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The Teaching and Learning Center is pleased to present the *Ten Questions for Faculty Series*. The series is dedicated to helping faculty to stay connected with one another while working remotely. Every week, a faculty member will have the opportunity to answer ten questions about themselves and about navigating the changes brought about by COVID-19. This week, we are pleased to feature Duval Zephirin, Professor of Mathematics.



**Duval Zephirin**  
**Professor of Mathematics**

***Where are you from?***

I am originally from Haiti. In 2007, I felt the urgency to move to this country known as the land of opportunity and to join my wife. I lived in Miami until I moved to Fort Myers in August 2019.

***Which college or university did you attend?***

I attended the State University of Haiti, Port-au-Prince, and double-majored in Mathematics and in Economics. I am a Ph.D. Candidate at Florida Atlantic University from which I earned my Master of Science in Mathematics and in Statistics degrees.

***When did you begin teaching at FSW?***

I accepted a full-time position of Professor of Mathematics at the Hendry Glades Center and began teaching at FSW in Fall 2019. So far, it has been a great experience.

***What made you become interested in your academic discipline?***

When I went to the State University of Haiti, the admission was made by competitive examination and one

had to be among the first 25 contestants out of thousands. I was admitted to two different schools and ended up majoring in Mathematics and in Economics.

I started falling in love with mathematics after taking my first logic class. When I started understanding how to construct proofs, I was fascinated by the fact that mathematics has given me the analytical and reasoning skills that are essential to solving all kinds of problems, even those that are not in the mathematical area.

***What is your favorite food?***

I am a fan of crustaceans. I love Caribbean grilled crab cakes. Two years ago, I went to the Joint Mathematics Meetings in Baltimore. I ate crab cakes there that I have never eaten before.

***If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would it be and what would you ask them?***

Isaac Newton. He is considered by many to be the greatest scientist of all time. Since there are not many

subjects that Newton did not greatly impact, I would have asked him what he would have been interested in nowadays and if his inventions would move our world in a different technological trajectory.

***What is your favorite local restaurant?***

I am not a fan of eating out, but sometimes my wife will pressure me to do so. I can count how many times I have eaten out since I moved to Fort Myers. I visited a few local restaurants, but Bruno's of Brooklyn on second Street is my favorite one.

***What new things have you learned or done as a result of COVID-19 & working remotely?***

I have learned to better prioritize my relations with family and friends. I was not doing this enough until

I realized that I must find time for my loved ones and use this time to strengthen the bonds of our relationships. I have better shaped myself professionally due to multiple workshops I attended. I have learned how to use Zoom, Open Broadcaster Software and have become more familiar with Canvas. I have progressed significantly in my Ph.D. thesis, have completed online certification, Universal Design, and a couple of Quality Matters trainings.

***What are you doing (exercise, cooking, reading, etc.) to take care of your mental and physical health during social isolation?***

During the day I was alone given the fact that my wife worked. I did not even open by doors for 15 days.

I cooked every day to the point that I was gaining weight. My wife advised me to take some time out to workout. This ended up being a big help with my mental and physical health.

***What advice do you have for your colleagues on how to navigate social isolation and changes from COVID-19?***

As one becomes homebound during social isolation and changes due to COVID-19, it is important to keep moving and to enjoy regular time outside to break the monotony. If one does not have access to a

way to get outside, do what you can to keep moving whether that be a hallway walk or a dance party with yourself. Just avoid a sedentary state when possible.

If you would like to be featured in the *Ten Questions for Faculty Series*, please contact Kelly Westfield, Coordinator of Marketing & Technology for the Teaching and Learning Center: [kwestfield@fsw.edu](mailto:kwestfield@fsw.edu)



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