

**Northeastern Illinois University**  
**New Faculty Fall 2007**  
**Self-Introductions**

**Ms. Kim Ambriz**

*Art*

She received her MFA in Printmaking, from the University of Iowa in 2005, and also holds a BA in Photography from Columbia College in Chicago. She has exhibited both locally and nationally, as well as taking part in collaborative ventures such as group installation projects, print exchanges and organizing group art shows. Ambriz's prints and drawings are informed by and reference the formats of pictorial histories, maps, manuscripts and chronicles, especially those of ancient Aztec codices and Plains Indian ledger drawings. She lives and works in Chicago where she also spends time as a musician, performing and recording under the name *yearling*.

**Dr. Abhijit Banerjee**

*Geography and Environmental Studies*

Originally from Calcutta, India, I completed my undergraduate education at the University of Calcutta, majoring in biological sciences and specializing in ecology. During that time I developed a keen interest in global sustainability issues and realized that a sole emphasis on ecological science was not where my passion lay. As a result, I came to the U.S. for interdisciplinary graduate studies, first completing my M.S. in "Environmental Policy" from Michigan Technological University and then my Ph.D. in "Environmental and Energy Policy" from the University of Delaware. Over the course of my graduate studies, I decided to pursue a career in academia, honing my teaching skills as adjunct instructor at the University of Delaware, Towson University (MD), and Temple University (PA). My teaching and research interests include environmental policy and politics; development, sustainability and globalization; environmental activism and sustainable lifestyles.

**Dr. Howard Bultinck**

*Educational Leadership & Development*

I am the new program coordinator for the ELAD program. I recently retired from Sunset Ridge School District No.29, Northfield, Illinois after serving as Superintendent for the last 24 years. During that time I also served as middle school principal and business manager. I have been an adjunct professor here for 12 years teaching seven different classes in the ELAD program. I am currently under contract with Eye on Education with NEIU Professor Lynn Bush to publish a book in the fall of 08.

**Dr. John Casey**

*Philosophy*

I defended my dissertation, on theories of relations in medieval philosophy, in 2002 at Loyola University Chicago (where I had also studied as an undergraduate). I was at that time on a one-year visiting position at Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa (where I taught mainly philosophy of religion). I returned to Chicago for a position as a visiting lecturer in philosophy here at Northeastern. I held that position until I was hired this year full time at the rank of assistant professor. My research and teaching concern mainly the history of philosophy and logic.

**Dr. Christina Ciecierski***Economics*

She was an assistant research professor at the Institute for Health Research and Policy at the University of Illinois, Chicago. Prior to that, she was a visiting research scholar and a Fulbright Scholar at Warsaw University in Poland. At the University of Illinois, Chicago, Christina earned a Ph.D. and an M.A. in economics and a B.A. in history and economics. Her dissertation is titled, "The Impact of Alcohol Control Policies on Alcohol Use and Abuse among College Students." Her research interests include health economics, demography and labor economics, and international economics. She joined NEIU in the spring of 2007.

**Dr. Martyn de Bryn***Political Science*

I received my PhD in political science, with a specialization in comparative/European politics from Purdue University in August 2003. My research focuses on the European Union and in particular the process of constitution formation. I will be teaching courses in comparative and European politics at NEIU. I come to NEIU from St John Fisher College in Rochester New York where I taught a variety of political science courses for the last two years. In my spare time I enjoy reading, biking, and cooking.

**Dr. Amanda Dykema-Engblade***Psychology*

Amanda Dykema-Engblade received her Ph.D. in Applied Social Psychology from Loyola University Chicago. Her research interests include small group performance and decision-making. Amanda was most recently an Assistant Professor of Psychology at St. Xavier University. She is married and has a two-year-old daughter, Evelyn. Her hobbies include cooking, discovering new restaurants in Chicago, and running to support her eating habit. Amanda is looking forward to joining the NEIU community in the fall.

**Dr. Essam Elshafie***Accounting, Business Law & Finance*

He received his Ph.D. in accounting from Kent State University, Ohio in December of 2005. His Master and Bachelor degrees in accounting are from Cleveland State University, Ohio and Cairo University, Egypt, respectively. He got his practical experiences from years of working in the banking and the manufacturing industries. Working in these two industries before starting his doctoral studies gave him relevant experience that he uses in teaching financial, managerial, and cost accounting classes. His research interests are in both financial and managerial accounting. Currently his research projects are on financial performance measures and the determinant factors of executive compensation. In addition to reading about history, he likes to read about science. One of his favorite books is *A Brief History of Time* by Stephen Hawking.

**Dr. Travis Heath***Music*

He is the incoming Assistant Professor of Trumpet and Director of Brass at NEIU. Dr. Heath is a versatile musician, performing in both the classical and jazz genres. Travis has received highest acclaim for his performances throughout the United States, Canada, Europe and Japan. He continues to perform over 40 concerts annually throughout the world with his own trio, the Brass Roots Trio. Dr. Heath is recorded on the Naxos, Mark, & BRT labels. Dr. Heath was an invited lecturer and performer at the International Trumpet Guild conference in 2006 where he

presented his recent work on pedagogy and acoustics. Travis received his Doctorate of Musical Arts degree from Rutgers University.

**Dr. Craig Johnston**

*Counseling*

Dr. Johnston is a graduate of The Ohio State University and most recently worked at Texas Tech University. He is married and the father of two boys, all of whom are glad to be out of the heat and back to the snowy northern regions of the country. Craig looks forward to being a Cubs fan, but otherwise has allegiance to sports teams from his home team of Michigan. Among his experiences is an attempt to scale Mt. Kilimanjaro, bunking in a Buddhist camp in China, appearing as a corpse in an episode of CSI: Las Vegas, and participating in the 1997 X Games.

**Dr. Eileen Kaiser**

*Teacher Education*

My career has taken me down many paths, but my focus and passion has always been to work with aspiring and practicing teachers as they hone their skills in teaching literacy. I started my career at a university in the Chicago area following completion of my doctorate in literacy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I loved my work with preservice and practicing teachers as I taught literacy methods and courses in assessment and instruction for struggling learners. The more time I spent in classrooms observing and coaching teachers, the more I felt a need to be involved in sustained professional development with a group of teachers in order to nurture and support reflective practice. As a result, I worked within school districts and as an external consultant for much of my career. I worked at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison as a consultant for federal grants. The most exciting and rewarding experience was my work with the Center on English Learning and Achievement in the Partnership for Literacy—a three year project working with middle school teachers in Madison, Milwaukee and New York. Three years ago, I returned to Chicago with my three daughters to work for Chicago Public Schools in the Office of Literacy. Over the past three years, I have worked on planning and implementing many exciting literacy initiatives in CPS schools. At this point in my career, I want to focus on my passion—fostering the professional growth of teachers. This move brings me full circle back to the dreams and aspirations that inspired me to go to graduate school in literacy. My research interests include studying the conditions and impact of implementing literacy initiatives in urban schools and in studying the necessary conditions to support reflective practice. My interests outside of academia include running, cooking and spending time with my family.

**Dr. Michele Kane***Special Education*

Michele Kane began at Northeastern in 1999 as an adjunct instructor in the Master of Arts in Gifted Education program and will begin in the fall as a fulltime faculty member. She started her career as an early childhood educator and then worked in public and private schools as a gifted educator in K-8 environments. Most recently, she was a Gifted Coordinator in a large suburban school district. Michele also has been working part-time as a career counselor at the College of Lake County for the past twenty-five years. She has a bachelor degree in psychology and elementary education as well as advanced degrees in Counseling and Guidance and Educational Administration. Her doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction is from Loyola University, Chicago.

**Dr. Andrew Kourvetaris***Sociology*

He holds a Ph.D. and M.Phil. from Columbia University, an M.A. from the University of Chicago, and a B.A. from Northwestern University. Andrew's areas of interest include immigration, urban sociology, and politics; race and ethnicity; social problems; and research methods. His hobbies include art, biking, hiking, and travel. He has been tear-gassed in Athens, chased by "tour guides" on horse- and camelback at the pyramids in El Gizeh, strip-searched in Haifa, and punched in Yankee Stadium by a mob of fathers for a foul ball that dropped at his feet.

**Dr. Alberto Lopez-Carrasquillo***Teacher Education*

I am from Guayama, a small town in Puerto Rico. I received my Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning from the Ohio State University in 2006. When I am not working I love to travel, read, and watch movies. My current scholarly interest is centered on the influences of social and institutional context on teachers' practices as well as the role of curriculum and teaching in building a democratic society in the face of the anti-democratic structures within society that promote social injustice and intolerance.

**Dr. Jason Mohaghegh***Philosophy*

I am arriving at NEIU as an Assistant Professor in the Philosophy department. I pursued my undergraduate and graduate studies at Columbia University, ultimately receiving a joint doctorate in Comparative Literature and Middle Eastern Studies, and then subsequently taught as an assistant professor at Columbia in the aftermath. As such, my specialization centers on the contemporary rise of avant-garde philosophical movements in both continental and Islamic thought, tracing such themes as "chaos" and "illusion" across various world intellectual circles in modernity. To this end, I also enjoy traveling extensively between Europe and the Middle East, seeking out the most experimental currents and dialogues in emergence and thereby taking note of the transformative exchange of ideas now occurring between these cultures.

**Dr. Donald R. Pittman***Educational Leadership & Development*

I am a recent retiree from Chicago Public Schools (CPS). I worked in CPS for 35 years: as a Teacher, Basketball Coach, Assistant Principal, Principal, Area Instruction Officer and finally as the Chief of High Schools. I have been involved with NEIU as an instructor for over 3 years. I received both my Bachelors and Masters degrees from Chicago State University, and I earned my Doctorate degree in Educational Leadership from Nova Southeastern University. I have done course work at Depaul, Roosevelt, and Harvard University.

I have been married to my wife Vicki for over 32 years. Vicki and I have 4 children: Kia-Rai, Donald II, Marcus, and David. My hobbies are playing basketball, reading, and walking my dog Chief for exercise.

**Dr. Marie-Élène Roberge***Management & Marketing*

I am Marie-Élène Roberge, a French-Canadian woman, who recently graduated with a Ph.D. in Labor and Human Resource Management from Fisher College of Business at the Ohio State University. My research interests are about managing diversity: "When and how does diversity increase group performance?" Teaching management in a diverse environment such as at NEIU is an honor to me. In addition to my career, my social life is active. I am very close to my family members and I have lots of friends. My hobbies are swimming, biking, breakdancing, piano playing, traveling and being involved with people in my community.

**Ms. Theresa Segura-Herrera***Counselor Education*

She is a native of Chicago and doctoral candidate in Counseling Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and currently completing her pre-doctoral internship at Illinois Masonic Medical Center in Chicago. Theresa is preparing to defend her doctoral dissertation, an examination of psychological well-being for Latina and Latino college students, recently awarded by the National Latina/o Psychological Association. Theresa's research interests fall under the umbrella of educational and mental health issues that affect racial/ethnic minorities, with an emphasis on Latinas and Latinos. Research endeavors have led to national presentations and publications in the *Journal of Self and Identity*, *Counseling American Minorities*, and *The Latina/o Pathway to the Ph.D.* Teaching interests include practicum supervision of counselors-in-training, multicultural counseling, and counseling skills training. Theresa enjoys bike riding, walking, and spending quality time with her family.

**Dr. David L. Sharlow***Music Education*

He comes to Chicago via Vermillion, South Dakota where he was Interim Director of Choral Activities at the University of South Dakota. Prior to South Dakota he was in Kansas City where he received a PhD in Music Education and Curriculum & Instruction from the University of Missouri Kansas City. Before starting his doctorate, David enjoyed 12 years as a high school vocal music teacher in the Wichita, Kansas area – his hometown. Dr. Sharlow's research revolves around the psychological, sociological, and anthropological aspects of the music ensemble – specifically focusing on the value of individual achievement and motivation. David's hobbies include spending time with his kids, running, biking, reading, writing and traveling.

**Dr. Marshall Thompson***Political Science*

I am a recent Political Science Ph.D. recipient from Washington University in St. Louis. Within the discipline I work in the subfields of Comparative Politics and International Political Economy. My research focuses on political development and state capacity; this has included fieldwork in Ethiopia and Kenya, with diversionary trips to France and the UK. My teaching interests include comparative politics, democratic institutions, political economy, and African politics. Other interests include classical music and fine automobiles. I grew up in Connecticut, did my undergraduate work at the University of South Carolina, and I have now spent five years each in Tampa and St. Louis.

**Dr. Qiumei Jane Xu***Management*

I graduated and got my Ph.D. in Management from University of California, Irvine on June 2007. I got my master and bachelor degree in Management in Peking University in China. My teaching and research interests are in the field of Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management. I am especially interested in what influences individuals to engage in work-related development and how this type of development affects their behaviors, attitudes, and performance in organizations. I am also interested in how individuals' demographic characteristics affect their behaviors and attitudes in organizations.

**Dr. Ai-Ru Yen***Accounting, Business Law & Finance*

I am from Taipei, Taiwan. I just received my doctoral degree from the University of Maryland, College Park. I am glad to be a new member of the Northeastern Illinois University. My research interests include financial reporting, information quality and credibility, and intangibles. One of my hobbies is to play jigsaw puzzles. In addition, I also enjoy watching movies, especially those about adventures or based on science fiction, and doing workout at the gym.