Fanny Lauby is Assistant Professor of Political Science at William Paterson University. Lauby completed her Ph.D. in Political Science at the GC in 2014.

By André Guzzi

André: You got a tenure track position at William Paterson University while still working on your dissertation. What was the job market like for you?

Fanny: I started applying to many different universities in the fall 2013. In that semester I also attended the APSA job placement program. It gets a bad reputation, but I think it provides good practice to present your research and teaching activities to different types of schools. I was later invited for a campus interview and got a job offer from one of the schools I met at APSA, but I did not feel comfortable at that university. I was then invited for a campus interview at WPU in March 2014 and got an offer from them a week later. I had a very good experience there and I accepted the offer. The most awkward part of the process was having to negotiate your offer – I had no idea how to do that! Afterwards I defended my dissertation in June, and started working the following fall.

A: What is your dissertation about and how did you get to the topic?

F: My dissertation is about immigrant political incorporation and I compare immigrant youth movements in New York and New Jersey looking at higher education policies.

A: What were your main findings?

F: Unexpectedly, the results led me to realize the importance of place in shaping policies. For example, public transportation was a great factor in determining the organization of the youth movements. In New York, the greater accessibility of public transportation allowed a broader involvement of the youth in the movements and demonstrations. In New Jersey, the less accessibility to public transportation made it harder for the youth’s involvement.

A: Where does your research stand right now?

F: I am expanding the research from my dissertation. Since I graduated I have interviewed 72 more people, including elected officials, community organizers, and non-Latino youth. Now I am in the process of transcribing and analyzing the data. I plan to write an article to present my initial findings, and later I plan to transform this expanded research into a book.

A: Do you have any advice for the Ph.D. candidates at the GC?

G: I would say start going to conferences as early as you can to build up confidence in your work. Also, focus on finishing your dissertation. The GC requirement to teach can consume a great amount of your time. Lastly, give yourselves a lot of time for the job market. Start applying for jobs when you’re in the initial stage of writing your dissertation.

João Feres Júnior is Associate Professor at IESP-UERJ. Júnior received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the GC in 2003.

By André Guzzi

André: After you finished your Ph.D., how did you proceed with your career?

João: I moved back to Brazil, where I am originally from, and got a post-doc position at one of the most prestigious Political Science programs in the country, IUPERJ (now IESP-UERJ). After the post-doc, I was hired as a professor. I am a political theory major but my research interests have spread to other areas such as race and affirmative action, and media and politics.

A: With regards to affirmative action, what are the main differences between Brazil and the United States?

J: Well, race is understood and lived as a reality differently in either country. In the United States, race has been culturalized, so perceptions of racial difference are tied with perceptions of cultural difference. In Brazil that is not always the case. Despite this difference, these are both post-colonial countries, with similar historical paths, in which race-based affirmative action has the goal of promoting the status and opportunities of non-whites, blacks mostly, who have been targeted by continued discrimination and prejudice.

A: What was the topic of your dissertation?

J: My dissertation is a crossover between political theory and comparative politics. It is entitled The concept of Latin America in the United States: misrecognition and social scientific discourse and explores the ways in which Americans, particularly in the social sciences, have perceived Latin America through narratives and theories such as modernization, political development, dependency, etc. I found that Latin Americans are consistently perceived as others, be it in cultural, racial or temporal terms. My dissertation was published as a book in four different languages (Portuguese, English, Spanish, and French).

A: What are the best memories from the GC?

J: I very much enjoyed the cooperative environment. In other American universities you may experience a lot of competition among students, something that can be harmful and counter-productive. This was never the case at the GC. I made a lot of friends in the program, some of whom I am still in touch.