

**Rededicated to Our Mission, Rediscovering Our Purpose
The 2020-2021 Annual Report
of the Ethyle R. Wolfe Institute for the Humanities at Brooklyn College**

Table of Contents:

Please note that this document includes hypertext to related [links](#).

Introduction	1
Mission Statement	1
2020-2021 Highlights	1
2020-2021 by the Numbers	1
The Wolfe Institute & The Brooklyn College Strategic Plan	2
Progress on FY2020 Goals.....	3
2021-2022 Goals	4
Strategic Vision & Plan for 2021-2021	4
<i>Vision Statement</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Vision for Programming</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Vision for Staff</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Vision for Finances</i>	<i>6</i>
FY20 Finance Report	7
<i>Funding Sources</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Wolfe Institute Endowments</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Spending & Spending Statement</i>	<i>8</i>
2020-2021 Staff & Board	8
Special Thanks	9

Appendices provided as PDFs:

FY20 Financial Reports for all Wolfe-Associated Accounts

FY20 Wolfe Institute Event Fliers (selected)

2021 Wolfe Review Committee Minutes

Additional fliers and links to event videos can be found on the Wolfe Institute website: www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/wolfe

Introduction

The emotional, financial, and logistical challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic continued to dominate life and work in FY20. The Wolfe Institute staff and board rededicated ourselves to the Wolfe's mission of supporting academic excellence and facilitating intellectual discourse in the BC community. In evolving circumstances we rediscovered our purpose through successful online programming serving thousands of students.

Mission Statement

[The Ethyle R. Wolfe Institute for the Humanities](#) supports excellence in research, publication, teaching, and all forms of academic discourse on the campus of Brooklyn College. The Institute sponsors a variety of lectures, seminars, colloquia, conferences, and study groups, often in collaboration with other academic departments, programs, and organizations, with the aim of keeping public conversation at Brooklyn College in touch with advances in the humanities and social sciences.

2020-2021 Highlights

- Assembled the first Wolfe Review Committee, garnering important external reflections and perspectives on our work, and generating fresh, important ideas we have already begun to implement.
- Worked with the BC Foundation and the HSS Dean to leverage Hess funds to support the full scope of work that goes into producing the Robert L. Hess Scholar in Residence.
- Presented the first online Hess residency with [Winona LaDuke](#), the first Indigenous Hess Scholar in Residence - which attracted a record hundreds of viewer-participants from BC and across the USA.
- Presented our first [campus-wide reading group](#), which was engaged by more than 100 people, with dozens showing up to each meeting.
- Hired a new Wolfe Administrator, BC alumnus Anthony Bianco, who in addition to supporting all of the activities of the Wolfe, has greatly contributed to the efficiency and functionality of our work.
- Continued the [Rapid Response](#) and [Black Lives: Research and Action Engagement Series](#), which for the first time enriched BC classes year-round.
- Added a current BC student and a recent BC alumna to the Wolfe Institute Board.
- An internship exclusively open to BC students, and an ongoing mentoring initiative grew out of the Rapid Response speaker series.
- In this unprecedented pandemic year, the Wolfe Institute supported important new BC humanities projects through Wolfe "venture projects:" the first-ever Wolfe Institute/Center for the Study of Brooklyn Brooklyn Public Humanities Grants *and* the first-ever Wolfe Institute Digital Humanities Fellow.
- Implemented better methods of tracking attendance, enabling a more accurate record of the number of students and people served.

The 2020-2021 Wolfe Institute by the Numbers

Over 4000 people served, overwhelmingly Brooklyn College students: We documented approximately 4,213 attendees at 87 events this year.

87 Events Serving the BC Community:

- 87 virtual events between September 2020 and June 2021, up from 60 events in 2019-2020
- 21 Rapid Response events
- 29 Black Lives Research and Action Engagements

45 Separate Cosponsors across Brooklyn College:

- *14 Academic Departments:* Africana Studies; Anthropology; Art; Business Management; Childhood, Bilingual, & Special Education; Classics; English; History; Judaic Studies; Modern Languages and Literatures; Philosophy; Puerto Rican & Latino Studies; School of Psychology, Counseling, & Leadership; Sociology
- *All 5 Schools Represented*
- *5 Academic Programs:* American Studies, Caribbean Studies, the English MFA programs, Studies in Religion, Women's & Gender Studies
- *11 Other BC Entities:* Black and Latino Male Initiative, Brooklyn College Immigrant Student Success Office, Brooklyn College Library, The Common Reader 1619 Project, Division of Student Affairs, Late Antique-Medieval-Early Modern Faculty Working Group, Office of Diversity and Equity, Office of the Humanities and Social Sciences Dean, Office of the President, Student Activities Involvement and Leadership Center (S.A.I.L.), The Student-Faculty Working Group on Indigenous and Native American Studies
- *7 Centers & Institutes:* Anti-Racist Pedagogy Working Group, Center for the Study of Brooklyn, Center for Teaching and Learning, H. Wiley Hitchcock Institute for American Music, LGBTQ+ Center, The Shirley Chisholm project, Women's Center
- *4 Student Organizations:* Black Student Union; Brooklyn College Anthropology Club; Brooklyn College International Business Association; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Alliance
- *4 Community Organizations:* American Community Indian House, Integrity First for America, Stonehenge NYC Still Standing Artist Residency, Wendy's Subway

The Wolfe Institute & The Brooklyn College Strategic PlanBC Strategic Plan Benchmarks

The Brooklyn College Strategic Plan states the following benchmark for year 3, 2020-2021: “Carry out the plan from Year 2. Convene a committee to review programming and attendance and evaluate practices for engaging students and faculty in Wolfe Institute events devoted to annual topics.”

The Wolfe Institute successfully met and exceeded this benchmark. We convened the first Wolfe Institute Review Committee with members from three different schools of Brooklyn College. (*Full minutes are provided as an appendix to this report.*) While the Review Committee had many complimentary remarks about the Institute's activities and programs, they also provided several useful suggestions.

Primary among these was the point, from Prof. Carla Santamaria in PRLS, that if students are the primary audience for Wolfe activities, then they should be represented in the Institute's programming decisions. Within one month of the Review Committee meeting, Wolfe staff had worked with the leaders of the Mellon Transfer Research Program (Professors Alan Aja, Joseph Entin, and Jeanne Theoharis) to have one advanced Fellow, a current BC undergraduate, and one BC alumna (currently an MA student at the CUNY Graduate Center) serve on the Wolfe Institute Board: Tania Darbouze and Alexandria James, respectively.

Adding students and alumni to the Wolfe Institute Board has been important and energizing. Their perspectives have influenced every meeting – for example, Ms. James added the parentheses to our new theme, which added depth to the concept.

Other suggestions from the Review Committee that we plan to implement in 2021-22 include building on Business Marketing professor Ngoc Cindy Pham's leveraging of Rapid Response speaker visits into an

internship exclusively for BC students at the Heineken Company as well as a USAA Credit Card Experience executive spending 1-3 hours each month mentoring BC students.

The Review Committee itself is a useful gathering that the Wolfe Institute plans to implement every other year. The Review Committee's meeting will provide moments of reflection with people both in and beyond the Wolfe Board, and will provide a mechanism through which the Wolfe is accountable to the College.

The Wolfe Institute & the Full Strategic Plan:

The Wolfe Institute's current activities and 2021-2022 goals are aligned with BC's Strategic Plan 2.0:

As a core contributor to the intellectual community of the campus, all Wolfe Institute programs *enhance academic excellence*. In particular, the Rapid Response and Black Lives: Research and Action Engagement programs directly support classroom guest speakers, ensuring that BC students can meet and learn from the broad network of our faculty.

Similarly, *increasing undergraduate, master's, and doctoral students' success* is a thread through all of our work. During FY21, we will encourage guest speakers to have continued interaction with our students, building pipelines towards professional networks, internships, and jobs. These actions will help *educate students for fulfilling work and leadership in their communities*.

Alongside the entire Brooklyn College community, we have continued to *develop a nimble, responsive, and efficient structure to serve our students and carry out our mission*. This is evident in the series we developed during remote learning that have continued to respond to student and faculty needs.

Our ongoing outreach to community collaborators and our new efforts to link internship and networking opportunities to events *leverage Brooklyn College's reputation for academic excellence and upward mobility*.

Progress on FY2020 Goals

- **Continue to fulfill the Wolfe Institute mission through a wide variety of intellectually-rich programming.**

Achieved. As is detailed in the "By the Numbers" section of this report (*see page 1*), the Wolfe Institute supported events with a broad spectrum of content, cosponsored by academic departments and programs, as well as offices throughout the College.

- **Complete our Strategic Plan goal for year 3: In Spring 2021, "convene a committee to review programming and attendance and evaluate practices for engaging students and faculty in Wolfe Institute events devoted to annual topics."**

Achieved. See above

- **Extend the Rapid Response Honorarium Program through Spring 2021, and expand the number of students speakers reach.**

Achieved. The Rapid Response Program was not only extended through the Spring, but in 2021 for the first time is available to Summer classes as well.

- **Implement the Black Lives: Research and Action (BLRA) Engagement series, with the goal of more than half of HSS departments and programs committing to the series, and of securing commitments from departments in each of BC's other schools.**

Partially achieved. Six of the 12 HSS departments, and several HSS programs, sponsored BLRA speakers, as did professors from each of the other BC schools. However, the majority of departments in other schools have not engaged the series. We hope that, with encouragement from upper-level administrators, this number will increase in the coming year.

- **Continue to work with the Library and the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program, as well as other BC offices and departments, to provide easy pathways for faculty to incorporate the Wolfe Institute theme and events into their teaching.**

Achieved. The Hess committees consistently have a Library representative. The multimedia [LibGuide](#) created by the Library and the [sample assignments](#) created by WAC fellows and the Wolfe Director were key to faculty integrating Hess materials into their syllabi. Since individual faculty choose the BLRA and Rapid Response speakers, those guests are typically speaking to topics central to each class.

- **Continue to increase social media presence.**

Achieved. Through working with the Office of Communications and Marketing and the Center for the Study of Brooklyn, the Wolfe had three social media interns for the Fall. When the opportunity arose to hire a new Wolfe Administrator, a facility with social media was part of the job description. As a result, we have maintained a vibrant and consistent [social media](#) presence, publicizing not only our own events, but also the programs, classes, and successes of other BC offices and colleagues.

2021-2022 Goals

- Continue to fulfill the Wolfe Institute mission through a wide variety of intellectually-rich programming.
- In accordance with the original Brooklyn College Strategic Plan, implement recommendations from the Wolfe Review Committee.
- Continue to have at least one student as a member of the Wolfe Institute Board.
- As CUNY and BC policies regarding in-person instruction and physical distancing evolve, work towards plans for hybrid and, eventually, in-person events.
- Continue to work with the Library and the Writing Across the Curriculum program, as well as other BC offices and departments, to provide easy pathways for faculty to incorporate the Wolfe Institute theme and events into their teaching.
- Work with the Magner Career Center to parlay classroom speakers into supporters of BC student and alumna careers.
- With support from the BC Administration, increase the number of departments participating in the Black Lives: Research and Action Engagement Series.

Strategic Vision & Plan for 2021-2022

Vision Statement

As Brooklyn College – and New York and the world – return to hybrid, and eventually in-person classes and work, the Wolfe Institute looks forward to continuing to present a broad range of intellectually rich events.

Following the evolving guidelines from the CUNY and BC administrations, the Wolfe Institute plans to present online activities in Fall 2021, and hybrid and in-person activities in Spring 2022 and thereafter. Maintaining an online option for programs not only ensures that immunocompromised people can attend our events; it also enables caregivers, people with long commutes and multiple jobs, interested individuals outside of New York, and a whole host of other persons to benefit from our programming. We will work to determine what type of events are best suited by the three different presentation options.

Vision for Programming

Theme: Faculty from multiple BC schools alongside student members of the Wolfe Institute Board convened to choose the 2021-2022 Wolfe Institute theme from an unprecedented number of submissions. The consensus for the theme was “*(re)discovery*,” suggested by a current BC student, with the parentheses

added by an alumna. The concept of (re)discovery acknowledges how transformative the experience of the pandemic has been, while simultaneously representing the hope we have for moving through the challenges of the coming year. We have discovered new ways to interact and to take and teach classes – and we have committed to new ways of looking at problems and finding solutions. The parentheses around the (re) acknowledge our different experiences and how we are rediscovering people and activities through loss; (re)discovery is a process that is honest about what we have experienced, and hopeful about where we are headed.

Series: The Rapid Response Honorarium Program, providing a small honorarium to guest speakers in online classes, continues to be successful and popular. For the first time, we have extended this series to the summer months. As BC moves away from remote learning, we hope to include guest speakers for in-person classes in this program as well.

We also hope that, with encouragement from the highest levels of the administration, more departments and schools will take advantage of the Black Lives: Research and Action Engagement Series to bring black experts in a range of fields to address, inform, and inspire our students.

Robert L. Hess Scholar in Residence 2021-2022: Samuel Knight Professor of American Studies, Professor of Ethnicity, Race, and Migration, and Director of American Studies Graduate Studies at Yale University [Lisa Lowe](#), PhD. was unanimously chosen by our Hess Selection Committee to serve as the Hess Scholar in Residence the week of 25-29 of October 2021. Her esteemed scholarship on race, immigration, capitalism, and colonialism, as well as her knowledge of Asian-American studies, will make for rich and timely conversations.

Based upon the continuing effects of the Covid pandemic, and keeping in mind physical distancing protocols as well as Fall planning by BC and CUNY administration, a formal decision was made by the Wolfe Institute Board, HSS Dean, and Hess Committee to once again hold the 2021-2022 Hess Scholar-in-Residence event online this fall semester.

General Programming Vision: *The Wolfe Institute continues to support online programming, and looks forward to supporting hybrid and in-person events as CUNY and BC guidelines permit them.*

Under the primary direction of Professors Lawrence Johnson and Joseph Entin, we cosponsored our first campus-wide reading group, with 80 people showing up to the first meeting to read *Otherwise Worlds: Against Settler Colonialism and Anti-Blackness* and to discuss the issues it raises in relationship to our campus. A second campus-wide reading group is planned, and new Wolfe Faculty Fellow Professor Lauren Mancina will co-lead the Fall 2021 Robert Viscusi Faculty Reading Group with Professor Brian Sowers.

During the last year, Marketing Professor Ngoc Cindy Pham successfully parlayed Rapid Response speakers' appearances into internships and mentoring for BC students. Using her efforts as a template, and working with the Magner Career Center, the Wolfe Institute will encourage all event organizers – and particularly those inviting guest speakers into the classroom – to invite those speakers to become part of students' professional networks via informal or formal internships and mentoring.

Before the Fall 2021 semester begins, new language will appear on the Wolfe Institute website describing our commitment to diversity, and encouraging those who seek our support to include a range of speakers in their events.

Wolfe Fellow: The 2021-2022 Wolfe Faculty Fellowship has been awarded to [Dr. Karen Stern](#), Associate Professor of History, to write a social history of Jewish people in the Middle Ages through materials with her project “Judaism: An Object History.” She uses both traditional historiography and inventive methods to examine diverse everyday objects, from notes and marriage contracts, to “magical”

amulets, grave materials, and graffiti. Building on her previous work, the book that will result from Prof. Stern's research will challenge what is considered Jewish history.

Social Media Vision: The Wolfe Institute has both increased and regularized its social media presence. The new Administrator has significant experience in this area, and regular posts and re-posts have been part of his work. In addition, with the assistance of our Wolfe/MTRP student board member, he has created a plan for the Wolfe YouTube channel that will attract viewers to the wide array of events that have been recorded over the years.

2021-22 Vision for Staff

The Wolfe Institute continues to add value to BC that far exceeds the size and remuneration of its staff. The addition of Anthony Bianco as part-time Administrator has brought the Institute back to its pre-pandemic functionality. Mr. Bianco has provided vital support, as well as fresh ideas for our processes, efficiency, social media, and visual presence. The Wolfe Institute would be able to more fully utilize its other resources and potential if we had a full-time staff person or an additional part-time person. We continue to be open to suggestions regarding and creative solutions to our staff shortage.

As is detailed elsewhere (*see page 2*) in this report, based on a suggestion from the Wolfe Review Committee, a BC undergraduate and a BC alumna currently sit on the Wolfe Institute Board. This arrangement – made possible by the Mellon Transfer Student Research Program (MTRSP) – benefits all involved. The student and alumna also work on a Wolfe Institute project, and they receive an honorarium from the MTRSP, as well as two meaningful lines on their resumes. In addition, the Wolfe Institute Director makes herself available for informal mentoring for these board members. The Wolfe Institute receives the student and alumna's candid input on programming decisions, as well as their work on projects such as how to optimize our YouTube presence, and how we might serve BC graduate students.

2021-22 Vision for Finances

Wolfe Endowment: The primary Wolfe Institute account, the Wolfe Endowment, supports both the majority of our programs and the majority of our staff. Because all of our events from the past year were remote, we did not need to spend funds on items such as space and catering. We decided to use some of these funds for "BC Venture Projects." Usually, venture capital refers to financing provided to companies that have long-term growth potential. In this moment of ongoing austerity, the Wolfe Institute recognizes that we can leverage some of our funds to support projects on campus led by other entities with separate staff. This past year, we invested in a few select ideas created and coordinated by the Library and the Center for the Study of Brooklyn, that will benefit students now and in the future. Wolfe's BC Venture funding has resulted in the first-ever Wolfe Institute/Center for the Study of Brooklyn Brooklyn Public Humanities Grants *and* the first-ever Wolfe Institute Digital Humanities Fellow. BC's best minds are always a sound investment, and we are excited to see the work these funds inspire.

Hess Endowment: The BC Administration, the BC Foundation, and the Wolfe Institute Director worked together to better and more accurately use the Hess Endowment. Specifically, the Hess Endowment now supports more of the many staff hours of the Administrator, the Director, and the Faculty Associate that are required to make the Hess Week a success. Even with these expenditures, the Hess account is healthy enough for us to explore hiring an external production company to handle the technical aspects of the many events of the Hess week, and to continue offering the Hess Scholar's books to those who are inspired to read them before Prof. Lowe arrives this fall.

Ewen Endowment: The Ewen account maintains a healthy balance, and we expect to use it judiciously as we plan more in-person events on campus.

FY20 Finance Report

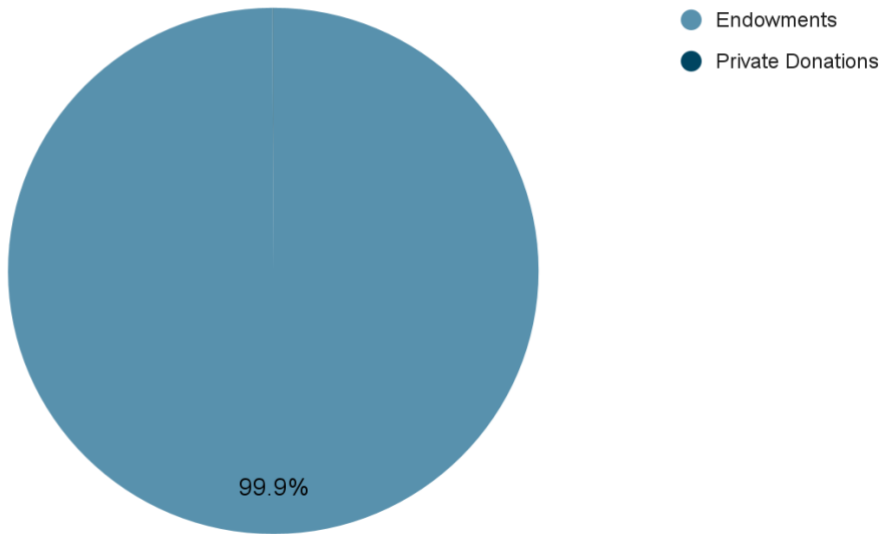
The Wolfe Institute is unique at Brooklyn College because more than 99% of our funding is from private endowments. This year because of the absence of OTPS, the College contributed no direct funds to the Wolfe Institute's major expenses: its staff and programs.

Complete financial reports and notes for all Wolfe Institute accounts are included as an appendix.

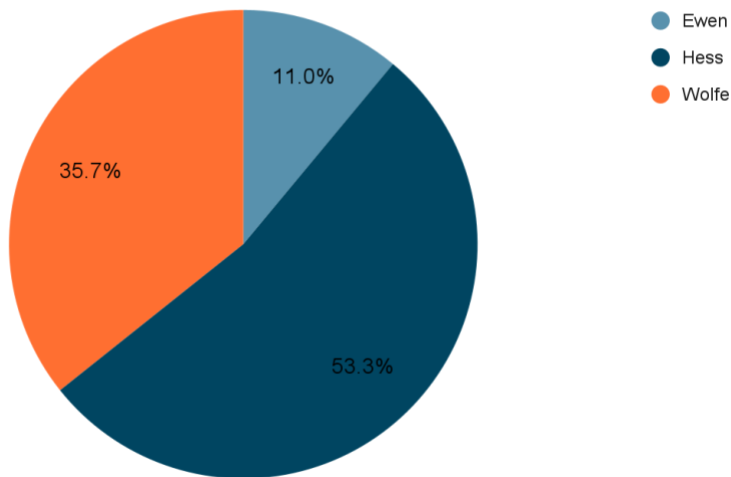
Funding Sources

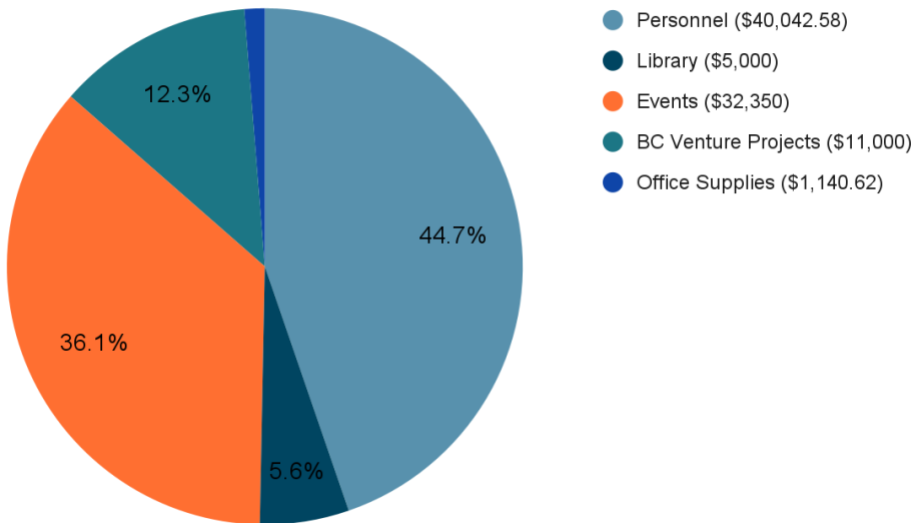
Donations totaling \$50 were received in FY2020

FY20 Sources of Wolfe Funds



FY20 Wolfe Institute Endowments



FY20 Wolfe Institute Spending***FY20 Spending Statement***

Our spending reflects our mission and values: support for events and new BC Venture Projects (*see Vision for Finances, page 6*) comprised nearly half of all FY20 costs. “Personnel” here refers to costs associated with the Wolfe Institute Administrator (currently fully funded by the Wolfe and Hess endowments), Faculty Fellow, Faculty Associate, and the Director.

Note that an annual disbursement to the BC Library to maintain the Hess-related Ethiopian collection is mandated by the Hess endowment.

Financial reports of the major endowment accounts from BC’s Budget Office are included as an appendix to this report.

2020-2021 & 2021-2022 Wolfe Institute Board & Staff2020-2021 Wolfe Institute Board

- Rosamond S. King, Director
- Emily Tumpson Molina, 2019-2021 Faculty Associate
- Anthony Bianco, Administrator
- Tania Darbouze, current Brooklyn College student, Political Science Major
- Alexandria James, Brooklyn College Philosophy alumna, current CUNY Graduate Center Philosophy MA student

2021-2022 Wolfe Institute Staff

The Wolfe Institute has a tiny staff, consisting of:

- A Faculty Director with partial reassigned time, currently [Professor Rosamond S. King](#) (English), who manages staff, provides vision and leadership, oversees all fiscal, logistic, and programming components of the Wolfe Institute, manages communication with faculty and

administration, represents the Wolfe Institute at BC, CUNY, and external meetings and events, etc.

- A part-time Administrator, Mr. Anthony Bianco, who is responsible for budget management, logistics and organizing for both the office and the programs, and other support, such as taking minutes at meetings, answering general phone and email inquiries, managing the website and social media, communicating with speakers, routine correspondence, etc.
- A rotating Faculty Associate who contributes to the programming of the Institute via regular meetings, but provides no logistical or office support. The 2021-2022 Faculty Associate is [Professor Lauren Mancia](#) (History).

Notes on staff: FY20 was the third year of Prof. King's three-year term as Director of the Wolfe Institute. Prof. King has requested reappointment for a second three-year term. As Director of the Studies in Religion program, Prof. Mancia has presented events cosponsored by the Wolfe Institute, and has served on some of our committees. This Fall, she will co-lead the Robert Viscusi Faculty Reading Group, and in Spring 2022 she will co-present a major conference: "Fragments of Experience: Approaching 'Lived Religion' from Late Antiquity to the Central Middle Ages" at BC.

The Hess endowment funds supporting Wolfe Institute staff will continue to be vital to the stability of the Institute's work. However, *around FY22, the Wolfe Institute endowment will not be able to absorb staff costs without diminishing the funds available for events.* Increased support from the College, which currently contributes no funds towards the Administrator position, will be necessary for the Wolfe to continue its current level of programming. Furthermore, while we have been able to function well during remote learning, as BC transitions back to in-person teaching and work, the need for a full-time staff person or an additional ½-time staff person for the Wolfe Institute will again become critical.

Special Thanks

The Wolfe Institute had the pleasure of working with dozens of Brooklyn College departments, programs, centers, and offices during the previous year.

The Wolfe Institute Staff and Board particularly appreciate the support of:

- The Office of the President
- The Office of the Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, especially Ms. Jennifer Matisi
- The Office of the Provost
- The Mellon Transfer Student Research Program
- The Office of Communications and Marketing
- The Library
- The Office of Fiscal and Business Services
- The Writing across the Curriculum Program and its Fellows
- Information Technology Services
- The Brooklyn College Foundation