

From: [TLC](#)
To: [TLC](#)
Bcc: [STAFF_FT_CHA](#); [STAFF_FT_COL](#); [STAFF_FT_HNL](#); [STAFF_FT_LEE](#); [Gloria Kitchen](#); [Eileen DeLuca](#); [Martin A. McClinton](#); [ADMIN_CHA](#); [ADMIN_COL](#); [ADMIN_HNL](#); [ADMIN_LEE](#); [eLearning](#); [FAC_ADJ_CR_CHA](#); [FAC_ADJ_CR_COL](#); [FAC_ADJ_CR_EOL](#); [FAC_ADJ_CR_HNL](#); [FAC_ADJ_CR_LEE](#); [FAC_EOL](#); [FAC_FT_CHA](#); [FAC_FT_COL](#); [FAC_FT_HNL](#); [FAC_FT_LEE](#); [Lucas Center](#); [Melissa Rizzuto](#); [Rachel](#); [Rebecca Yost](#)
Subject: Ten Questions for Faculty Series
Date: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 3:57:18 PM
Attachments: [Ten-Questions-Banner.png](#)
[Marcella_Smaller.PNG](#)



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 Dr. Marcela Trevino, Professor of Biology.



Dr. Marcela Trevino
Professor, Biology

Where are you from?

I am from Mexico City, which was officially called Distrito Federal (or DF) up until 2016, when its name was changed to Ciudad de México (or CDMX). This name change was part of a reform aimed at providing the special district with a political status similar to that of the 31 states that, together with CDMX, constitute the Mexican Republic. Does it ring a bell, Washington D.C.?

Which College or University did you attend?

I attended Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) for a B.S. in Biochemistry and Microbiology, and New Mexico State University (NMSU) for both a M.S. in Biochemistry and a Ph.D. in Molecular Biology.

When did you begin teaching at FSW?

I began teaching here as an adjunct in 2008, and full-time in 2011.

What made you become interested in your academic discipline?

I was fascinated by the mysteries of life, and I wanted to learn biochemistry and genetics in the hope of understanding our living existence, consciousness, etc. Little did I know back then that the more I would learn about life at the molecular and cellular levels, the more questions would end up arising in my mind, and the more mysterious and fascinating life would become to me! But I guess it only makes sense that, just like DNA can in principle encode an infinite collection of life forms, the field of biology presents us with endless opportunities to learn and discover.

What jobs or positions have you held that were formative for you and from which you draw experience that shapes your approach to teaching?

I think my approach to teaching derives in great measure from my experience of being a student for so many decades (which continues through today), during which I have benefited from the efforts of countless amazing teachers. I have also had the opportunity of teaching in many different capacities, starting when I was in middle school, when I first became a tutor, to then being a teaching assistant in graduate school, a substitute teacher in K-12, and a college professor. But having taught at FSW the longest, my experiences here have greatly influenced my approach to teaching, thanks to the opportunity of working with many outstanding and diverse students and colleagues. And it is also thanks to this job in SWFL that I have had the chance to meet several of my heroes, whose work and activism are deeply inspirational to me. For this, I am forever indebted to those working at FSW, at Lee Health, and at the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, to name a few.

What is your favorite food and local restaurant?

My favorite food is anything that is whole-food plant-based, and so I love the vegan fare offered by The Living Vine and Vibrant Beat in Fort Myers, the Loving Hut in Cape Coral, and the Vegan Kitchen, Organically Twisted and True Food in Naples... Sorry, I have too many favorites.

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

So long we are dreaming here, I would love to join a dinner conversation with Mahatma Gandhi, Albert Einstein, and four of my living heroes, Dr. Jane Goodall, Dr. Sylvia Earle, Dr. Neal Barnard, and Dr. T. Colin Campbell... I would want to know their thoughts on (a) the 'Science Renaissance' that Dr. Campbell envisions for the 21st century, whereby the life sciences switch from a reductionist to a wholistic approach; and (b) the steps that humanity would need to take to create a peaceful, healthy, happy, compassionate, and sustainable world.

What new things have you learned or done as a result of COVID-19 and working remotely and how has it changed your outlook on life?

I had never taught online courses before COVID, so I have been learning about this teaching modality on the fly. I enjoy that online learning makes it possible for every student in the class to equally contribute their questions and comments, including sharing their personal interests, which

is something that does not necessarily happen in ground classes, whether it is because some students might be more on the quiet side, or because class time is so limited (especially when teaching science courses that tend to have a heavy content load). On the flip side, I have come to appreciate even more the unparalleled effectiveness and richness that in-person and group interactions have as part of the teaching and learning process. But perhaps more importantly, the pandemic has caused me to reexamine the great responsibility that scientists have in the pursuit of knowledge that directly impacts the wellbeing of people and of the biosphere. As a result, I am motivated more than ever before to make sure I do my part in helping spread the life-saving knowledge that I have been privileged to learn, even if it means swimming against the current. Fortunately, there are many amazing scientists turned activists, such as the ones I mentioned in my answer to the previous question, who are resolute in leading the way to spare from unnecessary suffering and premature death as many sentient beings as possible. Their accomplishments remind me that anything is possible, if we work hard for it!

COVID-19 has increased online learning, and as a result, the need for promoting inclusivity in virtual learning environments. What ideas can you share with your colleagues about how to ensure inclusivity in the virtual classroom?

Although this is not specifically limited to the virtual classroom and might not address inclusivity in the usual sense, I have received positive feedback from students for the use of learning activities that involve watching/listening to brief lecture videos by expert scientists and physicians, followed by a quiz or discussion. In addition to helping students reinforce and expand the concepts and principles learned in the course, my aim is to also make sure that current scientific developments that greatly impact society—especially given the various pressing and readily solvable ecological and human health issues—are available to every student, and therefore, can also reach and benefit their individual circles and communities.

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

I would encourage my colleagues to take this time of isolation as an opportunity to deeply connect with nature, and to turn to music and dance for their beneficial effects on our bodies. At the same time, I would encourage everyone to learn more about the significant role that each one of us can play in preventing future pandemics, through the power of our food choices. I have learned that this approach can simultaneously improve human and ecosystem health (as highlighted by the 'One Health' policy) and can also help us prevent the impending ecological collapse that Yuval Noah Harari describes in 21 Lessons for the 21st Century (thank you OBOC team, for making this title available to the entire FSW community!). If anyone is interested in thus using the power of their plate, I would highly recommend watching the presentations (or at least the first one, by Fulbright Scholar and sustainability expert Dr. Leslie Duram) from a recent summit on climate change hosted by Dr. Barnard from the Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine (<https://www.pcrm.org>); the summit recording is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxzSfiFz3fo&t=3s>. By the way, PCRM created 'The Power Plate', available at <https://p.widencdn.net/ktho8u/Power-Plate-Brochure>. My sincere hope is that each of you will consider exploring and sharing this life-saving resource with your loved ones, as this simple solution requires a collective global effort to be effective. And so long we are sharing, there is a soothing lullaby music video entitled "Everything's All Right" created by Dr. Barnard's own music band, Carbon Works, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ER86cLvaC4>. As Carbon Works indicates, they specifically created this song to provide a little calm to people during the craziness of the pandemic... isn't that wonderful?

If you would like to be featured in the Ten Questions for Faculty series, please contact Kelly Westfield: kwestfield@fsw.edu

Florida SouthWestern State College, an equal access institution, prohibits discrimination in its employment, programs and activities based on race, sex, gender identity, age, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, pregnancy, sexual orientation, marital status, genetic information or veteran status. Questions pertaining to educational equity, equal access or equal opportunity should be addressed to the College's Title IX Coordinator/Equity Officer/504 Coordinator: Jana Sabo; Room S-213; 8099 College Parkway SW, Fort Myers, FL 33919; (239) 489-9051; Jana.sabo@fsw.edu. FSW online anonymous reporting www.fsw.edu/report. Inquiries/complaints can be filed with the Title IX Coordinator/Equity Officer online, in person, via mail, via email, or with the US Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, Atlanta Office: 61 Forsyth St. SW Suite 19T70, Atlanta, GA 30303-8927.