

VANESSA RODRIGUEZ

Human Development and Education
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EDUCATION

	<i>Harvard University</i>
2016 (<i>expected</i>)	Ed.D., Human Development and Education Dissertation: Exploring Social Cognition and Physiologic Synchrony during Teaching Interactions Committee: Kurt W. Fischer, Ph.D.* (<i>Previous Chair</i>), Tina A. Grotzer, Ed.D, (Chair), Pasi Sahlberg, Ph.D., and Carl D. Marci, M.D. *medical retirement
2013	Ed.M., Education Policy and Management
	<i>The City College of New York</i>
2004	M.S. Ed., Master of Science Education
	<i>New York University, College of Arts and Science</i>
1998	B.A. English Literature Minors: Sociology, English Education

PERSONAL STATEMENT

I am passionate about teaching. Born and raised in New York and being a public Middle School teacher in NYC for more than a decade, my identity as Latina and an educator is fused with the City. I believe students benefit when learning from teachers who to have excelled in their personal and professional development. Therefore I am dedicated to expanding our understanding of teaching as a human endeavor and helping teachers better understand themselves to unlock their full potential. I pursue this mission using multiple avenues of research, teaching and speaking – spreading the idea that the interaction between teacher and student and the system it creates is the “core” of education. I believe this idea is an innovative way to actualize a democratic education system driven by complex, highly developed educators from all backgrounds.



RESEARCH

INTERESTS

Teacher Socio-emotional Cognition, Adult Development, Equity, Mind Brain Education, Synchrony, Mixed Methods

EXPERIENCE

- 2013 – 2015 *Program Officer*, International Teaching Brain Consortium, Cambridge, MA
International Mind Brain and Education Society, Cambridge, MA.
- Mission: Plan long term neurocognitive studies of the teaching skills in different environments, from children teaching children to adult teachers in schools and universities, utilizing portable brain equipment to move from the lab to the classroom.
- 2013 – 2015 *Researcher*, The International Research Schools Network at Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA.

- Mission: Research schools are K-12 schools that partner with researchers to carry out practical research, conduct professional development based on this research, and disseminate findings.
- 2013 – 2014 *Research Assistant*, Educational Neuroscience Lab, Harvard University, Laboratory for Visual Learning, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, Cambridge, MA.
- Principal Investigators: Drs. Jennifer Thomson & Matthew Schneps
 - Project Title: *Investigating Reading Amongst Dyslexic Children Using Handheld Devices*
- 2012 *Facilitator*, Harvard University, Programs in Professional Education, Cambridge, MA.
- Chair: Drs. Kurt Fischer & Todd Rose
 - Program Title: Connecting Mind, Brain and Education
- 2011 *Research Assistant*, Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA.
- Principal Investigator: Dr. Meira Levinson
 - Book Title: No Citizen Left Behind
- 2011 *Research Assistant and Curriculum Writer*, Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA.
- Principal Investigators: Dr. Justin Gest, Dr. Michael J. Hiscox, Dr. Jens Hainmueller
 - Project Title: Naturalization and Civic Engagement Project
- 2011 *Research Assistant*, Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA.
- Principal Investigator: Dr. Jal Mehta
 - Project Title: “Distinctively Good Schools” Project
- 2011 *Facilitator*, Harvard University, Programs in Professional Education, Cambridge, MA.
- Chairs: Drs. Katherine Merseth & Hunter Gehlbach
 - Program Title: Redesigning High Schools for Improved Instruction
- 2010 *Facilitator*, Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Programs in Professional Education, Cambridge, MA.
- Chair: Dr. Katherine Merseth
 - Program Title: Charter Schools: Practices for High Performance Institute
- 2010 *Field Researcher*, New York City Study of Social and Literacy Development, Fordham University, Bronx, NY.
- Principal investigators: Dr. Maria LaRusso, Department of Psychology, Fordham University.
 - Project Title: NYC 4Rs Program (Reading, Writing, Respect, and Resolution), a school-based social-emotional learning and literacy development program.
- 2003 – 2005 *Research Fellow*, Teachers Network Policy Institute-MetLife Fellow, New York, NY.
- 2003 – 2004 *Research Fellow*, City College of New York, School of Education Science, New York, NY.
- Principal Investigator: Dr. Federica Raia
 - Title: Refining a Cognitive Model of Systems Thinking to Support the Design of Middle School Earth Science Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment.

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2014 Dean's Fellowship, Harvard University, *Using Physiologic Measures to Explore Synchrony in Teacher-Student Interactions*. (\$3,000)
- Study sought to identify the underlying physiological processes of expert teachers and their students during a teaching interaction.
- 2012 Hauser Grant, Harvard Initiative for Learning and Teaching, *Understanding the Teaching Brain*. (\$50,000)
- Study sought to identify the cognitive processes of expert teachers.
- 2012 Dean's Fellowship, Harvard University, *Understanding the Cognitive, Psychological and Biological Processes of Teaching*. (\$3,000)
- 2011 Doctoral Candidate Grant, Harvard University, *An MBE model of the Teaching Brain: Towards a More Comprehensive Approach for Educating with "Both" Brains in Mind*.
- 2010 Doctoral Candidate Grant, Harvard University, *Teaching "Historical Thinking" through a "Perspective Taking" curriculum in order to promote higher cognitive thinking*.

AWARDS

- 2014 Nan Haar Award, Harvard University; Mind, Brain and Education Program (\$4,000)
- 2013 Young Investigator Award, International Mind Brain and Education Society

JOURNAL EDITOR AND REVIEWSHIPS

- 2012 *Yearlong Series Editor*, Mind, Brain, and Education Journal, Wiley Periodicals, Inc.
- Special Section Title: The Teaching Brain
- 2012 *Reviewer*, Larson, Mark. *A Legion of Davids: Teachers Battle the Odds*. New York, NY: The New Press.
- 2008 *Reviewer*, Ward, Kyle. (2010). *Not Written in Stone*. New York, NY: The New Press.

PUBLISHED WORKS

- Rodriguez, V., & Solis, S. L. (2013). Teachers' awareness of the learner-teacher interaction: Preliminary communication of a study investigating the teaching brain. *Mind, Brain, and Education*, 7(3), 161-169.
- Rodriguez, V. (2013b). The potential of systems thinking in teacher reform as theorized for the teaching brain framework. *Mind, Brain, and Education*, 7(2), 77-85.
- Rodriguez, V. (2013a). The human nervous system: A framework for teaching and the teaching brain. *Mind, Brain, and Education*, 7(1), 2-12.
- Rodriguez, V. (2012). The teaching brain and the end of the empty vessel. *Mind, Brain, and Education*, 6(4), 177-185.

PAPERS IN CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

- Rodriguez, V. (April, 2016) "Using a Systems Thinking Framework to Explore Social Cognition and Physiologic Synchrony during Teaching Interactions." American Education Research Association (AERA) Conference, Washington, DC.

Rodriguez, V. (April, 2015) “The Teaching Brain: Examining Teaching as a Dynamic System Using Cognitive, Physiologic and Neurologic Tools.” American Education Research Association (AERA) Conference, Chicago, IL.

Rodriguez, V. (April, 2014) “The Dynamic Systems of Teaching and the Teaching Brain.” American Education Research Association (AERA) Conference, Philadelphia, PA.

Rodriguez, V. (July 2013) “A qualitative study towards understanding the teaching brain.” Eighth Course of the International School on Mind, Brain and Education, Ettore Majorana Centre for Scientific Culture, Erice, Italy.

Rodriguez, V. (July 2012) “An MBE model of the Teaching Brain: Towards a More Comprehensive Approach for Educating with “Both” Brains in Mind.” Seventh Course of the International School on Mind, Brain and Education, Ettore Majorana Centre for Scientific Culture, Erice, Italy.

Rodriguez, V. (April, 2012) “An MBE model of the Teaching Brain: Towards a Comprehensive Understanding of Brain-Based Education.” Harvard Graduate School of Education, Student Research Conference, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA.

Rodriguez, V. (April, 2011) “Teaching ‘Historical Thinking’ through a ‘Perspective Taking’ curriculum in order to promote higher cognitive thinking.” American Education Research Association (AERA) Conference, New Orleans, LA.

MEDIA COVERAGE AND FEATURE STORIES

Interviews

- Sparks, Sarah D. 2012. [Experts Call for Teaching Educators Brain Science: 'Neuro-myths' seen permeating the field.](#) Education Week, June 6.

Print

- Carmichael, Mary. 2012. [Innovative Teaching gets Boost at Harvard.](#) The Boston Globe, April 19.

Videos

- Weber, Matt. 2011. [Video Op-ed: Dear @Arne Duncan...The Teaching Brain.](#) Harvard University. December 12.
- Harvard University. 2014. [Understanding the Teaching Brain.](#) Harvard Initiative for Learning and Teaching. November 12.

WORKING PAPERS

Rodriguez, V. “Social Cognitive Processes of Expert Teachers.”

Rodriguez, V. “Physiological Synchrony during Teacher-Student Interactions.”

BOOK

Rodriguez, V. with Michelle Fitzpatrick. (2014). *The Teaching Brain: An Evolutionary Trait at the Heart of Education.* New York, NY: The New Press.

The Teaching Brain is the culmination of more than a decade of teaching in NYC Public Schools filtered through the socio-emotional cognitive lens I developed during my time at Harvard. I wrote it in part to help make sense of my experience and feelings about being a teacher. The Five Awarenesses of teaching that the book describes are a product of a personal journey and extensive research with expert teachers. It has generated a powerful response from the education community which I believe attests to its description of teaching on a fundamentally human level. Since its launch I have been invited to give guest lectures, run courses and conduct professional development based on its concepts. I've specifically highlighted these accomplishments below. I first list those that have had high impact and follow with a selected chronological list.

Selected High Impact articles, lectures, interviews and reviews related to the Teaching Brain

- Rodriguez, V. 2015. "[Great Teachers are not Built Overnight](#)." Bright, Medium, August 27.
- U.S. Department of Education, The Teachers Edition. 2015. [What does a Teacher's Brain Look Like?](#) October 29.
- *MIT's xTalks speaker series with the Office of Digital Learning*. Winter 2016.
- *2015 Boston Book Festival*, Boston, MA. October 24, 2015.
- *OnCue 2015, Cue Ball International*. Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. June 16, 2015.
- *Learning and the Brain Conference*, New York, NY. May 8, 2015.
- *Keynote Address and Workshop for Annual International neuroELT Conference*. Kitakyushu, Japan. July 19-20, 2014.
- "[Inside the Mind of a Teacher](#)" Harvard EdCast. Interview with Matt Weber. Cambridge, MA. October 14, 2015.
- "[The Teaching Brain](#)." NPR Miami: Topical Currents. WLRN 91.3 FM. Interview with Richard Ives. Miami, FL. March 3, 2015.
- "[Are Latino Students Shy in the Classroom?](#)" NPR Latino USA, Interview with Antonia Cerejido. February, 27, 2015.
- Higgins, John. 2015. "[Teaching is a natural human ability that starts developing in childhood, author says](#)." Seattle Times, February 27.
- Voigts, Jessie. 2015. "[The Teaching Brain: Changing the Field of Education](#)." Wandering Educators, February 19.
- Money, Jordan. 2014. "[Teaching Should Be Two-Way Interaction, Not Student-Centered, Author Says](#)." Education Week, November 21.
- Makar, Carmina. 2015. [Teachers College Record](#). June 25.

Additional Selected Authored Articles

- Rodriguez, V. 2015. "[National Teacher Week: Women and the Teaching Brain](#)." Momsrising.org, May 5.
- Rodriguez, V. 2015. "[Redefining Teaching: Why 'one size fits all' is not effective](#)." Texas School Business Magazine, January 15.

Additional Selected Invited Lectures and Professional Development Courses

- *Center for Transformative Teaching & Learning: Ideas in Education Festival*. Potomac, MD. April 16, 2016.
- *Floydada High School: In-Service Talk and Workshop*, Floydada, TX. February 16-17, 2016.
- *Community College of Rhode Island: In-Service Talk and Workshop*, Warwick, RI. January 12, 2016.
- *Learning and the Brain Conference*, Boston, MA. November, 15, 2015.
- *EDCO Collaborative, Professional Development*. Bedford, MA. November 7 & 21, 2015.
- *St. Paul's Episcopal School, Solomon Episcopal Conference Center*. In-Service Talk and Workshop, New Orleans, LA. September 4, 2015.
- *2015 Landmark College Summer Institute*, Landmark College, Putney, VT. June 25, 2015.
- *2015 Transfer School Conference*, New York, NY. June 4, 2015.
- *Massachusetts Consortium for Social-Emotional Learning in Teacher Ed*, Tufts University, MA. May 2, 2015.
- *Annual Faculty Symposium on Excellence in Teaching and Learning*, Johnson and Wales University, Providence, MA. April 24, 2015.
- *Distinguished Author Series*, Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA. November 18, 2014.

Selected Radio Appearances

- “The Teaching Brain” *Howard University Radio, WHUR 96.3 FM*. Interview with Taylor Thomas. Washington, DC. February 11, 2015.
- “The Teaching Brain.” *Minority Centerpoint, WXKS*. Interview with Gwendolyn Blackburn. Boston, MA. December 9, 2014.
- “The Teaching Brain.” *Talk of the Town with Larry Rifkin*. WATR 1320 AM. Waterbury, CT. November 24, 2014.
- “[The Teaching Brain](#).” *Jesse Lee Peterson Show*. Los Angeles, CA November 20, 2014.
- “The Teaching Brain.” *The Michael Dresser Show*. November 19, 2014.
- “The Teaching Brain.” York University. CHRY 105.5 FM, Toronto, November 13, 2014.

Additional Selected Print Interviews

- Goral, Tim. 2015. “[Teaching as it should be: A new book looks at teaching as an evolutionary cognitive skill](#).” District Administration, May.
- Sacks, Ariel. 2015. “[What Do We Know About The Teaching Brain?](#)” On the Shoulders of Giants Blog, Center for Teacher Quality, March 9.
- Lehman, Dave. 2015. [National School Reform Faculty, Connections](#). August.
- Walsh, Patrick. 2015. [Truth Dig](#), April 17.
- Fuller, Todd. 2015. [Missouri State Teachers Association](#), School and Community Magazine. March.
- [Flypaper Blog](#), 2015. Thomas B. Fordham Institute. March 4.
- [Bethany’s Bookshelf](#). 2015. Midwest Book Review, Vol. 15, Number 1. January.
- Meier, Deborah. 2015. [Two Books that Provoke](#). January 10.
- Foster, Kathy M. 2014. [New Book Challenges the Current Notion of Teaching and Redefines its True Meaning](#). Foster Folly News, December 9,
- [Publishers weekly](#), 2014. September 8.

Additional Featured Stories

- Schroth, Raymond A. 2016. [Fixing the Nation’s Education Crisis Requires Elementary Thinking](#). America Magazine. January 18.

Award

- #1 New Book Release in Education Psychology, Amazon.com, *The Teaching Brain*

TEACHING

EXPERIENCE

HIGHER EDUCATION:

2015– 2016	<i>Yearlong Guest Instructor</i> , Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA. Co-Instructor: Pasi Sahlberg, Ph.D., Visiting Professor HGSE <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Graduate Course A319: Hard Questions on Global Educational Change
2015	<i>Instructor in Education</i> , Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Graduate Course-HT104: Foundations of Learning and Teaching as Cognitive-Developmental Skills
2014	<i>Teaching Fellow</i> , Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA.

- Graduate Course-S015: Questionnaire Design: A Practical Guide from Conceptualization to Administration, Dr. Hunter Gehlbach

2009 – 2010

Instructor, Hunter College, Department of Curriculum and Teaching, New York, NY.

- Graduate Course-QSTA 412.80: Methods of Teaching Social Studies in Early Childhood and Elementary Schools
- Graduate Course-QSTA 301.00: Fieldwork For Teaching Social Studies
- Graduate Course-SEDC 755.00: Student Teaching in Social Studies, Grades 7-12

2010

Course Developer & Curriculum Writer, Hunter College; Urban Teacher Residency Program, New York, NY. Developed new courses in middle school Social Studies to launch the UTR special education program.

2004 – 2008

Adjunct Instructor, New York University, Department of Teaching and Learning, Steinhardt School of Education, New York, NY

- Graduate Course-E27.1030: Language Acquisition and Literacy Education in Multilingual and Multicultural Contexts
- Graduate Course-E27.2010: Inquiries into Teaching and Learning III

K-12 TEACHING:

Certification

New York State and New York City permanent certification in English 7-12
NCLB “Highly Qualified” in English, History/Social Studies and Science

2008 – 2009

Humanities Director/Literacy Coach; Co-Chair of Data Inquiry Team
United Federation of Teachers (UFT) – Teacher Center Renaissance Leadership Academy, New York, NY.

- Provide content knowledge & guidance in a range of effective and innovative literacy practices
- Facilitate discussions; coaching sessions, demonstration lessons & study groups

2007 – 2008

History Teacher, Mott Hall II, New York, NY.

- 7th Grade American History; Inquiry driven, project-based curriculum w/NYU collaboration

2004 – 2007

Humanities Teacher, Salk School of Science, New York, NY.

- Humanities (US History and English), 7th Grade; Inquiry driven, project-based curriculum
- NYU collaboration with Dr. Robert Cohen, Chair of Department of Teaching and Learning
 - Action research: “A Dialogue Among Historians, Teachers and Students”

2004 – 2007

Curriculum Coach, Mott Hall II, New York, NY.

- Interdisciplinary project development and training

2002 – 2004

Middle School Director of Curriculum and instruction, Humanities Teacher
New Explorations into Science Technology and Math (NEST+M), New York, NY

- Staff Developer, ELA Test Mentor, School Leadership Team & NEST+m cabinet member
- Humanities, 7th & 8th grade gifted and grade level classes: PBL Humanities curriculum

1999 – 2002 *Teacher* (All subjects excluding Math), West Side Collaborative Middle School, New York, NY.

- Humanities, Science, Portfolio, Advisory and Test Preparation, 6th & 8th grade; Interdisciplinary projects
- Integrated arts curriculum of biography and aesthetic theory

1998 – 1999 *English Teacher*, Mamaroneck High School, Mamaroneck, NY.

TEACHER TRAINING:

1998 – 1998 *Student Teacher*, Trevor Day School, New York, NY.

1998 - 1998 *Student Teacher*, Stuyvesant High School, New York, NY.

PUBLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

- Rodriguez, V. (2008). Frederick Douglass, the Constitution, and Slavery: A classroom Debate. *National Council for Social Studies (NCSS): Middle Level Learning*, 72(5), 2-13.
- Rodriguez, V. (2003). “*The Science in the Humanities*,” City College of NY.

TEACHING AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2008 Gilder Lehrman/OAH Award
- 2000 Annual Teacher Incentive Award, District 3

PAPERS IN CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Rodriguez, V. (April, 2010) “Providing what Standardized Tests Cannot: The Certified Teacher Researcher.” The Meier Symposium, New York NY.

Rodriguez, V. (February, 2010) “Providing what Standardized Tests Cannot: The Certified Teacher Researcher.” 31st Annual Ethnography in Education Research Forum, U Penn, PA.

Rodriguez, V. (February, 2008) “A Sustainable Solution: The Certified Teacher Researcher.” 29th Annual Ethnography in Education Research Forum, U Penn, PA.
 Co-Panelists: Deborah Meier, Dr. Terrie Epstein, Dr. Nicholas Meier, Dr. Joel Westheimer, Brooke Heiser.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND MEMBERSHIPS

- International Mind, Brain and Education Society (IMBES) (2013-present)
- Mind, Brain, and Education Research Collaborative (MBERC), Harvard Graduate School of Education (2013-2014)
- Dean’s Advisory Committee on Equity and Diversity (DACED), Harvard Graduate School of Education. (2012 - 2013)
- Doctoral Student Council, Harvard Graduate School of Education. (2011-2013)
- Multicultural Advisory Committee, Harvard Graduate School of Education. (2011-2012)
- The Deborah Meier Institute, Harmony Education Center. New York, NY (2009 - 2010)
- American Educational Research Association (AERA) (2008 – present)
 - Current Special Interest Groups: Systems Thinking in Education, Teaching and Teacher Education
 - Previous Special Interest Groups: Teacher as Researcher, Education Policy and Politics

- History and Democracy Working Group, New York University. (2004-2008)
- Education Committee, The New Press. (2004-2008)

TRAINING IN RESEARCH METHODS:

I employ mixed methods in my research with particular expertise in qualitative interview methods, structured classroom observation tools and psychophysiological and neurologic measurement devices.

Below is a list of some of the methods I am most comfortable.

- Qualitative interviews
- Classroom Assessment Scoring System – Certified Pre K-12 (CLASS©), The CLASS© method of observation is a valid and reliable measure for large scale classroom observation studies. The CLASS© provides a framework for observing key dimensions of classroom processes, such as emotional and instructional support, that contribute to quality of the classroom setting.
- Questionnaire Design
- Skin Conductance measurement using wireless sensors
- Event Related Potential (ERP) using EEG

REFERENCES

Tina A. Grotzer, Ed.D. (*Chair*)
 Associate Professor of Education
 Principal Investigator, Project Zero
 Harvard University
 Graduate School of Education
Tina_Grotzer@harvard.edu
<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/faculty/tina-grotzer>
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 Steinhardt School of Education
 MacArthur Fellow
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 Graduate School of Education
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 Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry
 Harvard Medical School

 Clinical Assistant in Psychiatry
 Director, Social Neuroscience, Psychotherapy
 Research Program
 Massachusetts General Hospital
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