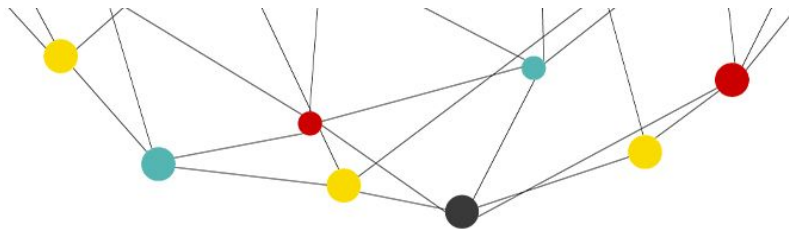




BU HUB SPOTLIGHT

Highlighting Innovative Teaching and Learning in the Hub



Greetings from the BU Hub! We hope that you and yours are healthy and navigating the many challenges we face today. In this issue, we feature teaching and programmatic activities in the Hub that include writing courses, teamwork and collaboration, Hub cocurriculars, and the Cross-College Challenge (XCC).

Effective written communication skills are a hallmark of liberal arts education and critical to career development, whatever a student's field of study. For this reason, we encourage all majors on campus to develop an inventory of Writing-Intensive courses (WIN) commensurate with their enrolled majors so that students learn appropriate methods and modes of writing within that field. Needing two such courses, all students would benefit from learning to write in their major and then broadening their written communication through a second WIN course outside of the major. This issue elaborates on these points and also links to a revised interpretive document by the General Education Committee (GEC) with guidance on crafting syllabi for WIN courses. We hope you find these stories useful and inspirational and are here to support you if you are interested in developing writing and other courses for the BU Hub.

David M. Carballo

Assistant Provost for General Education

Associate Professor of Anthropology, Archaeology, and Latin American Studies

Teaching Across the Disciplines

Linguistics Class Takes On Collaborative Research

The goal of Hub course CAS LX 346: Language Variation and Change is to explore how languages change across time and in social space, and for Associate Professor of Spanish and Linguistics Daniel Erker, the Hub's structure has helped to address a pedagogical challenge of the class: teaching simultaneously to undergraduate and graduate students. "I've tried to take advantage of the Hub's ability to bring students with a diverse set of interests into my courses and then focus the courses around collaborative research projects," Erker said. "Collaborative research projects scale really nicely when you have undergraduate students who have a broad range of interests, and then master's students who have very specific interests, and then Ph.D. students who have professional-level academic interests." This spring, students in CAS LX 346, which carries Hub units in Social Inquiry I and Teamwork/Collaboration, worked in teams to collectively research whether some Bostonians were losing some of their characteristic ways of speaking. Collaborating on Slack and Zoom, student groups created presentations that analyzed their respective data sets, and Erker later combined these presentations into a [video](#) that tells the story of the class's research. "This approach has allowed me to give students tremendous agency and ownership over the direction of the course," Erker said. "It's been effective pedagogically, and students seem to really like it."

More Writing-Intensive Courses Needed

The General Education Committee and the BU Hub are strongly encouraging all departments and programs to continue to develop Writing-Intensive courses to help to meet student demand (all students are required to earn two Hub units in the Writing-Intensive Course Hub area). For the most recent GEC interpretive document on Writing-Intensive courses, please visit the [Hub website](#). A key takeaway from the WIN interpretive document is that total page length should not be seen as an impediment to the development of WIN courses. The main variable is that students receive feedback on their writing multiple times during the semester, whether it be short-form pieces, lab notebooks, or scaffolded research papers.

Teaching Writing and Research Skills with Wikipedia

As a part of her innovative Hub courses for the CAS Writing Program, Lecturer Malavika Shetty has students generate Wikipedia content through assignments that combine research, writing, and editing. For Shetty, these assignments have aligned well with the learning outcomes for such Hub areas as Digital/Multimedia Expression—for example, with CAS WR 152: Writing, Research, & Inquiry with Digital/Multimedia Expression (which carries Hub units in Writing, Research, and Inquiry, Digital/Multimedia Expression, and Research and Information Literacy). "On Wikipedia, students are both users of the

technology and knowledge creators, and by creating this knowledge, they are getting practical experience in how this technology works,” Shetty said. “Not only are they producing content, but they are also able to evaluate and reflect on that content and on the technology that they are using.” Other benefits of Wikipedia-based assignments are that they allow international students to create content related to their cultural backgrounds, and that they enable students to see their research being viewed on a public website. “It’s very empowering for a lot of students—doing the research and putting it up on a page, and then seeing that a lot of people are actually using that knowledge,” Shetty said. To see examples of Wikipedia entries created by Shetty’s students, please visit pages edited by [Lara Werneck \(CAS '23\)](#) and [Zhitong Su \(CAS '21\)](#).

Cross-College Challenge (XCC)

XCC Call for Faculty

Are you interested in co-teaching an interdisciplinary course addressing a substantial real-world problem or an enduring human question? The Cross-College Challenge (XCC) is open to all full-time BU faculty from the Charles River, Medical, and Fenway Campuses and is now accepting new faculty to teach in 2021-2022. For more information, please visit bu.edu/xcc-faculty/ or contact XCC Faculty Director Sandi Deacon Carr at sdeacon@bu.edu.



Click above to view the XCC Faculty Insights video

XCC Featured Student Projects

As spring 2020 abruptly went to remote instruction, students in Cross-College Challenge (XCC) courses (HUB XC 433) epitomized creativity and collaboration in their final presentations. To view examples of their resilience, please visit the [XCC Student Experience webpage](#).



Click above to view BU Spark Demo Day video (HUB XC 433 C1)



Click above to view Virtual Puppet Slam video (HUB XC 433 D1)

Hub Cocurriculars

Innovate@BU and Hub Cocurricular Program Share Common Goals

[Innovate@BU](#) and its programming team at the [BUild Lab IDG Capital Student Innovation Center](#) have participated in the Hub cocurricular program since its inception and currently offer two Hub cocurriculars: HUB CC 161: Starting a Startup and HUB CC 163: How to Launch a Project (each of which carry a Hub unit in Creativity/Innovation). HUB CC 161, which focuses on the process of transforming an idea into a start-up company or nonprofit, was developed by Program Director of Business Ventures Rachel Spekman, and according to Spekman, the Hub and the BUild Lab have paired well on account of parallel goals. “Hub cocurriculars and the BUild Lab started at the same time, and there were some nice synergies around how to get this off of the ground together,” Spekman said. This past spring, Spekman worked with 14 students in HUB CC 161, and three of her student teams are continuing to work on their ideas on the [Innovation Pathway](#) program this summer. “The most meaningful part of this experience has been seeing students having ‘a-ha’ moments and really starting to soar as a result,” Spekman said.

For Program Director of Social Innovation Blake Sims St. Louis, alignment between BUild Lab and Hub learning objectives has been important to the success of these Hub cocurriculars. “The Creativity/Innovation learning outcomes mirror very nicely many of our learning outcomes as a department, which has been great,” Sims St. Louis said. In HUB CC 163, which Sims St. Louis developed, students use a human-centered design approach to pursue their own projects, such as a policy idea or a passion project, and according to Sims St. Louis, the structure of the Hub cocurricular has helped to support students in their work with the BUild Lab. “Innovate@BU is able to form very personal relationships with students because they are working on projects that really matter to them—and so having a supportive environment for them is crucial,” Sims St. Louis said. “The Hub cocurricular has provided a weekly checkpoint, where students can receive feedback from peers and connect with staff, and has allowed for a full level of support for these students.”

Innovate@BU is a University-wide initiative to enable BU Terriers to become drivers of innovation in their lives, careers, and communities. The BUild Lab IDG Capital Student Innovation Center serves as its physical home on campus and provides student programming focused on building innovation skills and establishing an entrepreneurial mindset.



Innovate@BU Program Director of Social Innovation Blake Sims St. Louis speaks with Hub cocurricular and other students as part of a BUild Lab program in fall 2018.

Remote Teaching Resources

Remote Teaching Reflections from Hub Teaching Excellence Faculty Fellows

Two [Hub Teaching Excellence Faculty Fellows](#), Joseph Harris (Assistant Professor, Sociology, CAS) and Sophie Godley (Clinical Assistant Professor, Community Health Sciences, SPH), recently shared some personal reflections on teaching remotely during the COVID-19 global pandemic this past spring. To read their reflections, please visit the [BU Center for Teaching & Learning website](#).

Stay in the Loop with the BU Hub

Our hope is that the BU Hub lives up to its name as a central node on campus that helps to keep us all connected. We would love to hear from you about your Hub courses and experiences! Please share your Hub stories and resources with us by sending a note to thehub@bu.edu.

Want to learn more about the Hub? Please visit our website at www.bu.edu/hub.

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