



End of 2019

Dear HESAL community,

As the snow was falling the Monday of Thanksgiving week, I sat down to write my final coordinator newsletter of 2019 and this decade, I contemplated writing more about values and program view but it felt uninspiring given the weather and seasonal shifts. Every season is my favorite time of year – but this one, this one I love for the LIGHTS that illuminate the dark skies.

Allow me to share a little story. Earlier this November I had the joy of bearing witness to an annual tradition at my daughter's school. It's called the Lantern Walk. The kids prepare lanterns out of jars/cans, they learn the songs to sing as they walk together in community, and they learn together through storytelling about values and life lessons.

The story is an old French tale and goes something like this.

A soldier is riding his horse back to the city late one cold winter night. There is a city curfew and the gates will be closing soon. He must hurry to get into the warmth and safety of the walls. The soldier happens upon an old beggar before he reaches the gate. Yet, he does not pass him by like all the others who had come upon the old man earlier. This one was different than the others. He had something more. He stops and dismounts. He cuts his red, wool cloak in half to share, gives of his food, and importantly, recognizes another's humxnity. Yet, this delay means that night, the soldier also got locked out of the city walls to freeze. He lays under a tree nearby and snuggles in as best he can. In the middle of the night, he awakens to find that it snowflakes are falling all around him, only to focus in more. Upon closer look, they are stars falling for light and warmth.

To me, it is the lesson of **how, in times of darkness, we bring our own light forward from a place of loving kindness towards self and our fellow humxns**. Finding the light in the darkness feels so meaningful and critical right now. I contemplate this a lot for the higher education context. How are we nourishing ourselves so that when we are ready, skilled, and in community, we can step forward in action that promotes transformational changes around us?

Turn inward to care for your own light

Winter with its colder, snowier weather is a great time to take some extra time for ourselves in the way of care and love. Think – cooking or baking, naps, journaling, books to read for enjoyment, creative projects – knitting, painting, drawing, anything. The weather reminds us that this is not the time to extend out your energies growing – that will come in the spring. This is the time to rest and nurture yourself.

What are the things you can do this break to really nurture your inner self? How do you show love and care for yourself that is restorative? How do you connect back to your light – what does that even mean to you?

Care for others through kindness

When we care for ourselves in deep, meaningful ways, we create space and capacity within to offer greater kindness to others around us. I think and feel often the collective hurt in the world these days. When I connect to that collective pain, I find my empathy and patience for others expands. I find I want to share space and witness our suffering, not to wallow, but to honor it and create change through kindness.

In the story, the falling stars were a gift from the old man who said this to the soldier:

*Your cloak is woven whole
Of light that never tears
And never will grow old.
Because you gave of your cloak,
It ever will increase
Of courage it is made
And life and love and peace.*

What is one thing you want to do for someone else or others to extend that kindness out? What courageous act do you want to offer up to someone else? How can you hold space and witness our collective pain to find what action your light wants/needs to take towards personal change?

Find and create community

We sit in a time of great societal darkness. We are at a peak of massive loneliness in a time of constant stimulation and technological connection. Our Earth dies more every day with climate change and humxn created damages. Politically, we are polarized in very painful and damaging ways. We rail and fight and kill in response to each other's humxnity - the right to life and fulfillment. There's so much - it can be overwhelming which is why we need each other now more than ever.

What does community mean to you? What do you need in community? Then, how can you find and create a little community through this dark season? What does your light need you to focus on creating?

As in the Lantern Walk, the bringing together of all the individual lights is such a powerful message of community. Together we fight and change the world with combining of our lights! I leave you with a song that the children sang as they walked from their school that night out to the old wise Willow tree to share in music and community for one dark cold night.

*Down with darkness, up with light,
Up with sunshine, down with night.
Each of us is one small light,
But together we shine bright.
Go away, deepest, darkest night,
Go away, give way to light!*

Be well, nourish your inner lights, and see you all in the new year/decade!

With light and love,





UPDATES and ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. HESAL Faculty Open Meetings – Open to All Students

January 30, February 27, March 26, April 23 at 12-1230 McKee 426 (conference room)

The HESAL faculty wish to increase feedback loops and communication between students and faculty. We welcome HESAL students to the last part of our faculty meetings the last of each month from noon-1230. JOIN US – ask what we are up to; offer topics and student perspectives; bring feedback to the group; share your ideas for strengthening the program and student experience! You are welcome to email Tamara in advance with discussion topics so that the faculty can be ready to discuss more specifically, but this is not required.

2. HESAL Program Review – What are we doing?

HESAL has started the self-study phase of the program review process. Here are some things we are working on as we wrap up fall semester:

- We began gathering data from units/platforms across UNC – this is largely aggregate data on enrollment, application, and graduation numbers.
- We have started exercises to determine HESAL values – real/enacted AND aspirational ones. A survey will be emailed out to you all separately for your feedback and recommendations.
- We have submitted a list of possible external reviewers (faculty in other programs) who will review our self-study materials and write a report with recommendations in late spring.
- In the spring, a couple MA HESAL students will intern with the program to work on revising experiential learning in HESAL.

3. HESAL hosts MORE Facebook & Instagram LIVE Recruiting events

December 4th 5-530pm MST MA Student Experiences and Dec 10th PHD Student Experiences
We will need your help in sharing. These will be moderated by Dr. Yakaboski and teched by the fabulous HESAL GA, Angel. The purpose of these is to share information to prospective students about the HESAL program and applying to graduate school at UNC. If you have other recruitment ideas and suggestions, contact us directly!

4. Financial Deadlines (see attached handout)

- **HESAL Scholarships** are available to any HESAL student via UNC Foundation (private funding) – to be eligible students must fill out the UNC Universal Scholarship, available in URSA. You must complete the universal scholarship so that the faculty can consider you. The HESAL faculty make decisions in July 2020 to award for 2020-21 year.
- **Work Study** funding for graduate students – get on waitlist via Marty in Financial Aid. If you are eligible via FAFSA (federal funding), please get on the waitlist and this funding might be available to support field experiences or other hourly positions on campus.

5. Updates from YOUR HESAL Student Organization => HESA

Join us and HESAL after Research Night on Tuesday, December 10th from 7PM to 9PM in the Office of Student Life Lounge (located on the second floor of the University Center) for our End of the Semester Celebration! We will be having a Nacho Bar as well as a few social events to help wrap up the semester! If folks would like to bring other items please feel out the form below but know it is not

required: https://docs.google.com/.../1FAIpQLSdzUSJG7_KpkwH1k.../viewform...

- Check out **Facebook Page** for updates and events
<https://www.facebook.com/UNCHESA/>

6. SAVE THE DATES reminders

- **Research Evening** will be on Tuesday, December 10th from 5-7pm.
- **HESAL End of the Semester Celebration** – December 10th, 7-9p
- **SPRING MA COMPS:**
 - Orientation for MA comps: **Jan 30** 5-530p, McKee 426
 - Exam: **Friday March 6th** in person location TBD or start of take home due by noon MST of Friday, March 13th.

Adhere to any [Graduate School deadlines for filing](#) graduation, etc

7. HESAL Listserv **Make sure you are subscribed to the listserv**

We send out a compiled email at the end of each week with jobs, GA's, internships, and other opportunities that might be of interest to HESAL people.

8. HESAL Social Media

HESAL has a new Instagram account – check us out @uncohesal

Be sure to like our HESAL Facebook page to stay up to date on events and good news:

<https://www.facebook.com/UNCBearsHESAL/>

Like and follow the HESAL Student Organization (HSO):

<https://www.facebook.com/UNCHSO/>

HESAL Twitter account: @UNCoHESAL



Please reach out if you need anything!

On behalf of HESAL,

Tamara Yakaboski, Ph.D.

[pronouns: she/her/hers]

Professor & Coordinator, Higher Education & Student Affairs Leadership

Department Chair of Leadership, Policy and Development

Schedule an appointment: <https://tamarayakaboskiphd.as.me/>