGuardia Community College, Lehman College, and Queens College to teach interdisciplinary graduate courses addressing issues related to access, diversity, and equity in higher education. Students and faculty participating in the five courses shared their work and outcomes from the courses in a year-end symposium in May 2016. Thanks to funding from CUNY Central, the Futures Initiative will be offering another five team-taught interdisciplinary courses in 2016–2017.

### 2015–2016 Courses

#### FALL 2015

**ENCOUNTERING CUBA—GLOBAL RACE, POSTCOLONIALITY, CULTURAL EXPRESSION.** Co-taught by Professors Kandice Chuh (The Graduate Center, English) and Sujatha Fernandes (Queens College, Sociology)

Cuba has long loomed large in the U.S. imagination, whether by virtue of its refusal to embrace capitalism, the richness of its literary and musical traditions, the persistence of Fidel Castro’s leadership, its proximity to the US coastal state of Florida and the migrants, exiles, and refugees who crossed the Florida Straits, and, now, because of the changing relations between the two countries. This team-taught, interdisciplinary course offered students the opportunity to consider how ideas of Cuba and “Cubanness” take shape through literary and other aesthetic modes of expression, and to examine the ways in which such ideas are grounded in or depart from the everyday lives and political and cultural practices characterizing life in Cuba. Overarching themes in the course grappled with the following questions: What understandings of Cuba emerge by understanding it as a key site in the long histories of capital-driven migrations? How might racial formation be theorized through this space characterized by multiple forms of racialization, colonial histories, and ex-colonial nationalism? In what ways does Cuba exemplify and generate Caribbean and Latin American epistemologies, and what remains distinctive “about” Cuba and Cubanness? The



course addressed these questions by studying the literature, film, history, sociology, and political theory, to encounter Cuba from multiple points of entry.

**GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION—CUNY LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND GLOBAL LANGUAGE LEARNING POLICY.** Co-taught by Professors Ofelia García (The Graduate Center, Urban Education/Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages) and Carmina Makar (City College, Teaching Learning and Culture)

In this seminar, students engaged in critically thinking about how language policies in society and education are linked to sociopolitical ideologies in different nation-states. The seminar focused on the role that language policies, enacted from the top, have played in constructing, sometimes, better futures, but other times, inequities and differences among speakers with various social characteristics. The seminar also expanded on understandings of how people at the local level, as well as educators, negotiate language and literacy policies from the bottom-up. To enlarge these theoretical understandings, cases were drawn from throughout the world, using a global lens to expand on local understandings and practices. Students in the course used New York City as the laboratory to study the language practices of different communities and to reflect on the relationship between those practices and the language policies in New York City schools. Course participants collaborated on research projects related to language practices and language education policies that were presented in a public symposium at the Graduate Center on May 2, 2016. Work presented at the session was also published in the May/June 2016 issue of the open access *Bellaterra Journal of Teaching & Learning Language & Literature*.

## SPRING 2016

**AGENCY AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION: INCREASING EQUITY IN EDUCATION AND BEYOND—STUDENT-CENTERED PEDAGOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY.** Co-taught by Professors Anna Stetsenko (The Graduate Center, Psychology/Urban Education) and Eduardo Vianna (LaGuardia Community College, Social Sciences)

The role of agency and agentive positioning in knowledge production and teaching-learning processes remains highly contested across major frameworks at the intersection of education and human development. Students in this course examined a broad spectrum of approaches—from critical pedagogy and constructivism to learning-as-participation and activist learning—in terms of how they address agency at both individual and collective levels of social dynamics. One of the angles was to critically address how conceptions about agency in the context of culture and society find their way into the practices of teaching and learning. The goal was to set the stage for teaching-learning in ways that overcome the ethos of adaptation and transmission models to instead provide the tools for learners' agentive positioning as creators and co-contributors to knowledge production and learning within the dynamics of social transformation in classrooms and beyond. In capitalizing on social transformation and activist agency, this exploration allowed students to interrogate responsibilities that various models and epistemologies embody and target templates for overcoming taken-for-granted norms, biases, power differentials, and inequalities.



**MINDFULNESS IN STEM EDUCATION.** Co-taught by Professors Gillian Bayne (Lehman College, STEM Education) and David Forbes (The Graduate Center, Urban Education and Brooklyn College, School Counseling)

This course encouraged students to examine novel, contemporary and foundational methodological approaches and the application of mindfulness into STEM education, and more broadly into the learning sciences (i.e., the science of teaching and learning in formal and informal contexts). An overarching goal of the course was to understand, develop and contribute to a nexus of theories, ideas, research activities and practices that can be used to improve teaching and learning experiences at the student, teacher, teacher education and policy levels via drawing from a sociocultural framework and the Integral Model. Students in the course grew as scholars, researchers, global citizens and reform minded education leaders, while coming away from the course experience with an awareness of a) the psychological, social, cultural, and political context of STEM and the learning sciences b) their own values, thoughts, and feelings about teaching urban youth STEM content that is synergistically aligned to mindfulness practices, and c) the psychological, social, cultural, and political context of the lifeworlds of urban youth and their relationships to STEM.

**AMERICAN LITERATURE, AMERICAN LEARNING.** Co-taught by Professor Cathy Davidson (The Graduate Center, The Futures Initiative and English) and Graduate Teaching Assistant Danica Savonick (The Graduate Center, The Futures Initiative and English)

This course had three primary intentions; First, the course considered some foundational texts of American educational and cultural history, investigating the strategies of inclusion and exclusion they deploy. Second, learners in the course read contemporary critiques/accounts of American education. Third, the course experimented with a variety of pedagogical practices in the classroom that model different relationships between power and knowledge. Instead of term papers, the students co-created a book, to be published on the Futures Initiative and hastac.org website as well as in physical book form, *Structuring Equality: A Handbook for Student-Centered Learning and Teaching Practices*.

## 2016–2017 Courses

### SPRING 2017

**RACE AND GENDER THEORY IN THE UNDERGRADUATE CLASSROOM.** Co-taught by Professors Cathy Davidson (The Graduate Center, English) and Michael Gillespie (City College, Black Studies and Film Studies), in partnership with Shelly Eversley (Baruch College, English)

**THE PUBLIC AND PUBLICS.** Co-taught by Professors Setha Low (The Graduate Center, Environmental Psychology, Anthropology, Earth and Environmental Sciences, and Women's Studies) and Amy Chazkel (Queens College, English)



**SEMINAR AND PRACTICUM ON THE TEACHING OF PSYCHOLOGY.** Co-taught by Professors Maureen O'Connor (The Graduate Center, Psychology), Jill Grose-Fifer (John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Psychology), and Patricia Brooks (The College of Staten Island, Psychology)

**THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHILDHOOD: PERSPECTIVES ON SELF, OTHERS, SOCIETY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS.** Co-taught by Professors Martin Ruck (The Graduate Center, Psychology) and Erika Niwa (Brooklyn College, Psychology)

## Building Bridges with Other Institutions and Programs

For the 2015–2016 academic year, the Futures Initiative welcomed Visiting Distinguished Scholar Patrik Svensson. Svensson is Professor of Humanities and Information Technology at Umeå University, and the former Director of HUMlab (2000–2014). Svensson's current work can be loosely organized under two themes: Digital Humanities and Conditions for Knowledge Production. The first theme includes research and practice in relation to the intersection of the humanities and information technology with a particular focus on the history, role and place of the digital humanities. The second theme addresses research infrastructure, spaces for learning and knowledge production, intellectual middleware, presentation software and academic events. His work seeks to be critical and interventionist. Recent publications include *Between Humanities and the Digital* (co-edited with David Theo Goldberg, MIT Press, 2015), "One Damn Slide After Another": PowerPoint at every Occasion for Speech" (with Erica Robles-Anderson, *Computational Culture* 5, 2016) and "Sorting out the Digital Humanities" (in *A New Companion to Digital Humanities*, 2016).

The Futures Initiative also welcomed two graduate students, Frances Tran (The Graduate Center, English) and Julia Gomez (The Graduate Center, Social Welfare), who shadowed the Futures Initiative in Spring 2016 as part of the Graduate Center's program Crossing Bridges: Putting Your Ph.D. to Work in University Administration.

Finally, the Futures Initiative became a founding member of the Northeast Public Humanities Consortium (NEPH), a network that fosters public projects animated by humanistic inquiry in support of art, culture, history, and education for a more democratic society. Linking eleven diverse institutions across the region (Bard Graduate Center, Brown, Columbia, the Graduate Center, Harvard, Lehigh, New York University, Rutgers-Newark, University of Massachusetts Boston, Tufts University, University of Delaware, and Yale), the consortium provides opportunities for faculty, students, professionals, and community members to build partnerships and enhance the relationship between liberal arts and the public. The consortium provides an innovative structure for sharing ideas, determining best practices, and strategizing funding and resources. NEPH aims to serve as a powerful advocate for the importance of public humanities both within our institutions and across the region.

## Goal #2: Supporting the next generation of college professors and intellectual leaders

### Key Activity:

- Supporting the professional development of Futures Initiative Graduate Fellows and students throughout the Graduate Center

**Action:** Recognizing that today's graduate students are the intellectual leaders of the next generation, the Futures Initiative fosters the growth and professional development of our Graduate Fellows and creates programs that offer similar growth opportunities to students throughout the Graduate Center, both through the team-taught courses described above as well as through public programming, workshops, and network-building across institutions.

## Supporting the professional development of Futures Initiative Graduate Fellows and students throughout the Graduate Center

The Futures Initiative's team-taught courses are complemented by our workshop and discussion series, *The University Worth Fighting For*, which in addition to advocating for public higher education as a public good, provide public discourses on the intersections of equity, access, diversity, pedagogy, teaching practices, peer-mentoring, and public research in higher education. In the 2016–2017 academic year, the *The University Worth Fighting For* series will continue with a new sequence of public programs and discussions. The event series, which is designed to create openings for other students throughout the Graduate Center to seek and step into similar leadership opportunities in their own areas, is described in full in the “Advocacy” portion of this report.

Futures Initiative Graduate Fellows plan and execute these events, gaining important professional skills and establishing themselves as knowledgeable peers in matters that go beyond their subject area to address systemic issues in higher education. The act of producing all aspects of these events, which have drawn large crowds in person as well as in the virtual spaces of Twitter, [hastac.org](http://hastac.org), and [futuresinitiative.org](http://futuresinitiative.org), gives them new skills and talents that they can draw on no matter what career they pursue.

The Graduate Fellows' remarkable achievements in the past year are testimony to their unparalleled growth:

- **Michael Dorsch**, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow and doctoral student in the Earth and Environmental Sciences program at the Graduate Center, was a contributing author on a book chapter included in *Cities on a Finite Planet: Toward Transformative Responses to Climate Change* and on two book chapters in the forthcoming book *Prospects for Resilience: Insights from New York City's Jamaica Bay*. Michael's research on the CUNY New York City Language Mapping Project was presented at the HASTAC 2016 Conference where it received 1<sup>st</sup> place in the student poster competition. Michael also helped organize the Transformation and Resilience on Urban Coasts (TRUC) New York City Stakeholder Consultative/Scenario Modeling workshop and presented research at the 2016 Association of American Geographers Meeting in San Francisco and at the TRUC Project Method Workshop in Stuttgart, Germany.
- **Allison Guess**, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow and doctoral student in the Earth and Environmental Sciences program at the Graduate Center, was a contributing author on “Reaching to Offer, Reaching to Accept: Collaboration and Co-Theorizing” to be published in *American Quarterly*. Allison also presented work at the African American Intellectual Historical Society (AAIHS) inaugural conference and at Pratt Institute's In Search of African American Space Symposium. Allison also helped to co-organize a two-day public conference called “Breaking Broken Windows” in April 2016 with the Coalition to End Broken Windows and Ph.D. students Deshonay Dozier and Amanda Matles. Additionally, Allison received a Dean K. Harrison Summer Research Grant and continued her studies of decolonial theory in Spain over the summer. Allison continues to build and contribute to the work of the Black/Land Project and Outdoor Afro.
- **Mike Rifino**, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow and doctoral student in Human Development at the Graduate Center, delivered a symposium presentation for the Urban Science Education Research Seminar (USER-s), participated in a panel presentation for the American Educational Research Association, and presented on two panels

“Assessment can be more powerful when it's a two-way street. And [this experience] will help me prepare the rest of the course to respond to the information they shared with me.”

— Ryan Donovan,  
Ph.D. Candidate at The Graduate Center and  
Instructor at Hunter College



at his first HASTAC conference with the Futures Initiative. In addition to passing his doctoral examination with presentation of his research “Emotions within the Ecology of Learning and Other Contexts Among Community College Students” at the Human Development Research Festival, Mike also taught his first college level course, General Psychology, for the College Now program at LaGuardia Community College.

- **Danica Savonick**, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow and doctoral candidate in English at the Graduate Center, published her first article “‘The Problem of Locomotion’: Infrastructure and Automobility in Three Postcolonial Urban Nigerian Novels” in *Modern Fiction Studies*, contributed to keyword entry for “Collaboration” co-authored with Katina Rogers and Amanda Licastro in the forthcoming *Digital Pedagogy in the Humanities: Concepts, Models, and Experiments*. In addition to presenting her work at the HASTAC 2016 conference, Danica is presenting work at the Futures of American Studies Institute at Dartmouth, and presented at the American Studies Association Annual Meeting in Toronto, the Early Research and Scholarship Conference in New York, the Cultural Studies Association Annual Conference in Los Angeles, and the CUNY Digital Humanities Initiatives Symposium. Danica was also awarded the Morton Cohen Dissertation Year Travel Grant and received dissertation prospectus approval in October 2015. In addition, Danica’s blog post “Gender Bias in Academe: An Annotated Bibliography of Recent Studies” was republished by the London School of Economics Impact Blog.
- **Lisa Tagliaferri**, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow and doctoral candidate in Comparative Literature at the Graduate Center, has articles forthcoming in the “Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing” series and *Ceræ: An Australasian Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*. Lisa was an invited speaker to the Unflattening and Enacting Visualization workshop at the Graduate Center, and the Committee for the Study of Religion. She presented research at annual meetings for the Renaissance Society of America (2016), the American Comparative Literature Association (2016), CUNY IT (2015), and Digital Humanities (2015). Lisa also organized a panel and presented at HASTAC 2016. She received the Mellon Committee for the Study of Religion Dissertation Fellowship, a Folger Institute Grant, a Conference Research Grant from the Graduate Center, Iter Travel Grant, Comparative Literature Conference Travel Grant, and Doctoral Student Research Grant from the Graduate Center. Lisa has worked to build partnerships with the nonprofit groups Ammal, Chayn, and the Pirandello Society of America.
- **Kalle Westerling**, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow and doctoral student in Performance and Theatre at the Graduate Center, was organizer and presenter in a roundtable on Digital Humanities in Theatre and Performance at HASTAC 2016, had a curated panel on historical examples of trans performers in burlesque accepted at the American Society for Theatre Research, and participated in the 2016 Digital Humanities Summer Institute. Kalle served as HASTAC Scholars director, helping to plan the HASTAC Scholars Unconference 2016 and the HASTAC Interview Collection. In addition to designing visualizations and graphics for the Futures Initiative, Kalle served as moderator for *Queering the Map: Theoretical Reflections on Spatial Methods for Action Research*, organized a workshop for the Futures Initiative on design principles, and organized a workshop for the Advanced Theatre Research course on using digital tools in research and teaching. Kalle also served as translator/adaptor and dramaturg for *The Pelican*, a production by Voyage Theatre Company, in May 2016. In Summer 2016, he taught Topics in Performance Studies: History of American Burlesque at New York University’s Department of Drama. He is also Chair of Programming on the Board of Directors for CLAGS, and is a Board Member of OpenCUNY.



## Goal #3: Structuring Equality and Supporting the New Majority of College Students

### Key Activities:

- Supporting Humanities Teaching and Learning from Community College to Graduate School through the CUNY Humanities Alliance

### Supporting Humanities Teaching and Learning from Community College to Graduate School through the CUNY Humanities Alliance

**Action:** In October 2015, the Graduate Center and LaGuardia Community College were awarded an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant of \$3.15 million dedicated to fostering humanities education in community colleges and introductory humanities education for the “new majority” of college students entering universities in the U.S. today. The Futures Initiative is a key partner on the grant, as is the Graduate Center’s Teaching and Learning Center. The project will enable Graduate Center Ph.D. students to be trained in effective teaching techniques at LaGuardia Community College based on methodologies proven to benefit all learners. Goals include increased retention and graduation rates for community college students and the development of pathways to rewarding careers and potential advanced degrees in the humanities.

Beginning in Fall 2016, the new CUNY Humanities Alliance will bring together a team of nine graduate teaching fellows, visiting faculty, and staff to broaden doctoral student training and improve humanities education for approximately 2,500 CUNY undergraduates at LaGuardia Community College. This ambitious new partnership will train Ph.D. students in innovative methods to teach humanities to a predominantly immigrant, low-income,

urban, undergraduate community—the new majority of students entering U.S. colleges and universities today. The goal of the alliance is to support graduate students in mastering the most successful methods for teaching



Follow the Humanities Alliance’s work:  
[cunyhumanitiesalliance.com](http://cunyhumanitiesalliance.com)

undergraduate general education humanities courses to increasingly diverse students while simultaneously broadening and strengthening access to and opportunity in the humanities for those undergraduates. The grant will also fund a substantial online community platform, a humanities scholar, and a postdoctoral fellowship to research humanities education and digital scholarly communication.

In preparation for the launch of the Humanities Alliance in Fall 2016, the Futures Initiative shared in the responsibility of recruiting an excellent team:

- **Kaysi Holman, Director of Administration and Programs, Humanities Alliance.** Kaysi Holman brings over 15 years of experience working with nonprofits and educational organizations dedicated to equity and social justice, both within higher education and achieved through access to higher education. Holman served as a political advocate and community organizer for education and welfare reform in California and at the Alameda County Bar Association in Oakland, CA, before moving to Duke University where she directed programming and administration for HASTAC (Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory) and the Ph.D. Lab in Digital Knowledge in the John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute. She holds a law degree from Arizona State University and a bachelor’s degree from Vanderbilt University. Holman brings a wide array of skills, all of which she will be drawing upon as Deputy Director of the Humanities Alliance: higher education administrator, community organizer and advocate, web developer, social networker, financial manager, and mentor of doctoral students.

- **Elizabeth Alsop, Humanities Scholar.** Based in the Teaching and Learning Center at the Graduate Center, Dr. Alsop will help pivot the lessons of the Mellon-funded Humanities Alliance with LaGuardia Community College to a broader constituency by extending the programming, partnerships, and reach of the Teaching and Learning Center. She received a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the Graduate Center, where she also earned a certificate in Film Studies. She holds a B.A. in Comparative Literature from Brown University. Her research and teaching interests include Anglo-American modernism, narrative theory, film and television studies, writing pedagogy, and educational technology. Prior to joining the GC's Teaching and Learning Center, Dr. Alsop was an Assistant Professor of English and Film at Western Kentucky University, where she taught a variety of undergraduate and graduate-level courses in 20th-century British literature, world literature, composition, and film history and theory. Her current book project, *Making Conversation: The Poetics of Talk in Modernist Fiction*, examines the evolving function of dialogue in the Anglo-American modernist novel. She is also planning a second manuscript that explores the impact of art cinema aesthetics on contemporary television. In addition to her academic work, Dr. Alsop also writes about film, TV, and popular culture for general audiences, and has previously published essays on these topics in publications including *The Atlantic*, *The LA Review of Books*, and *The New York Times Magazine*.
- **Kitana Ananda, Humanities Alliance Post-Doctoral Fellow.** Based in the Futures Initiative, Dr. Ananda will help to manage the development and support of an online publishing platform to facilitate communication and collaboration among all partners in the Humanities Alliance. Dr. Ananda will effectively be the project's ethnographer, working to understand the communities served by the project and build tools and communications channels that meet those needs. Dr. Ananda's scholarship and teaching examines the culture and politics of war, migration, and diaspora in North America and South Asia, with a focus on Tamil refugees and immigrants from Sri Lanka. She believes strongly in the mission of the public university, and has a deep interest in digital communications for scholarship, collaborative learning, and public engagement. She has served as a Contributing Editor for the open-access website of the journal, *Cultural Anthropology*, and as a Communications Associate intern with the National Economic and Social Rights Initiative. She earned a Ph.D. in sociocultural anthropology from Columbia University, and an honors B.A. in history and anthropology with a minor in cinema studies from the University of Toronto.



- **Emily Brooks, Humanities Alliance Teaching Fellow—History**, is a Ph.D. candidate in the History Department at the Graduate Center. She studies the history of nonviolent crime in the United States in the twentieth century, and focuses particularly on the construction and policing of social deviance. Brooks looks at changes in laws and policing practices pertaining to drug and alcohol prohibition and sexual activities to consider the origins of these changes and how they reflected and reinforced inequalities delineated along lines of race, class, gender, and perceived ability. Currently, Brooks is exploring the policing of women for sexual crimes in New York City during and after the mobilization for WWII, a moment of unsettled gender norms and heightened concern about female sexuality. Through this research she hopes to examine both policing practices of the New York City Police Department, and how these practices were used to construct gender difference.
- **Deshonay Dozier, Humanities Alliance Teaching Fellow—Environmental Psychology**, is a Ph.D. candidate in Environmental Psychology at the The Graduate Center, CUNY. Broadly, her research engages the cultural critique and alternative development practices of people of color in the Los Angeles region. Dozier's dissertation research maps the contested racialized relations of property and policing between elites and the homeless in Skid Row. Her research has been supported by the International Center for Nonviolent Conflict, Institute for Human Geography, and USC Wallis Annenberg Research Grant. Dozier holds a Bachelor's in Child and Adolescent Development with a Minor in Sociology from California State University, Northridge and a Master's in Psychology from CUNY. She has taught and assisted courses in ethnic studies, psychology, and urban affairs.
- **Cory Greene, Humanities Alliance Teaching Fellow—Critical Psychology**, is a formerly incarcerated organizer for the Center for NuLeadership on Urban Solutions (CNUS) and The Incarceration to Education Coalition (IEC). He graduated from the Applied Psychology program at NYU's Steinhardt school of Culture, Education, and Human Development in 2013. He is one of the co-founders of How Our Lives Link Altogether! (H.O.L.L.A!), an organization dedicated to youth leadership development, radical healing, youth organizing, and community empowerment with historically marginalized youth of color. Greene is a student in the Critical Social Personality Psychology doctoral program at the Graduate Center, CUNY, where he plans to engage in/participatory action research: an epistemology and practice that challenges inequalities, normative assumptions of "the normal," and promotes social/human justice.
- **Luis Henao Uribe, Humanities Alliance Teaching Fellow—Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Languages and Literatures**, is a Colombian writer based in New York since 2005. He published the short-stories collection *Diarios del limbo* in 2006 and he collaborates often with literary magazines *Los bárbaros* and *Vecindad*. He is a Ph.D. student at The Graduate Center, CUNY in the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages Program and his main research interests are Mexican and Columbian novel of the 20th Century and the representations of violence and literature as part of State-building processes.
- **Anton Kociolek, Humanities Alliance Teaching Fellow—Cultural Anthropology**, is a Ph.D. student in the cultural anthropology program at the Graduate Center. Originally from Chicago, he earned a B.A. in anthropology at Hunter College, CUNY in 2013. His research interests encompass ethnomusicology, historical anthropology, migration/mobilities studies, semiotics, and critical race theory, with a regional focus on Puerto Rico, the wider Caribbean, and Caribbean diasporas in the U.S. His research looks at Puerto Rican musical practices in order to explore questions of race, nationalism, historical consciousness and processes of migration and cultural exchange both past and present. In this, he is informed by and draws on his years of experience as a performing musician and dancer in the Afro-Puerto Rican genres of bomba and plena. His pedagogical concerns include a keen interest in how the study of popular musical practices can help to inform student engagement with broader questions of culture and power. He is himself a product of community college, the City Colleges of Chicago, which provided him with the basic competencies required for matriculation to a four-year institution. These experiences motivate his commitment to the value of urban public higher education.
- **Makeba Lavan, Humanities Alliance Teaching Fellow—English**, is a Ph.D. student in the Department of English at the Graduate Center, CUNY. There, her research focuses on (African) American Studies, Speculative Fiction and Popular Culture. In addition to her studies, she also teaches at Lehman College.

- **José Alfredo Menjivar, Humanities Alliance Teaching Fellow—Urban Education**, is a poet, writer, educator, activist, doctoral student in the Urban Education program at The Graduate Center, CUNY and instructor across NYC universities. His scholarship centers on how race, class, gender, sexuality, language and citizenship fundamentally shape and mark the ways folks of color exist, participate, negotiate and navigate the word and the world. He is the organizer of Affirmations: Honoring Self & Community Care for & with Educators of Color.
- **Jennifer Polish, Humanities Alliance Teaching Fellow—English**, a writer and educator with a healthy dose of Queens pride, has taught writing at CUNY Queens College and is a Ph.D. student in English at the The Graduate Center, CUNY. Her classroom and research interests deeply intersect, so she and her students spend a lot of time discussing and writing about the lived realities of critical race and dis/ability theories. She is currently focusing her academic work on the relationship between affective whiteness and dis/ability in composition classrooms while writing her first novel, a queer young adult fantasy.
- **Rojo Robles Mejías, Humanities Alliance Teaching Fellow—Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Languages and Literatures**, is a writer, filmmaker, and educator from Puerto Rico. He recently published the novel *Los desajustados* and the English version *The Maladjusted*, and is currently finishing his first feature film *The Sound of ILL Days*. He is a Ph.D student at The Graduate Center, CUNY in the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages Program where he focuses in the intersection between Literature and Cinema in Latin America.

## Supporting Peer Mentoring through Liberal Arts for the New Majority

**Action:** In March 2016, the Futures Initiative was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Teagle Foundation for a new program, “Liberal Arts for the New Majority.” This multi-layered peer mentorship program will reconnect liberal arts teaching and learning with the mission of public higher education and the needs of the “new majority” of undergraduate college students, while also supporting graduate students’ development as both teachers and learners. Through advising, skilled peer mentoring, and a conceptual reframing of basic education, Liberal Arts for the New Majority will help students link skills, purposes, mission, and design of general education in the arts, humanities, social sciences, math, and basic sciences, showing how these are essential to navigating the complexities of the real world. Graduate students will learn to translate their specialized doctoral research for foundational, introductory courses that become a toolkit to lifelong success for undergraduate students. In turn, these students become peer mentors and leaders who then help other students make intellectual and practical pathways through foundational courses (where the dropout rate is highest). The project will help graduate students understand their essential role as teachers of introductory courses and will train successful undergraduates to be peer mentors. In the process, all learn to be leaders.



## SUMMER PEER MENTORING PROGRAM

In Summer 2015, the Futures Initiative's Peer Mentoring Program provided leadership training to thirty undergraduate students from seven CUNY colleges (Brooklyn College, City College of New York, Hunter College, John Jay College, Kingsborough Community College, Lehman College, and Queens College) during a two-day workshop. Led by Futures Initiative Teaching Fellows Hilarie Ashton, Rachel Oppenheimer, and Natalie Oshukany; Futures Initiative Fellows Allison Guess, Mike Rifino, and Danica Savonick; and LaGuardia Community College's Associate Director of Digital Learning Projects Jade Davis, the workshop encouraged undergraduate peer mentors to think about challenges college students face and the unique skills diverse students each have to help others work through difficulties in the learning process. Mentors worked through different mentoring scenarios and skills

building exercises, worked on collaborative resume building, designed mentoring tools, discussed and practiced public writing exercises, learned about and discussed CUNY's history of student activism, and discussed strategies to improve individual campus resources and connect with other mentors and mentees across CUNY.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Teagle Foundation, the Futures Initiative will offer a second peer mentoring workshop in July 2016 at the Graduate Center, this time with twelve colleges represented. A small sub-team will direct this endeavor: Lauren Melendez, Director of Undergraduate Peer Mentoring and Administrative Specialist; Thomas DeAngelis, Ph.D. Student in Earth and Environmental Sciences and Futures Initiative Peer Mentoring Liaison; Mike Rifino, Ph.D. Student in Human Development and Futures Initiative Fellow; and Allison Guess, Ph.D. Student in Earth and Environmental Sciences and Futures Initiative Fellow. The Futures Initiative Peer Mentoring Program launched with a two-day workshop for thirty undergraduates across twelve CUNY campuses. The students who have completed the Futures Initiative Peer Mentoring workshop have become official Futures Initiative Peer Mentors and will have the opportunity to serve as leaders among their peers, helping to provide resource, advice, and support to fellow students throughout the 2016–2017 academic year.

### FUTURES INITIATIVE PEER MENTORS 2016–2017

- Kristina Aganova, Queens College
- Ehab Aly, City College
- Khadiza Begum, Baruch College
- Sujoy Bhowmik, City College
- David Brandt, Hunter College
- Julissa Camilo Valerio, Queens College
- Lauren Capellan, Lehman College
- Cassandra Castelant, Baruch College
- Lindsey Cibelli, Brooklyn College
- Cherishe Cumma, New York City College of Technology
- Yelena Dzhanova, Baruch College
- Michelle Feng, Hunter College
- Lesley Fernandez, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
- Nicolas Fuertes, Baruch College
- Estefany Gonzaga, Baruch College
- Luis Gonzalez, Brooklyn College
- Katherine Melissa Gutierrez Rios, Laguardia Community College
- Meiyin Hago, York College
- Brenell Harrison, Hunter College
- Hurriya Hassan, Queens College
- Alexander James, Medgar Evers College
- Elizabeth Lutale, New York City College of Technology
- Renee McCarthy, Baruch College
- Victoria Menasce, Kingsborough Community College
- Jenny Perez Bruno, City College
- Teneille Pryce, Hunter College
- Sergio Ernesto Salinas Cortes, Brooklyn College
- Laila Siddiqui, Hunter College

**“So much of what I took away from our workshop was the power of simply putting yourself out there. It is a hard world to ask for help in . . . We help, and ask for help, by opening ourselves up to others. We foster connections with those that we encounter.”**

— Renee McCarthy,  
Futures Initiative Mentor and Baruch Student

Follow the Peer Mentors' work:

[futures.gc.cuny.edu/mentors](http://futures.gc.cuny.edu/mentors)

## Team-Taught Courses

As part of the program's goal to foster interdisciplinary collaboration and mentoring relationships amongst peers, the Futures Initiative offered five graduate level courses, team-taught by CUNY faculty based at the Graduate Center with faculty from other CUNY colleges were offered by the Futures Initiative in 2015–2016. Thanks to the CUNY Central and the Teagle Foundation, the Futures Initiative will sponsor another five interdisciplinary, collaboratively-taught graduate courses with faculty members from different CUNY colleges and disciplines in 2016–2017.

## Goal #4: Advocating Higher Education as a Public Good

### Key Activities:

- Public programming series: The University Worth Fighting For
- Speaking, writing, and lobbying
- Research

**Action:** In 2015–2016, the Futures Initiative initiated The University Worth Fighting For, a public programming series, aimed at fostering important discussions—both in person and online—to connect student-centered, engaged pedagogical practices to institutional change, inclusion, equality, and social justice in higher education. The Futures Initiative also sponsored additional events at the Graduate Center as well as panels at HASTAC 2016.

New research from Futures Initiative faculty and graduate fellows connected languages spoken across New York City with language education policy and language programmatic offerings at CUNY colleges. Moreover, Futures Initiative Director, Cathy Davidson, engaged in lobbying efforts aimed at building stronger support for public higher education nationwide and at CUNY in particular.

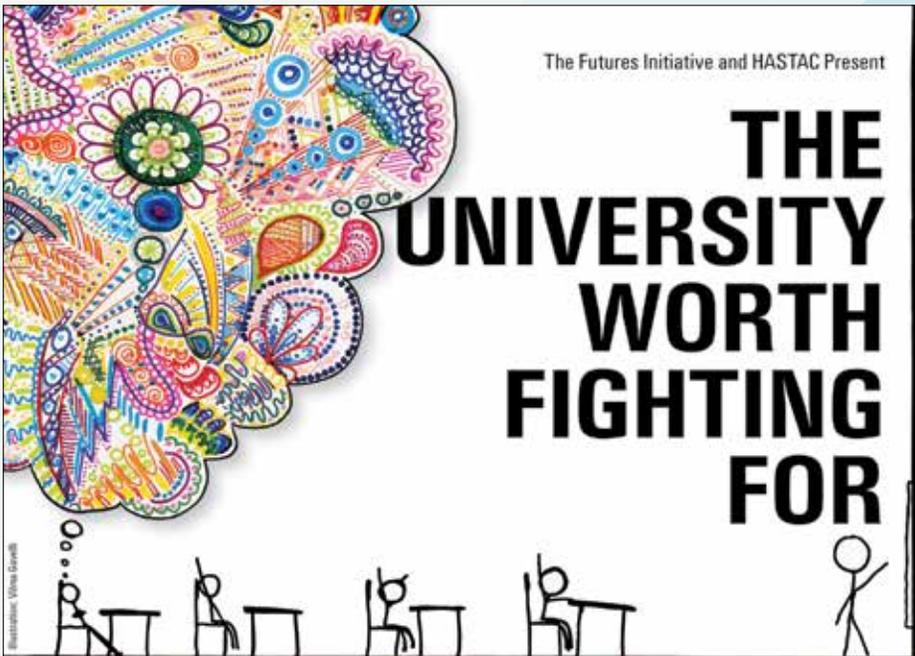
### The University Worth Fighting For

In conjunction with the team-taught courses the Futures Initiative sponsored in 2015–2016, The University Worth Fighting For was a new series the Futures Initiative sponsored in partnership with HASTAC to offer workshops, webinars, and online reading groups with special attention on race, gender, diversity, equity, and inequality and a rethinking of how higher education can be reimagined now and for the future. The series represented a continuation of the Futures Initiative's commitment to public, open dialogue and advocacy for higher education by maintaining an already strong and growing social media presence promoting equity, diversity, innovation, and interdisciplinarity in the classroom, at CUNY, and in public higher education more broadly.

- **Towards a Pedagogy of Equality, August 28, 2015.** During the first event in the series, Futures Initiative Director Cathy N. Davidson, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow Danica Savonick, and guest panelist Andrew Lucchesi (Graduate Center English Ph.D. Candidate and Instructional Technology Fellow at City College of New York) encouraged participants to share favorite strategies, practices, activities, techniques, and assignments to promote and model equality in the classroom. The event was open to the public, was livestreamed, and attracted 114 participants both in-person at the graduate Center and watching on the livestream with 400 tweets on Twitter.
- **Peer Mentoring and Student-Centered Learning, September 24, 2015.** The second installment of the series was facilitated by Futures Initiative Faculty Fellow Kandice Chuh (Graduate Center Professor of English) and Futures Initiative Graduate Mentor Hilarie Ashton (Graduate Center English Ph.D. student and Instructor at Queens College). This session involved a conversation about how classrooms relate to the much larger setting of cultural inequality, contemporary issues of education, and their economic and political conditions. In addition, a critical discussion developed on (vertical) mentoring structures. Leaders from the Futures Initiative's Summer 2015 Mentorship Program also discussed good and bad mentorship practices. The event was open to the public,

was livestreamed, and attracted approximately 70 people both in-person and on the livestream with almost 250 tweets on Twitter.

- Teaching the Humanities as Survival Skill, October 22, 2015.** The third installment of the series included a panel discussion with Futures Initiative Director Cathy N. Davidson, LaGuardia Community College Professor of Psychology Eduardo Vianna, LaGuardia Community College Professor of Psychology Vanessa Bing and Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow Mike Rifino. The workshop opened with a discussion of how higher education exacerbates inequalities as four year colleges and universities are structure on exclusion. On the other hand, community colleges are structured with inclusion at their core. Workshop participants had an extensive conversation on the many opportunities for humanities and social sciences to foster cultural understandings, historical perspectives, critical thinking, ethics, creativity, and communication skills in community college education. The event was open to the public, was livestreamed, and included a full-house in-person and 55 viewers on the livestream with 86 Twitter users tweeting 268 tweets.
- On and Off the Tenure Track: Career Paths and Hiring Practices, November 18, 2015.** The fourth installment in the series included a panel discussion with LaGuardia Community College's Associate Director of Digital Learning Projects Jade E. Davis, New York Academy of Sciences Science Alliance Manager Yaihara Fortis Santiago and Director of the Graduate Center's Office of Career Planning and Professional Development Jennifer Furlong. This provocative discussion ranged from thorny issues related to the casualization of academic labor to the size of Ph.D. programs and ways to expand our expectation of how career outcomes might affect the structure of graduate programs (and who has access to those programs). The event was open to the public, was livestream, and 44 Twitter users posted 249 tweets.
- Ideas in Circulation: Open Scholarship for Social Justice, February 5, 2016.** The fifth installment in the series included an introduction by Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow Allison Guess and panel discussion with NYU Librarian for Scholarly Communications



The Futures Initiative and HASTAC Present

# THE UNIVERSITY WORTH FIGHTING FOR

**A series of workshops that tie student-centered, engaged pedagogical practices to institutional change, race, equality, and social justice**

For more information:  
<http://www.futuresinitiative.org>

**LIVESTREAMED**  
<http://bit.ly/FuturesED-live>

Fall 2015	
Aug 28	A Pedagogy of Equality
Sep 24	Peer Mentoring and Student-Centered Learning
Oct 22	Humanities as a Survival Skill
Nov 18	On and Off the Tenure Track
Spring 2016	
Feb 5	Ideas in Circulation: Libraries, Presses, Platforms
Mar 2	Credentials or Learning? Measuring What Counts
Apr 14	Teaching as Social Justice
May 19	The University Worth Fighting For

**F.I. The Futures Initiative**  
 Advancing Equity and Innovation in Higher Education

**hastac**  
 Changing the Way We Teach + Learn

**CUNY**

**THE GRADUATE CENTER**  
 CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

April Hathcock, Executive Officer of the MA Program in Liberal Studies and Associate Professor of English and Digital Humanities at the Graduate Center Matthew K. Gold and Distinguished Professor of Psychology, Urban Education, and Women's studies at the Graduate Center Michelle Fine. This discussion took an in-depth look at access, equality, and diversity in the context of open scholarship and scholarly communication. The event was open to the public, was livestreamed and included 35 participants in person, 77 users watching the livestream, and 549 tweets on Twitter making the #fight4edu hashtag trend in the United States on the day of the event with a ranking of 47.

- **Measuring What Counts: Credentials for Learning? March 2, 2016.** The sixth installment in the series included an introduction by Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow Mike Rifino and panel discussion with Lead Digital Education Reporter for NPR and author of *The Test* Anya Kamenetz, Historian and Vice President of Academic Affairs at LaGuardia Community College Bret Eynon and Vice President of Education, Strategy & Innovation at Girls Who Code Leah Gilliam. The panel discussed how to measure learning both in and outside of formalized education spaces. Prior to the event, we hosted a Twitter chat and the event was open to the public and livestreamed with 73 users following the video stream during the event. A total of 74 Twitter users tweeted 500 posts the day of the event with a reach of 89,437 and 1,529,396 impressions.
- **Teaching as Social Justice: Equity, Diversity, Race, April 14, 2016.** The seventh installment in the series included a panel discussion with Assistant Professor of History at Bronx Community College Prithi Kanakamedala, Dean of the School of Media Studies and Professor of Media Studies at the New School and Co-founder of FemTechNet Anne Balsamo, and Director of the Center for Place, Culture, and Politics and Professor of Geography and Earth and Environmental Sciences at the Graduate Center Ruth Wilson Gilmore. Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow Allison Guess was an invited respondent. This session encouraged participants to think about how teaching can address the unequal distribution of resources, wealth, privilege, and opportunity along axes of race, gender, sexual orientation, and ability. The event was open to the public and livestreamed. The live event was preceded by a Twitter Chat moderated by Simone Browne, Associate Professor of African and African Diaspora Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. A total of 117 Twitter users tweeted the day of the event with a reach of 190,180 and 2,199,175 impressions.
- **A Year-End Celebration of the Futures Initiative, May 19, 2016.** The last installment in the series offered an opportunity to celebrate all that the Futures Initiative Faculty Fellows, graduate students, undergraduate students, peer mentors, and Graduate Fellows accomplished throughout the 2015–2016 academic year and to share and recap the University Worth Fighting For series, which will continue through the 2016–2017 academic year.

## Additional Futures Initiative Sponsored Events

The Futures Initiative also hosted the following additional events in the 2015–2016 academic year:

- **Queering the Map: Theoretical Reflections on Spatial Methods for Action Research** with Jen Jack Giesekeing, Assistant Professor of Public Humanities in American Studies at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. Dr. Giesekeing shared research on the spaces of lesbian and queer women, as well as about geographic information systems (GIS) in more general terms. The event was open to the public at the Graduate Center, was livestreamed, and attracted 32 users on Twitter contributing 151 tweets.
- **MLA Connected Academics Proseminar—Invited Site Visit.** As part of the MLA's proseminar on careers for graduate students and recent Ph.D. recipients in the New York City area, participants in the program visited the Futures Initiative on November 11, 2015 to meet our staff and learn more about what our program does. As one of the eight New York City organizations highlighted in the program, participants were able to investigate how the humanities Ph.D. is applicable for a much wider range of careers than has traditionally been acknowledged.
- **HASTAC 2016 Conference at Arizona State University.** The Futures Initiative also helped to sponsor the HASTAC 2016 Conference and hosted three panels, all led by the Graduate Fellows:

- Speculative Classroom Design: What's Your University Worth Fighting For?
- Building the University Worth Fighting For: Tools for Pedagogical, Institutional, and Social Change
- New Institutional Configurations: Community Colleges and Doctoral Training in the Humanities

## Research

In conjunction with the Fall 2015 Futures Initiative sponsored course Global Perspectives on Language and Education—CUNY Language Diversity and Global Language Learning Policies, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow Michael Dorsch led a research project to map the languages spoken across New York City and to compare the languages spoken in communities closest to each of CUNY's campuses with language education opportunities offered at each campus. The CUNY NYC Language Mapping Project is hosted on a new Futures Initiative website and includes results of the analysis, interpretation of the results, and an interactive map built using CartoDB that allows users to toggle through different languages spoken across New York City for close analysis of neighborhoods throughout the city and close to CUNY. The interactive map also allows users to navigate snapshots of the languages taught at CUNY campuses and the languages spoken in the communities around those campuses. The results highlight not only CUNY's incredible linguistic diversity, but also opportunities for greater support and new scholarship on language policy in higher education.

The Futures Initiative develops and hosts an online community on its Commons In A Box website. This digital tool allows students across the CUNY campuses to interact with each other and explore the courses offered through the Futures Initiative. Graduate Fellow Lisa Tagliaferri has led a network analysis research project that maps the pathways of the site's users and shows how students grow their communities through the online tool. This research also provides feedback for how to best structure the site and facilitate network building through the website. Lisa has presented this research at Digital Humanities 2015, and will present continued findings at the International Conference on Interactive Collaborative Learning 2016. A paper on this project entitled "Open-Access Student-Centered Learning: The open web as a collaborative space for higher education in public" is forthcoming in the Springer series "Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing," and interactive visualizations of the network are available on the Futures Initiative website.



### 2016–2017 Graduate Fellows and Team Members

In the upcoming year, the Futures Initiative will begin working with two new graduate fellows, a peer mentoring liaison, one new staff member, and nine faculty fellows, who will contribute their skills and knowledge to the overall mission of the Futures Initiative.

- **Thomas DeAngelis, Futures Initiative Peer Mentoring Liaison**, is a first-year doctoral student in the Earth and Environmental Sciences program at the The Graduate Center, CUNY. Thomas recently earned a B.A. in Sociology from CUNY Brooklyn College where he was both a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow and a CUNY Pipeline Fellow. He is interested in the displacement of black people by urban renewal in New York City and Salvador, Brazil and how people organized against urban renewal. Drawing on Stuart Hall's method of conjunctural analysis, Thomas hopes to develop a broader understanding of the political, economic, geographic, and ideological forces that allowed for urban renewal to displace black people from housing in both Salvador and New York City. More broadly, Thomas holds interests in black geographies, black radical thought, and Afro-Pessimism.
- **Celi Lebron, Budget Manager**, recently graduated from City College of New York with a B.S. in Computer Engineering and a minor in creative writing (in English—her second language). During her studies, Celi discovered her interest in finance and began working at the Art Department of City College of New York, where she managed the department's budget. In addition to her role with the Futures Initiative, she works as a Brand Activation Manager for Anheuser-Busch InBev. Born and raised in the Dominican Republic, Celi is bilingual and began her CUNY trajectory at Hostos Community College, where she developed a strong community of peers while learning to navigate the U.S. higher education system. She hopes to pursue a Master's degree in Finance and Economics.
- **Michelle Morales, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow**, is a doctoral candidate in computational linguistics and a former Magnet Fellow at the Graduate Center. She is also a speech processing researcher at the Queens College Speech lab, where she focuses on computing and mental health. Michelle's research investigates how to use language as an objective marker in the diagnosis and monitoring of mental disorders, such as depression, anxiety, and PTSD. As part of her dissertation, she is currently building a computational system that uses speech to automatically identify the presence of mental health disorders. Given the severe shortage of clinicians and the ever increasing number of individuals in need, Michelle's research aims to improve the current state of mental healthcare by providing a scalable technological solution.
- **Jessica Murray, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow**, is a doctoral student in Human Development at the Graduate Center. Her interests include mobilities, work-family psychology, transportation, technology, accessibility, and disability rights. She earned a BFA in Design from the University of Texas at Austin in 2003 and worked as a graphic designer in a variety of media before coming to The Graduate Center in 2012. She completed an MA in Liberal Studies, on the Psychology of Work and Family track in 2014. Her future work will explore the connection between independent mobility, autonomy, and emotional and social development for adults with disabilities. More importantly, she hopes to bring awareness to and provide critical assessment of systems that fail to support 100% of humanity.

### 2016–2017 Faculty Fellows

- **Patricia Brooks, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (The Graduate Center and College of Staten Island; Psychology)**. Patricia Brooks is the Director of the Language Learning Laboratory in the Psychology Department. She joined the CSI faculty in 1997 after completing post-doctoral research fellowships at Carnegie Mellon University and Emory University. Her research program focuses on individual differences in language learning and development

across the lifespan. She conducts laboratory studies of adult foreign language learning and uses computer games to study speech perception and production in children with typical and atypical language development. Professor Brooks was appointed to the Doctoral Faculty of The Graduate Center in 1999, and she is active in the Ph.D. programs in Psychology and Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences. In addition to conducting research on language learning, Brooks has broad interests in the development of effective pedagogy, especially with regards to active learning environments, mentoring, and use of technology and games to support learning and memory.

- **Amy Chazkel, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (The Graduate Center and Queens College; History).** Amy Chazkel, a historian of Latin America who specializes in post-colonial Brazil, is an Associate Professor of History at Queens College and the The Graduate Center, CUNY. She is the author of *Laws of Chance: Brazil's Clandestine Lottery and the Making of Urban Public Life in Brazil* (Duke University Press, 2011), winner of the New England Council of Latin American Studies Best Book Prize, co-winner of the J. Willard Hurst Prize of the Law and Society Association, and recipient of Honorable Mention for the Best Book Prize of the Brazil Section of the Latin American Studies Association. A Brazilian edition of *Laws of Chance*, entitled *Leis da sorte* was published with the Editora da Unicamp in 2014. She is also co-editor of *The Rio Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, an anthology of primary sources on the history of Rio de Janeiro (Duke University Press, 2016). Other publications include articles on the history of penal institutions, criminal law, illicit gambling, and the urban nighttime in modern Brazil and co-edited issues of the *Radical History Review* that explore the privatization of common property in global perspective and Haitian history. Her projects in progress include research for a book that explores the social, cultural, and legal history of nighttime in nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro.
- **Shelly Eversley, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (Baruch College; English).** Shelly Eversley teaches American, feminist, and black studies. She is Academic Director of The City University of New York's Faculty Fellowship Publication Program, and is the founder of equalityarchive.com. She is the author of *The "Real" Negro: The Question of Authenticity in Twentieth Century African American Literature* (Routledge), as well as of several essays. She is editor of *The Modern Library's The Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano or, Gustavus Vassa, The African* and editor of *The Sexual Body* and *The 1970s*, both special issues of *WSQ*. She is the editor of the forthcoming book on 1960s African American literature and culture in transition (Cambridge), and is writing a new book titled *The Practice of Blackness, or Integration's Discontents*.
- **Michael B. Gillespie, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (City College; Black Studies and Film Studies).** Michael B. Gillespie is Associate Professor of Media Communication Arts and Black Studies at City College. His teaching and research focuses on film theory, black visual and expressive culture, historiography, global cinema, film adaptation, and genre theory. His recent publications include "Reckless Eyeballing: Coonskin, Film Blackness, and the Racial Grotesque" in *Contemporary Black American Cinema: Race, Gender and Sexuality at the Movies*; "Dirty Pretty Things: The Racial Grotesque and Contemporary Art" in *Post-Soul Satire: An Interdisciplinary Critical Overview*; and "Smiling Faces: Chameleon Street, Racial Performativity, and Film Blackness" in *The Politics of Appearance: Racial Passing in U.S. Fiction, Memoir, Television, and Film, 1990–2010*. His book, *Film Blackness: American Cinema and the Idea of Black Film*, is forthcoming from Duke University Press. Gillespie is also co-editing two volumes, *Black Cinema Aesthetics Revisited* and *New Chester Himes Criticism*.
- **Jill Grose-Fifer, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (Graduate Center and John Jay College; Psychology).** As a neurophysiologist, Jill Grose-Fifer uses EEG recording to investigate sensory and cognitive function across the lifespan. Her research focuses primarily on brain development during mid and late adolescence with a view to better understanding increased risk taking and other behaviors in these populations. More recently, she has also begun to use EEG recording to investigate how certain personality traits may affect how college students process emotional information and whether certain personality traits are predictive of better academic success. She is also interested in the scholarship of teaching and learning and assessing the efficacy of innovations in pedagogy. She was the recipient of the John Jay Distinguished Teaching Prize in 2009, and the John Jay Outstanding Scholarly Mentor award in 2012.
- **Setha Low, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (The Graduate Center; Environmental Psychology, Anthropology, Earth and Environmental Sciences, and Women's Studies).** Setha Low received her Ph.D. in cultural

anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley. She trains Ph.D. students in the anthropology of space and place, urban anthropology, the anthropology of the body, and cultural values in historic preservation. She is also director of the GC's Public Space Research Group. She has been awarded a Getty Fellowship, an NEH fellowship, a Fulbright Senior Fellowship, and a Guggenheim for her ethnographic research on public space in Latin America and the United States. She was president of the American Anthropological Association from 2007 to 2009. Her current research is on the impact of private governance on New York City co-ops and condominiums, and she is writing a book titled *Spatializing Culture: An Anthropological Theory of Space and Place*. In 2009 she began a collaborative project with Dolores Hayden on spatial methods and public practices, funded by the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford, and in 2010 she was a fellow in the Center for Place, Culture and Politics. In 2011 she became cochair of the Public Space and Diversity Network, funded by the Max Planck Institute for Religious and Ethnic Diversity. Most recently, she received funding from the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council to study condominiums and private governance in Toronto and New York with Randy Lippert. She is widely published, with more than a hundred articles and chapters, and lectures internationally. Her books include *Politics of Public Space* (2006), with Neil Smith; *Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity* (2005), with S. Scheld and D. Taplin; *Behind the Gates: Life, Security and the Pursuit of Happiness in Fortress America* (2004); *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture* (2003), with D. Lawrence-Zuniga; and *On the Plaza: The Politics of Public Space and Culture* (2000).

- **Ananya Mukherjea, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (College of Staten Island; Sociology/Anthropology).** Ananya Mukherjea received her Ph.D. in Sociology from the City University of New York Graduate Center and her BA from New College, Florida. She joined CSI's program in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work in the fall of 2004. Her research interests include: the study of gender and sexuality; medical sociology (the social politics of infectious disease epidemics and their management, particularly viral epidemics); urban sociology; the sociology of culture and popular culture; and the study of animals in society. Dr. Mukherjea teaches courses on gender studies, urban sociology, community studies, and the sociology of culture at CSI, and she has co-taught the Introduction to LGBTQ Studies at the The Graduate Center with Dr. Paisley Currah. Dr. Mukherjea also is a member of the faculty for the doctoral program in public health at the The Graduate Center.
- **Erika Niwa, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (The Graduate Center and Brooklyn College; Psychology).** Erika Niwa joined the Psychology Department and the Children and Youth Studies Program at Brooklyn College in 2014. After receiving her Ph.D. in Applied Developmental Psychology from New York University, she then completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Rutgers University. Her work examines how culture and context shape the developmental pathways of children and young people, with a specific focus on inequality.
- **Diana Romero, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (School of Public Health; Community, Society, and Health Program).** Diana Romero is an Associate Professor at Hunter College. She holds a Ph.D. in Sociomedical Sciences from Columbia University. Her research interests include: research related to poverty and maternal, child and reproductive health; racial/ethnic health disparities, particularly among Latina women; reproductive health policy with an emphasis on abortion.
- **Martin Ruck, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (The Graduate Center; Psychology).** Martin Ruck earned his Ph.D. in applied cognitive science from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. He is a widely published specialist in the overall process of cognitive socialization—at the intersection of race, ethnicity, and class—in terms of children's and adolescents' thinking about human rights, educational opportunity, and social justice. He has recently extended his work on young people's perceptions of their rights to the UK and South Africa. Currently, he is investigating how children's perceptions of social exclusion and discrimination are influenced by their social experiences and interpretations of rights and justice. He has authored or coauthored numerous book chapters and articles, and his work has appeared in such journals as *Applied Developmental Science*, *Child Development*, *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, *Journal of Adolescence*, *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *Journal of Early Adolescence*, *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *Journal of Social*

Issues, and Journal of Youth and Adolescence. He serves on the editorial board for Child Development, Human Development, and the Journal of Social Issues.

## 2015–2016 Faculty Fellows

- Gillian Bayne, Faculty Fellow**, is an Assistant Professor of Science Education and a program coordinator in the Middle and High School Education Department at CUNY's Lehman College. With over ten years of science teaching experience in both New York City public and private high schools, she combines her expertise and commitment to excellence with innovative teaching philosophies and practices in order to create greater possibilities for students and teachers as they embark on the complex journey that is science education. Grounding her work primarily in cultural sociology, the sociology of emotions and face-to-face interactions, Gillian's research interests involve improving teaching and learning in science education through the use of cogenerative dialogues and coteaching at the high school, undergraduate and graduate levels.
- Kandice Chuh, Faculty Fellow**, joined the Graduate Center in 2010 as a professor in the Ph.D. Program in English and as a core member of the Mellon Committee on Globalization and Social Change. Chuh is a coleader of the Revolutionizing American Studies Initiative launched at the Graduate Center in Spring 2011. From 1996 to 2010, she was a faculty member in the English department at the University of Maryland, College Park, where she was affiliated with the American studies department and the Asian American studies program and recognized for teaching and mentoring excellence. She has served in a variety of leadership positions in the American Studies Association (ASA), the Association for Asian American Studies, the Cultural Studies Association, and the Modern Language Association. The author of *Imagine Otherwise: On Asian Americanist Critique* (2003), which won the ASA's Lora Romero Book Award, Chuh is also the coeditor, with Karen Shimakawa, of *Orientalisms: Mapping Studies in the Asian Diaspora* (2001), and has published in such venues as *Public Culture*, *American Literary History*, and the *Journal of Asian American Studies*. Her current research brings together aesthetic philosophies and theories, minority discourse, and analysis of globalization's impact on modern sociopolitical subjectivity. Chuh is broadly interested in the relationship between intellectual work and the political sphere; disciplinarity and difference; and U.S. culture and politics as matrices of power and knowledge, and she lectures widely on these topics. She earned her Ph.D. in English at the University of Washington, Seattle, in 1996, and her B.A. in English and women's studies at Colgate University in 1989.
- Sujatha Fernandes, Faculty Fellow**, is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Queens College and the Graduate Center, City University of New York. She is the author of three books: *Who Can Stop the Drums? Urban Social Movements in Chávez's Venezuela* (Duke University Press, 2010), *Cuba Represent! Cuban Arts, State Power, and the Making of New Revolutionary Cultures* (Duke University Press, 2006), and *Close to the Edge: In Search of the Global Hip Hop Generation* (Verso, 2011). Her work has been translated into several languages, including Spanish, Portuguese, German, French, and Chinese. Her current book project is entitled, "Mobilizing Stories: The Political Uses of Storytelling." It traces the contemporary use of storytelling by social movements in a range of global contexts, including migrant worker social movements in New York City. Fernandes has been awarded



several distinguished fellowships, including a three-year Wilson-Cotsen fellowship at Princeton University, an ARC Distinguished Fellowship, a Mellon Foundation fellowship at the Center for the Humanities at the The Graduate Center, CUNY, and a Mid-Career Mellon Fellowship at the The Graduate Center, CUNY. In 2008, she was awarded the Feliks Gross Award from the CUNY Academy for the Humanities and Sciences in recognition of outstanding research. Her writing has appeared in academic journals and popular forums, including *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, and *The Huffington Post*. She has been featured in New York's *Daily News*, and has appeared on NPR, MSNBC, American Public Radio, BBC, and many other news outlets globally.

- **David Forbes, Faculty Fellow**, is an educator and counselor who teaches mindfulness and other contemplative and integral practices to school counseling students and educators. He is an Associate Professor in the School Counseling program in the School of Education at Brooklyn College. Dr. Forbes wrote *Boyz 2 Buddhas: Counseling Urban High School Male Athletes in the Zone* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004) on practicing mindfulness with a Brooklyn high school football team. He was a co-recipient of a program fellowship from the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society in 2005. He wrote “Occupy Mindfulness” on the need to critically situate mindfulness within current neoliberal contexts, challenge social injustices, and promote full self development.
- **Ofelia García, Faculty Fellow**, is Professor in the Ph.D. programs of Urban Education and of Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She has been Professor of Bilingual Education at Columbia University's Teachers College, Dean of the School of Education at the Brooklyn Campus of Long Island University, and Professor of Education at The City College of New York. Among her best-known books are *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective; Translanguaging; Language, Bilingualism and Education* (with Li Wei); *Educating Emergent Bilinguals* (with J. Kleifgen), *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity* (with J. Fishman), *Negotiating Language Policies in Schools: Educators as Policymakers* (with K. Menken), *Imagining Multilingual Schools* (with T. Skutnabb-Kangas and M. Torres-Guzmán), and *A Reader in Bilingual Education* (with C. Baker). She is the Associate General Editor of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* and the co-editor of *Language Policy* (with H. Kelly-Holmes). For the past three and a half years, García has been co-principal investigator of CUNY-NYSIEB. García's extensive publication record on bilingualism and the education of bilinguals is grounded in her life experience living in New York City after leaving Cuba at the age of 11, teaching language minority students bilingually, educating bilingual and ESL teachers, and working with doctoral students researching these topics.
- **William P. Kelly, Faculty Fellow**, served as Graduate Center provost and senior vice president (1998–2005) and president (2005–June 30, 2013). A distinguished American literature scholar and an expert on the works of James Fenimore Cooper, Kelly is the author of *Plotting America's Past: Fenimore Cooper and the Leatherstocking Tales*. His essays and reviews have appeared in a broad range of publications, including the *Times Literary Supplement*, the *New York Times Book Review*, and the *American Scholar*. He is the editor of the Random House edition of *The Selected Works of Washington Irving* and the Oxford University Press edition of *The Pathfinder*. He is currently at work on a book about John Jacob Astor. Kelly graduated *summa cum laude* from Princeton University, and was named Outstanding Graduate Student in English at Indiana University, where he received his Ph.D. Kelly also holds a diploma in intellectual history from Cambridge University and in 1980 received a Fulbright fellowship to France, where he subsequently became visiting professor at the University of Paris. He was also executive director of the CUNY/Paris Exchange Program and, in 2003, was named Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques by the French Ministry of Education in recognition of his contributions to Franco-American educational and cultural relations. On the faculty of CUNY's Queens College from 1976 to 1998, he was named Queens College's Golden Key Honor Society Teacher of the Year in 1994. He was appointed concurrently to the doctoral faculty in English in 1986 and served as the program's executive officer from 1996 to 1998. Kelly is Chair of Guggenheim Foundation's Board of Trustees.
- **Carmina Makar, Faculty Fellow**, is Assistant Professor in the programs of Bilingual Education and TESOL at City College of New York. Born and raised in Mexico, Carmina first came to New York as a Fulbright Fellow to pursue graduate studies in International Education Development. She earned her MA and Ed.D from Teachers College, Columbia University. Her scholarly interests include bilingual education, language, immigration

and transnational education in the context of educational policy and development. As part of her work with childhood, space and community development in non-formal education, Carmina has served as a consultant for UNESCO and UNDP as well as for other community-based organizations in Mexico and New York.

- **Anna Stetsenko, Faculty Fellow.** Anna Stetsenko's research is situated at the intersection of human development, education and social theory including topics of subjectivity, collective agency/action, and identity—all viewed through the lens of social change and activism. Her works draw on cutting-edge advances in philosophy, psychology, and sociology of practice, feminist and postmodernist materialism, dynamic systems theory, situated and embodied cognition, Freire's critical pedagogy, and Vygotsky's cultural-historical and activity theory frameworks. She is currently exploring the topics of imagination and collective action in pursuit of social change and collaborative transformation for theories of human development and educational practices. In this work, she is increasingly drawing on social, policy and political dimensions of theory and practices in psychology and education to interrogate traditional gaps including between individual and collective agency and between subjectivity and social action. Potential areas of research supervision include (but are not limited to): applying innovative theories of human development to understanding educational practices, learning, disability, child welfare policies, creativity, play, agency, identity, gender, communication, art, family dynamics and social interactions.
- **Eduardo Vianna, Faculty Fellow,** is Associate Professor of Psychology at LaGuardia Community College. Building on recent advances in Vygotskian cultural-historical theory, especially the Transformative Activist Approach, his research and publications focus on the intersection between teaching-learning and development. Dr. Vianna has carried out research in various settings that serve underprivileged populations, including in a child welfare program, a substance abuse recovery support program, and public schools. Currently, his research focuses on applying critical-theoretical pedagogy to build the peer activist learning community (PALC) with underprivileged community college students has received increased recognition, including a recent article in the New York Times. Dr. Vianna has won several awards, including The President's Dissertation Scholarship at The Graduate Center, CUNY, and the 2010 Early Career Award in Cultural-Historical Research awarded by the Cultural-Historical Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association for the book he published in 2009. He has also published book chapters and articles in premier journals in the fields psychology and education.

## Team Achievements

Futures Initiative faculty, staff, and graduate fellows have engaged in a varied array of research, presented work at a wide range of events across CUNY and at national and international conferences and workshops, and published their work in diverse outlets in the past year. Graduate Fellows' achievements are detailed on pages 10–11. The Futures Initiative is deeply proud of our staff achievements as well:

- **Cathy Davidson, Founding Director of the Futures Initiative and Distinguished Professor at the Graduate Center,** was the recipient of national and international honors and spoke widely about the need for structural change in higher education. In May, she met with the head of higher education for New York, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, to discuss the importance of CUNY and the Graduate Center as a model for all of higher education, the need for greater support for public higher education, and the role of the humanities in thinking through, with, and about technology. She continued in her role as a President Obama appointee to the National Council on the Humanities, on the Board of Directors of Mozilla, on the Advisory Board of the New York Public Library and on Data and Society. She gave keynote addresses this year at the FrogAsia conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on "Project Classroom Makeover" (a conference inspired by her work), two papers at the Modern Language Association Annual Convention, a scholarly residency and talk at Cornell University on "Time and the Modern University," keyed the Society for College and University Planners (SCUP) in Vancouver, Canada, and keyed the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) where she was also presented with the Ernest J. Boyer Award for "Significant Contributions to Higher Education" presented by the New

American Colleges and Universities. *The Journal of American Studies* devoted a forum in its summer 2016 issue to essays responding to her book *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America*, celebrating its 30th anniversary. She has written the “back to school” essays for the August 2016 issues of *Choice* and *Liberal Education*. She continues work on a book on the future of higher education that will be published in August 2017 by Basic Books.

- **Katina Rogers, Director of Administration and Programs of the Futures Initiative**, is co-principal investigator for the Teagle grant, Liberal Arts for the New Majority, and a key partner for the Mellon grant, the Humanities Alliance. She gave invited presentations at the Council of Graduate Schools, the Graduate Career Consortium, the CUNY Faculty Fellowship Publication Program, Syracuse University, and Medgar Evers College on topics including innovative dissertations, career paths, and the Futures Initiative’s work. Dr. Rogers published new work in *Digital Humanities Quarterly* and has a collaborative chapter forthcoming in *Digital Pedagogy in the Humanities: Concepts, Models, and Experiments*. She spoke at numerous conferences and workshops, including the Northeast Public Humanities Consortium, where she is on the advisory board; the HASTAC 2016 conference at Arizona State University; a conference on Open Educational Resources at CUNY and SUNY; the Modern Language Association Annual Convention in Austin, Texas; and the CUNY IT Conference at John Jay College of Criminal Justice.
- **Lauren Melendez, Futures Initiative Undergraduate Peer Mentoring Director and Administrative Specialist at the Graduate Center**, attended her first HASTAC conference in May 2016 where she presented as part of the Futures Initiative panel Speculative Classroom Design: What’s Your University Worth Fighting For. Lauren is currently pursuing a Master’s degree (MSEd) in School Counseling at Hunter College and completed her practicum at James Baldwin High School in the Fall 2015 semester. In the 2015–2016 academic year, the Futures Initiative was awarded generous funding from the Teagle Foundation to launch the Futures Initiative Peer Mentoring Program in the summer of 2016. Lauren is directing this program along with assistance from Futures Initiative colleagues Mike Rifino and Thomas DeAngelis.

## HASTAC

The Futures Initiative is a proud administrative partner of HASTAC, the Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory, an interdisciplinary community of humanists, artists, social scientists, scientists, and technologists who are dedicated to changing the way we teach and learn. Founded in 2002, HASTAC is the world’s first and oldest academic social network, and the Futures Initiative leverages this robust and wide-ranging network to amplify the reach of events, methods, research, news, and more. HASTAC’s 14,000+ members from over 400+ affiliate organizations share news, tools, research, insights, pedagogy, methods, and projects.

The annual HASTAC conference offers a venue for connecting in person with members of this network while sharing research and project outcomes and enacting engaged, student-centered approaches that characterize the Futures Initiative’s local work across the CUNY system. The theme of the 2016 conference, hosted by Arizona State University, was “Impact: Variation, Innovation, Action.”

Finally, a crucial component of HASTAC is the HASTAC Scholars program, a student-driven community of graduate and undergraduate students whose work centers on rethinking pedagogy, learning, research, and academia for the digital age. In 2015–2016, Duke Ph.D. student Fiona Barnett and Futures Initiative Fellow Kalle Westerling co-directed the program. HASTAC Scholars are the most vibrant and active element of the HASTAC network and are an integral connection point between local institutions and the broader community. The connection between HASTAC and the Futures Initiative is powerful, linking local and national initiatives to ensure the broadest and deepest possible impact.



# The Futures Initiative

Advancing Equity and Innovation in Higher Education

**The Futures Initiative advances greater equity and innovation in higher education.**

**Leadership:** Equipping graduate students to expand career horizons and connect their learning to the wider world.

**Technology:** Using network and communications tools to build community, foster greater access, and share work beyond the classroom.

**Interdisciplinary teaching:** Facilitating engaged, collaborative pedagogies that emphasize peer learning, mentorship, diversity, equity, and student agency.

**Research:** Conducting high-level research and connecting it to local and global audiences in creative, meaningful, policy-relevant ways.

**Advocacy:** Promoting institutional change, social justice, and the reinvestment in higher education as a public good.

