



THE DEREK BOK CENTER FOR  
TEACHING AND LEARNING

ANNUAL REPORT  
2021-22



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## DEAR FRIENDS,

After more than a year of teaching, learning, and working remotely, we returned to campus and to in-person teaching for the 2021-22 academic year. Although the pandemic continued to bring uncertainty and stress, we appreciated connecting with students and instructors in person, and helping faculty and graduate student instructors develop meaningful learning experiences for their students.

Throughout the year, we helped instructors navigate uncertainty and change arising from the ongoing pandemic. As we returned to campus in August, we helped instructors adapt to teaching in person, with masks. In preparation for the likelihood that class members might need to isolate due to COVID, we developed guidance about maintaining academic continuity during student absences. As circumstances of the pandemic changed, we were nimble in adapting—pivoting to offer Winter Teaching Week remotely due to the rise of the Omicron variant. Whether our offerings were held virtually or in person, we maintained our focus on creating community among instructors, as well as students.

We embraced the opportunities afforded by being back on campus. We welcomed over a thousand undergraduates into the Learning Lab studio to participate in activities that were not feasible over Zoom and that took advantage of the physical space and physical materials. Graduate students practiced teaching in classrooms during our Bok Seminars and pre-term workshops. Our student fellows met as cohorts in our spaces, learning from each other and building connections across disciplines. We prepared Harvard Horizons scholars to present their research in Sanders

Theatre for the first time since 2019. At the same time, we revised our practices to benefit from the Zoom era; many of our individual consultations with instructors moved online, and we continued to build out the digital resources that we had created out of necessity during the pandemic.

We partnered with instructors to create transformational learning experiences for all students, embodying the mission of Harvard College to educate citizens and citizen leaders. Increasingly we have helped faculty design assignments in which students apply what they are learning to change the world. We coached instructors in facilitating conversations in which students engage with challenging topics and share dissenting perspectives. Through our work developing Gen Ed Writes, we helped faculty and TFs design meaningful writing assignments and helped students better understand how to engage with these assignments.

As we continue to move into a post-pandemic world, we look forward to advancing teaching and learning at Harvard through fostering equity and inclusion; centering students in all aspects of our work; building community around teaching and learning; and sharing evidence-based practices.

Warmly,



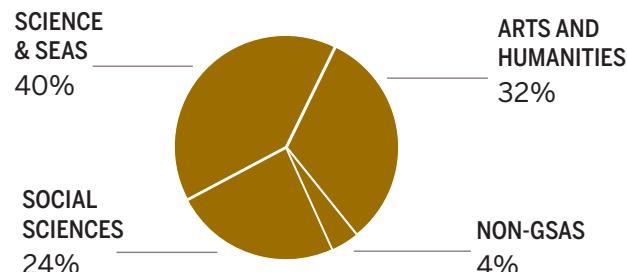
*Tamara J. Brenner*

**TAMARA BRENNER**  
Executive Director

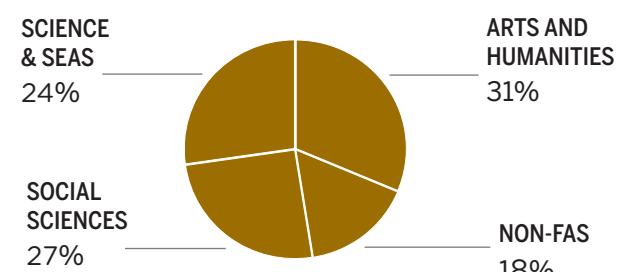
# OUR INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY



**628** unique **graduate students** participated in Bok Center programming



**190** unique **faculty** worked with the Bok Center



**96%** of **PhD programs** represented

**54** postdocs and teaching assistants worked with the Bok Center

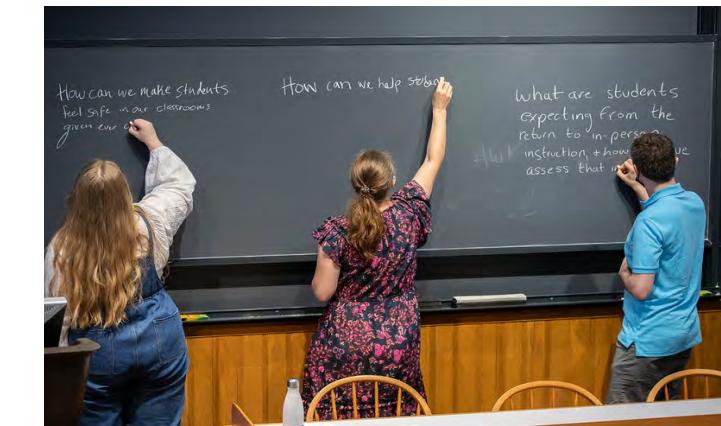
Numbers reflect activities between July 2021 and June 2022.

# STARTING THE TERM

Pre-term workshops introduce instructors to Bok Center resources and explore foundational topics in teaching and learning. In Fall 2021, we helped instructors navigate the return to campus and the classroom after more than a year of remote teaching and learning.

**245**

graduate students attended the **2021 Fall Teaching Conference** and **Winter Teaching Week 2022**.



We offered a 7-day hybrid **Fall Teaching Conference**, with our [Hit the Ground Running Canvas site](#) at its core.

- » Our 3-session **Fundamentals** training helped new TFs prepare for their first section, design a lesson plan, and create inclusive teaching environments.
- » We offered new “**Back Again**” sessions to allow TFs to explore resources and ideas as we readjusted to in-person teaching.
- » During **practice teaching** sessions, participants presented a short lesson to a small group of peers.
- » We facilitated a slate of **13 workshops**, which focused on key topics including equitable and inclusive teaching, teaching across disciplines, teaching with problem sets, and leading discussion sections.

Read more in our [news story about the Fall Teaching Conference](#).

The surge in COVID cases in December forced us to make a quick pivot to offer **Winter Teaching Week** entirely online. While our goal of helping PhD students connect, reflect, and recharge was harder to accomplish via Zoom, we nonetheless helped graduate students prepare for the upcoming semester through workshops on topics including growth mindset, how to teach reading and writing, syllabus design, and visual communication. Read more in our [news story about Winter Teaching Week](#).

We welcomed **new faculty** at orientation workshops in August. We facilitated a series of activities to help new faculty reflect on reentering the in-person classroom and develop transparent goals for their teaching.

In August and January, we offered **Course Assistant (CA) training** for undergraduates who teach, lead office hours, and facilitate help sessions. The workshops prepared CAs for their unique role of teaching and mentoring their peers.

# LEARNING IN COMMUNITY

We believe that learning about teaching happens best in collaborative settings. We create intergenerational communities where faculty, students, and staff learn from each others' experiences and collectively develop their expertise.

17

144

Bok Seminars

Unique Participants

162

Hours of Total Teaching Time

- » Our Bok Seminars program continued to grow and thrive, building on these core categories: Foundations, Methods & Classroom Practice, Equity & Inclusion, Communication & Language, and Professional Development.
- » Our seminars range from helping PhD students directly with their work supporting undergraduate learning in the classroom, to helping more advanced PhD students prepare for the job market and develop other professional skills. This year we developed new seminars on *Grading and Feedback Across Disciplines*, *Mindful Approaches to Race and the Classroom*, and *Intercultural Communication Skills for International PhD Students*.



Our biweekly **STEM journal club** for faculty and graduate students explored recent literature on science education research and encouraged a community of scientists to share ideas about effective teaching.

Through our **peer observation program**, cohorts of three junior faculty—plus a Bok facilitator—visited each other's classrooms and met to share reflections and ideas.

"The peer observation program was an invaluable tool for me as a first-time instructor. The interactions with instructors from other departments broadened my knowledge of pedagogy and the feedback they offered on my own teaching was extremely valuable."

Faculty Participant

# BOK TEACHING CERTIFICATE

The Bok Teaching Certificate gives PhD students a tangible marker of their commitment to developing as teachers in higher education. Graduate students who pursue the Certificate explore topics in teaching and learning through departmental pedagogy courses and Bok Seminars, reflect on their own teaching practice, and compile a portfolio of written materials. In the past year, 32 graduate students received the Bok Teaching Certificate, and 5 received the Bok Certificate in Teaching Language and Culture.



"My experience in completing the requirements for the Bok Teaching Certificate has taught me that teaching is both an art and a science. At the very least, I know that teaching requires as much preparation and reflection as a book-length project, and I am grateful to all my teachers at the Bok Center for this realization. The lessons I have learnt from the Bok Seminars will remain with me throughout my professional life and will encourage me to strive for being a better teacher."

ANIKET DE, PhD Student in History

"The pursuit of the Bok Teaching Certificate has allowed me to critically reflect on my own teaching and how I can more effectively connect with not only students, but also the general public who are interested in learning more about science. I was able to directly practice various skills related to teaching, such as writing homework questions. The feedback received from others was also extremely helpful, as each seminar had different participants, coming from diverse academic backgrounds, which allowed everyone to benefit from the new insights generated from those working outside of each person's own individual field."

CHARLES LAW, PhD Student in Astronomy



"I found the experience of pursuing the Teaching Certificate to be an extremely valuable one, and I am very glad that I decided to work on it during the pandemic. Pursuing the Certificate offered me a concrete goal and a feeling of support during a difficult and discouraging time. I also learned about many tools and techniques that I likely would not have otherwise been exposed to so early in my teaching career. I believe that taking the Bok Seminars made me feel much more confident in the classroom."

SOPHIA GATZIONIS, PhD Student in English

# EQUITY AND INCLUSION

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Equity and inclusion underlie all aspects of our work, from one-on-one consultations and course design projects to the work we do to build community among our fellows and workshop audiences. At the Bok Center, we believe that inclusive teaching requires curiosity, intention, reflection, and an orientation towards growth on the part of instructors, and that all learning is embodied learning.

## WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

The **Fall Teaching Conference** and **Winter Teaching Week** place an emphasis on inclusive teaching strategies, with plenary sessions and focused workshops on both equitable and inclusive teaching and identity and power dynamics in the classroom.

We work closely with our **Pedagogy Fellows** to ensure that their departmental teaching colloquia include sessions on equity and inclusion as well as a robust engagement with Harvard students' identities.

We offer a steady rotation of **Bok Seminars** on topics in this space, including *Mindful Approaches to Race in the Classroom* and *Inclusive, Antiracist, or Decolonial: Exploring Power and Privilege in the Classroom*.



## DIVERSITY STATEMENTS

Departments and universities are increasingly asking for diversity statements as part of hiring and the tenure and promotion process. We created [new resources](#) and workshops to help graduate students and faculty reflect on equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging in their teaching and develop their own diversity statement.

## CAMPUS COLLABORATIONS

The Bok Center has partnered with the FAS and University-wide Offices of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging to create and support programs and events designed to engage faculty, students, and staff in reimagining our campus community.

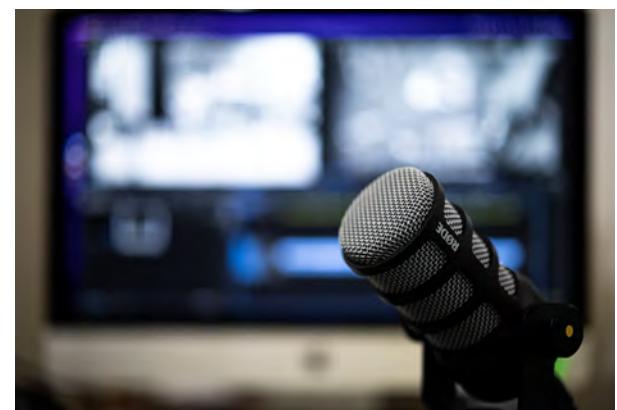


- » We helped to select and support the second cohort of **DIB Graduate Student Fellows**, a program hosted by the FAS Office for EDIB in collaboration with GSAS. Five students received training on topics including facilitating challenging conversations and inclusive teaching, and undertook department-based projects to enhance teaching practices, community-building, and climate.
- » Ashlie Sandoval, Assistant Director of Equity and Inclusion, and Adam Beaver, Director of Pedagogy, served on the planning committee for the inaugural University-wide **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Forum**, which was held in April and attracted over 2000 registrants. Sandoval contributed a workshop on Somatic Abolitionism and Mindful Pedagogy to the event.
- » We also partnered with the **Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations** to offer workshops and training for the Foundation's student interns.

## ACCESSIBILITY

The Learning Lab collaborated with faculty and student fellows to increase accessibility in College courses. For example, Media and Design Fellow (MDF) Sarah Rosenthal worked with Andrew Bottoms, Preceptor in Linguistics, to develop authentic means of providing students with feedback in his American Sign Language course. MDF Wesley Simon and Learning Lab Undergraduate Fellow (LLUF) Charlie McNamara collaborated on a film dubbing project to ensure that subtitles on non-English language films were accessible to students with visual impairments.

Two graduate student Pedagogy Fellows, Julia Judge Mulhall and Dana Mirsalis, developed workshops and written guidance to help TFs create accessible courses.



# TAILORED CONSULTATIONS

As we consult with faculty and graduate student instructors, we provide space for them to articulate their goals, talk through ideas or challenges, and consider their teaching from other perspectives. Additionally, we help instructors create activities and assignments for their courses that will engage their students in ways that are authentic to the material they are teaching.

## FACULTY CONSULTATIONS

**Faculty** consulted with Bok Center staff on topics ranging from designing a syllabus, to handling controversial topics in the classroom, to interpreting student feedback.

**143**

unique faculty

**160**

consultations  
on course and  
assignment design

**79**

consultations on other topics,  
including professional communication  
and developing grant proposals

## GRADUATE STUDENT CONSULTATIONS

**PhD students** consulted with Bok Center staff on topics that included strategies for teaching section, communication, and preparing their teaching materials for the job market.

**140**

unique graduate  
students

**187**

consultations

**173**

**class observations** prompted graduate student and faculty instructors to reflect on their teaching with Bok staff and fellows.

**76**

hours of office hours

Faculty and TFs stopped by **virtual office hours**, offered in collaboration with Academic Technology for the FAS and the Library.

# PARTNERING WITH DEPARTMENTS

We work with partners across departments to build collaborations across disciplines and to create department-based programs and resources. Our Fellows Programs are prime examples of how these connections strengthen support for teaching and promote learning, community, and professional development for PhD students.

**31**

**Pedagogy Fellows**—experienced graduate students from 27 departments and programs—supported their peers by leading pedagogy seminars and workshops, developing resources on teaching and professional development, and consulting with TFs. Each Pedagogy Fellow completed a capstone project to reflect and learn from each other, and share their work with their departments and the broader teaching community. View the [Pedagogy Fellow Capstone Gallery](#), and read more in our [news story about the Pedagogy Fellows](#).



The **Media and Design Fellows** (MDF) program aims to raise the levels of multimedia literacy and digital pedagogy across departments. Graduate student MDFs worked with Learning Lab staff and departmental stakeholders to determine priorities for deploying and supporting media tools across the department. Read more about the MDFs on page 14 of this report.

**21**

Workshops

Bok staff led workshops in departments for graduate students on topics including discussion leading, facilitating difficult conversations in section, and creating teaching portfolios.

# MAKING HARVARD FEEL LIKE HOME

Every fall the Bok staff are among the first members of the campus community to greet new faculty at the New Faculty Institute and Navigating Harvard orientations organized by the Office of Faculty Affairs. Among our priorities is helping the newest members of our teaching faculty adjust to the teaching culture in the FAS—to answer their questions about Harvard and let them know that they’re not alone as they learn to navigate the many procedures and offices that give shape to the curriculum. At their best, these exchanges are never “just” about logistics; what starts as a question about where to procure blue books easily becomes a deeper, wide-ranging conversation about the faculty member’s assessment scheme, the kinds of goals they have for their students, and how well they think the lesson plans that they brought with them to Cambridge actually match the kinds of students they’ve met since they arrived. It’s no surprise that some of our most fulfilling partnerships at the Bok Center involve new faculty, who are especially eager and open to the new possibilities that come with their new appointments.

## IRENE PEIRANO GARRISON: COMPOSING THE FUTURE OF LATIN

Irene Peirano Garrison, Pope Professor of the Latin Language and Literature (and a recent arrival from Yale), reached out to the Bok Center during the Spring 2021 semester about the possibility of hosting a custom Course Design Institute for her colleagues in Classics. Their goal was to engage in a substantial redesign of some of the core composition courses within their concentration, part of a larger departmental effort to make the Classics more accessible to students coming from a wide array of backgrounds. Together with Peirano Garrison and her colleague Jared Hudson, the Bok Center hosted several days of intensive debate, brainstorming, and research that highlighted the pedagogical potential of a trove of records about Latin pedagogy in the Harvard Archives hitherto unknown to the Classics faculty. Ultimately, the project resulted in a revitalized Latin composition course entitled “Doing Things with Latin: Syntax and Stylistics,” which Peirano Garrison taught in fall 2021 to great enthusiasm. Profiled in the *Harvard Gazette*, Peirano highlighted the fact that the new concept for the course that she developed in conversation with her colleagues and the Bok Center enabled her and her students to approach their study of Latin texts “with a questioning spirit, and within that to engage with Latin pedagogy as a political phenomenon.” Read more in the [Harvard Gazette article about Prof. Peirano Garrison’s course redesign](#).



“I am so grateful for the help we received from the Bok Center!”

IRENE PEIRANO GARRISON, Pope Professor of the Latin Language and Literature

## JULIA RHYDER: NEW APPROACHES TO AN ANCIENT SCRIPTURE

Julia Rhyder, Assistant Professor of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, approached the Bok Center soon after she arrived at Harvard during the summer of 2021. Having completed her doctoral studies in Switzerland, Rhyder (who hails originally from Australia) came armed with questions about how she might best work with American students interested in the Hebrew Bible, her area of expertise. Though she was taught in a fairly traditional way that emphasized sight translation and intimate engagement with the rich and rather rebarbative tradition of learned commentaries, Rhyder aspired to teach a course that would be centered on a more thematic, historical, and archaeological approach to understanding the Bible. Working closely with the Bok Center’s Adam Beaver and Eleanor Finnegan, Rhyder developed a new vision for her course in which her students worked collaboratively on a semester-long project to produce their own commentary or scholarly companion to the biblical texts they were reading, one that respected the importance of linguistic mastery and translation while also going beyond to engage students in thinking conceptually about the history of God. Rhyder was so pleased with the experiment that she published a reflection in the academic journal *Ancient Jew Review*. Read more in the [Ancient Jew Review article by Prof. Rhyder](#).



“I hope [the AJR article] communicates just how much I have loved teaching this seminar and how much your advice helped me. I am so grateful for how you’ve walked with me this first year of teaching at Harvard.”

JULIA RHYDER, Assistant Professor of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations

## TARA MENON: NOT YOUR PARENTS’ VICTORIANS

Tara Menon, Assistant Professor of English, is a study in apparent contradictions: an international touch rugby player, she is also a pathbreaking scholar of British novels who uses the tools of data analysis to make literary connections across time and space. She arrived at Harvard eager to engage with colleagues in her department and at the Bok Center about how to balance a respect for the traditional periods and canons of British literature with her—and her students’—keen desire to master and apply new and unconventional frames and methods to the reading of new and classic texts. One of the results was a popular course on “City Fictions,” which introduced students to pairings of four cities and their emblematic longform narratives: Charles Dickens’ *Bleak House* for London, Suketu Mehta’s *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found* for Mumbai, Teju Cole’s *Open City* for New York, and Yu Miri’s *Tokyo Ueno Station* for the Japanese capital. We were delighted to be able to help Prof. Menon think through how to incorporate a diverse range of sources into her syllabus and her assignments. Read more in the [Harvard Gazette article about Prof. Menon’s approach](#).



# THE LEARNING LAB

The Learning Lab is an intergenerational team composed of staff and undergraduate and graduate fellows supporting creative approaches to teaching and learning. In collaboration with faculty, the Learning Lab team explores, designs, and builds innovative materials, assignments, and activities for Harvard courses.

## THE LEARNING LAB:

SUPPORTED

**70**

**courses and projects**

— enrolling 2,397 undergraduates.

OFFERED

**110**

**workshops and hackathons** to help students develop new skills and complete course projects.

PROVIDED MORE THAN

**721**

**hours** of direct face-to-face support for students and faculty.



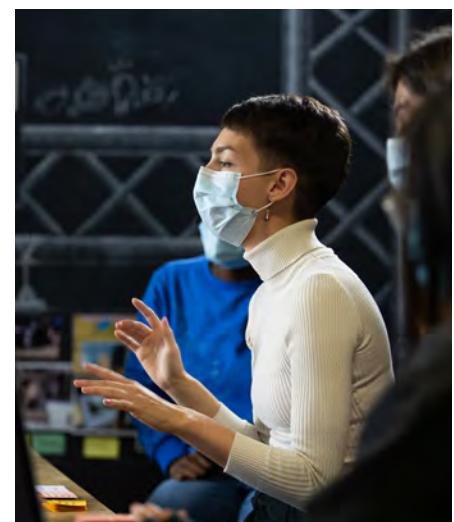
## OUR INTERGENERATIONAL DESIGN TEAM

**36**

**Learning Lab Undergraduate Fellows** (LLUFs) tested assignments, assisted in building course materials, and assisted with workshops and hackathons.

**21**

**Media and Design Fellows** (MDFs) developed and deployed their skills in technology, art and performance; designed assignments and activities; led workshops for courses; and supported the implementation of innovative digital methods and tools in undergraduate courses at Harvard.



# MEDIA & DESIGN FELLOWS

Media & Design Fellows (MDFs) partner with faculty to design and prototype activities that integrate new media tools and practices in the classroom, and then support students with workshops, hackathons, and resources. As part of their support for individual courses, MDFs lead class meetings and events in the Learning Lab that explore and illustrate key course concepts and also teach students the concrete skills and tools they will utilize to complete assignments and final projects.

## CLAIRE ADAMS: MULTIMODAL PROJECTS

As a way of augmenting students' learning in History courses, Media & Design Fellow Claire Adams (PhD candidate in History) developed a series of workshops at the Learning Lab to introduce students to the fundamentals of visual communication and presenting academic findings in digital forms. By designing activities and assignments that aligned with course content and historical methods, Claire helped students gain experience in multimodal communication in a number of History and Gen Ed courses. Read more in our [news story about Claire's development of multimodal projects](#).



"The most exciting aspect of working as an MDF is the opportunity to learn how the various programs, applications, and assignments are being used pedagogically across various departments. This has opened my eyes to ideas about how I would like to structure my own courses in the future and how I could better conduct my own historical research."

CLaire Adams, PhD Candidate in History

## IGNACIO AZCUETA: PODCASTING ASSIGNMENTS

Media & Design Fellow Ignacio Azcueta (PhD candidate in Romance Languages and Literatures) developed a podcasting workshop for students in Spanish 50: Advanced Spanish II: Creative Writing and Performance. Ignacio brought the students to the Learning Lab studio and led them in a close-reading of a podcast episode. Then, Ignacio helped students think through the design of their own podcast assignments, in which students imagined a conversation between characters found in poems and short stories assigned in the course. Read more in our [news story about Ignacio's work with this podcasting assignment](#).

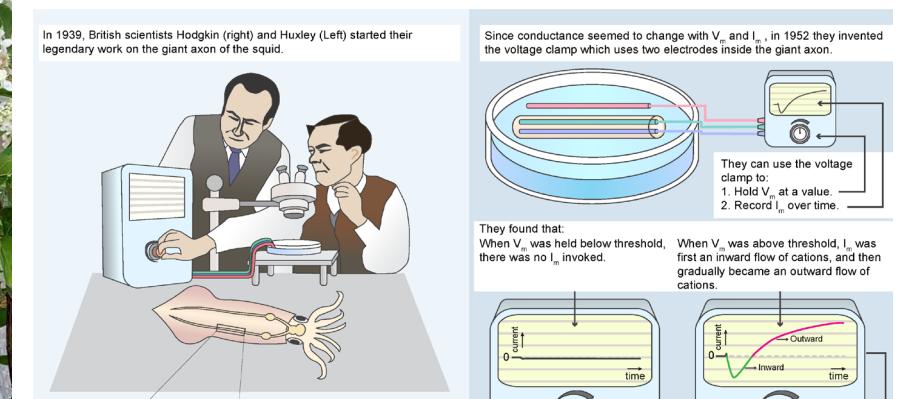


## XIAOMENG HAN: GRAPHICAL ABSTRACTS

In MCB 80: The Neurobiology of Behavior, many Harvard undergraduates encounter scientific papers for the first time. As a way to augment students' understanding of influential research papers in neuroscience, Media & Design Fellow Xiaomeng Han (PhD candidate in Neuroscience) developed "graphical abstracts"—a form that uses illustration and graphic design to explain key concepts in neuroscience. Her graphical abstracts illustrate how original research in neuroscience was conducted, helping students gain a better understanding of important findings and processes. Read more in our [news story about Xiaomeng's graphical abstracts](#).



The Hodgkin-Huxley Model of the Action Potential





## A RETURN TO EMBODIED LEARNING

With the return to campus, the Learning Lab sought to engage its digital and art-making capacities to make the most out of students' in-person, embodied experiences in Harvard's classrooms and on campus. While there were many things that we as the Learning Lab did to support courses during the prior year of remote teaching—such as developing digital tools that could be used online—this year we wanted to focus on integrating an array of digital and creative technologies into the physical space.

Our workshops for Harvard courses aimed to engage students through live experiences. As one example, we supported HISTSCI 1890: Co-ops, Commons, and Communes: The Technology of Cooperation, a course taught by Dave Unger that explores avant-garde, radical, and creative collectives of different kinds, including workers' movements, artists' movements, and other groups that produced manifestos.

The course also explored different sorts of designing cycles that are used in project management. We hosted the course for a workshop in which students engaged in a collaborative mode of making and then tested out different approaches to making—different types of development cycles, different types of iteration cycles, different ways of checking in with

clients, and different ways of coming up with plans in advance versus using rapid iterations.

As a central component of this workshop, students made buttons, in part because making little buttons has been important in the history of artist collectives and radical movements. The Suffragettes did it, and a variety of movements in the 1960s and 1970s made buttons as well. We encouraged students to make buttons based on the Riot Grrrl manifesto, which was on students' reading list that week. Different groups of students were assigned to make buttons in alignment with different design methodologies: either come up with a perfect plan in advance or make a working prototype as quickly as possible and iterate from there.

Through this activity, students had an embodied learning experience of what it means to collaborate according to these different methodologies. What also manifested were all sorts of interesting emergent phenomena that we had not anticipated. For instance, four students who volunteered to work in the button factory ended up creating a Button Makers Union that revolted against their clients. It was a great experience of embodied learning for students and for the course, and they and we will return to it again.

**“It is one thing to talk abstractly about the relationship between organizational structure and team dynamics, but having the students see the immediate effects of different project organization styles really brought the point home. The session helped set a playful collaborative tone that carried through the whole semester.”**

DAVE UNGER, Lecturer on the History of Science

# CREATIVITY AND ENTHUSIASM

In their support of innovative course development within FAS, the Learning Lab partners with faculty to design assignments, teach material, and develop both analog and digital tools for classes and departments. This work enables faculty to give their students access to further dimensions of the subject matter, new skills, and the ability to unpack and explore their course's content in deeper—and often surprising—ways.



"The creativity and enthusiasm of our MDF was amazing! I feel like she was always willing to try something and coming up with ideas of how to make our assignments and activities even better."

**ROBIN HOPKINS, Associate Professor of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology**



"The entire Learning Lab team is so helpful and enthusiastic. They create a welcome space for all students and different types of learners but also demonstrate that fun and playfulness is not antithetical to critical or rigorous thinking. It's a fantastic, supportive space in which to build my students' fundamental academic skills."

**AJ GOLD, Head Preceptor of Expository Writing**



"The Learning Lab provided an opportunity for students to engage with the subjects we've been covering in class using a different medium. My students took the primarily textual material they have been working with in class and through the Learning Lab's support created visual representations that identified connections between study cases and illuminated them in new ways. Through this, the students gained a deeper understanding of processes that had only been discussed theoretically in class, and acquired new skills in the area of data visualization."

**SHAI DROMI, Associate Senior Lecturer on Sociology**

# SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

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Teaching is an act of scholarly communication, and developing communication skills is an important component of professional development. This year we focused on communicating in person (both with masks and without) after more than a year of being confined to Zoom, and on getting used to a hybrid academic world where we need to be skilled at communicating via different media, from the Sanders Theatre stage to Zoom.

## WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

In the fall, we invited our colleague Erika Bailey, Head of Voice and Speech at the American Repertory Theater and Lecturer on Theater, Dance and Media, to speak at the Fall Teaching Conference. Her presentation on [Teaching with Presence](#) provided guidance on using our voices and bodies in person again, especially as we adjusted to teaching while masked.

In our Bok Seminar [Engaging Audiences in our Professional Stories](#), graduate students practiced communicating their research and giving talks in person and on Zoom to compare how their strategies change and what adjustments they need to make based on our communication medium.

We have compiled our key communication resources for graduate students into a new module, [Engaged Communication](#), on our [Hit the Ground Running Canvas site](#). Read more in our [news story about Engaged Communication](#).



## COMMUNICATION IN UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

We worked with courses—ranging from French to Sociology to Organismic and Evolutionary Biology—that ask students to move beyond conventional academic communication in order to intervene in the world politically or ethically, to educate the public, and to develop skills that will help them in their lives beyond Harvard. The Learning Lab partnered with faculty to support students in making podcasts, video essays, and oral presentations, among other forms, to achieve these goals.



## HARVARD HORIZONS

We worked intensively throughout the spring to prepare the 2022 [Harvard Horizons](#) Scholars to present their research on the [Sanders Theatre stage](#) on April 12. We supported the scholars as they grappled with important questions in their research, decided what story to tell, developed compelling visuals, and engaged their voice and body in the crafting and delivery of short talks about their dissertation research. We also prepared the scholars to share their research at an interactive webinar in June.

## FACULTY RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

We supported faculty winners of the [Star-Friedman Challenge](#) for Promising Scientific Research as well as the [Aramont Fellows](#) as they prepared presentations of their research for a general audience.

## SUPPORT FOR SENIOR THESIS WRITERS

We collaborated with the Academic Resource Center to offer a workshop for [senior thesis writers](#) in January. The workshop helped students identify and communicate key ideas about their research projects.

# INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS AND SCHOLARS

We offer opportunities for international PhD students and scholars to develop their speaking, teaching, and cross-cultural communication skills. It was exciting to welcome international students to campus for the first time since 2019; being in-person and getting settled at Harvard was so important for new students as well as students who had to start their graduate programs remotely.

We conducted **oral English proficiency interviews** for 77 international PhD students and scholars.

**8** undergraduate **Culture and Communication Consultants** (CCCs) offered insights about Harvard undergraduate culture and supported international graduate students as they developed their English language and communication skills. The CCCs served as language partners, led discussion groups, participated in Bok Seminars, and organized special events such as Harvard House tours.

**40** graduate students participated in our **Discussion Group for International PhD students**, which provides opportunities for international PhD students to connect with each other and with undergraduate CCCs to practice oral communication skills and discuss topics related to language, culture, teaching, and current events.

**30** students completed intensive Bok Seminars that focused on **communication and language**. Our seminars offer extensive individual consultations and tailored support.



Our **new online resource site**, *Professional Communication for International Scholars*, provides an overview of academic culture and communication at Harvard, English language skills (speaking, listening, writing, and reading), and cross-cultural communication skills. The site had 250 participants and 7,000 page views this year.

# BRIDGING CULTURES

Our undergraduate Culture and Communication Consultants (CCCs) help international graduate students develop their English language and communication skills; at the same time, the CCCs learn a great deal from this experience. We asked two of our graduating seniors, who both worked as CCCs for three or more years, to reflect on what they learned from working at the Bok Center.

"This work involves helping TFs learn how to present information to a variety of audiences, formulate professional introductions for job searches, answer questions in a clear and succinct way, and so much more. These are strategies that also help us [undergraduates] as we navigate similar experiences in our own lives."

"I enjoy helping the international TFs (ITFs) advance in their professional development; I know how eager many international TFs are to start teaching undergraduates, so helping them excel in their presenting and speaking skills feels very gratifying. There was one ITF that I worked with for three semesters; she was my language partner, so we met once a week to work on her English skills. A couple semesters later, I enrolled in an economics class, and coincidentally she was a TF in the class! It was so fulfilling to see how much her English had improved and to watch her teach other students using the strategies that we had practiced in our meetings."

JACKIE FEFFER '22, CCC



"Working as a CCC has helped me talk to people from all walks of life and granted me a greater latitude of cultural references and schemas that facilitate intercultural communication. Learning about the various intellectual and academic journeys of each of our international teaching fellows was definitely a highlight of this position. Especially during microteachings [short, 5-minute practice lessons] it was fun to hear the grad students try to explain complex and nuanced topics from their fields while also practicing their language skills."

ELIJAH SCHIMELPFENIG '22, CCC



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Gen Ed Writes website. At the top, there are navigation links for HOME, FOR COURSE HEADS, FOR TFS & TAS, FOR STUDENTS, DECODERS+, and ABOUT+. Below the header, a banner reads "Welcome to Gen Ed Writes, a resource for faculty, teaching fellows and teaching assistants, and undergraduate students in Harvard's General Education courses." It features three main sections: "Are you creating assignments and materials for a Gen Ed course?" (FOR COURSE HEADS), "Are you working directly with students on their writing in a Gen Ed course?" (FOR TFS & TAS), and "Are you working on a writing assignment in a Gen Ed course?" (FOR STUDENTS). A footer link at the bottom says "Curious about how to adopt Gen Ed Writes into your course?"

## MEANINGFUL WRITING

This past winter we launched a new website, [Gen Ed Writes](#), which represents the culmination of over three years of effort on the part of the Bok Center to partner with faculty as they design assignments, syllabi, and in-class activities for General Education courses. Our goal is to develop a culture of meaningful, metacognitively rich writing assignments—meaningful both in terms of their effectiveness in teaching students to think and communicate more cogently and persuasively, and in terms of their authentic connection to students' interests and concerns. Supported by a grant from [the Davis Educational Foundation](#), the Bok Center has been helping Gen Ed instructors develop expertise in writing pedagogy, improved disciplinary transparency, and better models for less common writing assignments.

Behind Gen Ed Writes stands an impressive amount of effort undertaken by a large cast of faculty and staff, led by Jonah Johnson, the Bok Center's Assistant Director for Writing Pedagogy. The first step involved assembling materials from Gen Ed courses, including syllabi, assignment prompts, and rubrics, that could serve as models of writing in the Gen Ed curriculum. Working with Johnson, a team of three preceptors from the Harvard College Writing Program took inventory of recently offered Gen Ed

courses, including several that had participated in the Bok Center's Course Design Institutes in 2019–2020. This process yielded detailed case studies of approximately fifteen courses, which focused primarily on identifying moments in the course materials that showed strong alignment with “signature moves” taught in Expository Writing, engaged explicitly or implicitly in rendering their disciplinary conventions transparent, or asked students to write either in non-traditional academic genres (like policy memos) or in non-academic genres (like podcasts).

Armed with a set of case studies, Johnson's team pivoted to designing the Gen Ed Writes site itself. The project's graduate assistant created a library of ~30 annotated excerpts of assignment prompts illustrating the concepts and principles of assignment design laid out in subpages focused on “[The Elements of Writing Prompts](#).“ In parallel, Johnson designed guidance to help professors, TFs, and students stay on the same page by laying out best practices and tools for designing assignment prompts, teaching with writing, and giving/receiving effective feedback. In the coming year we hope to collect more feedback from Harvard users, and to share the site's resources with educational developers and writing instructors beyond Harvard.

“Gen Ed Writes has helped me be intentional about the ways in which I give feedback throughout each step of the grading process—from designing rubrics to writing margin comments—and the grade norming workshop that our TF team did with the Bok Center helped ensure that our grading process was consistent and equitable.”

KAREN SMITH, PhD Candidate in Health Policy and Head TF for GENED 1079: Why Is There No Cure for Health?

# EXPERTISE FROM BEYOND HARVARD

The Bok Center is always looking for opportunities to introduce Harvard instructors to the latest currents in teaching and learning from the wider world of higher education. In 2021–2022, we invited two speakers to address Harvard audiences about how instructors can be responsive to students' evolving needs in, and beyond, the classroom.

## STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

The pandemic exacerbated an already rising rate of mental health challenges among students. Therefore, it is more important than ever to think about how the way that we design and present our courses—and especially our policies with regard to things like deadlines, participation, and collaboration—affects the wellbeing of our students and teaching staff. This winter, [Sarah Lipson](#) (Assistant Professor, Department of Health Law Policy and Management, Boston University School of Public Health and a Principal Investigator at [The Healthy Minds Network](#)) joined the Bok Center to lead two workshops about ways that faculty and Teaching Fellows can support students' mental health. [Advice arising from these workshops can be found on the Bok Center website.](#)

## TAKING PEDAGOGY SERIOUSLY

In May, the Bok Center hosted [David Gooblar](#), author of [The Missing Course: Everything They Never Taught You About College Teaching](#), for two workshops. Gooblar facilitated an interactive lecture aimed at faculty focused on principles and strategies for engaging students so that they are excited to learn. Visit the Bok Center website to watch [videos of Gooblar's lecture](#) on “Taking Pedagogy Seriously.” Gooblar also led a workshop for graduate students about pedagogical practices that can lead to unequal outcomes among students and research-based approaches that can help every student succeed.



# OUR TEAM

Spring 2022



**Adam Beaver**  
Director of Pedagogy

**Tamara Brenner**  
Executive Director

**Rebecca Brown**  
Assistant Director, Graduate  
Student Programming

**Casey Cann**  
Technical Operations and  
Learning Lab Studio Manager

**Christine D'Auria**  
Assistant Director of the Learning  
Lab

**Danielle Duke**  
Program Coordinator

**Sarah Emory**  
Assistant Director, International  
Teachers and Scholars

**Eleanor Finnegan**  
Assistant Director, Faculty  
Programming

**Katie Gilligan**  
Learning Lab Project Manager

**Shava Glater**  
Program Coordinator

**Grace Gomez**  
Program Coordinator

**Jonah Johnson**  
Assistant Director, Writing  
Pedagogy

**Yasemin Kalender**  
Assistant Director, Science  
Pedagogy

**Jordan Koffman**  
Assistant Director of the  
Learning Lab

**Marlon Kuzmick**  
Director of the Learning Lab

**Laura Madden**  
Director of Administration

**Luke Pollack**  
Media Production Coordinator

**Pamela Pollock**  
Director of Professional  
Development

**Ashlie Sandoval**  
Assistant Director, Equity  
and Inclusion

**46** Undergraduate Fellows

Learning Lab Undergraduate Fellows | Culture and  
Communication Consultants | Undergraduate  
Pedagogy Fellows

**58** Graduate Fellows

Media and Design Fellows | Pedagogy Fellows |  
Teaching Consultants | Life Sciences Outreach  
Fellows



**HARVARD** | THE DEREK BOK CENTER FOR  
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