

Get to Know NYCPM Staff: Erin Lynn, EdS *Academic Learning Specialist*



Erin Lynn is new to NYCPM and so is her position: Academic Learning Specialist. The College decided to establish the position as part of an ongoing process to support the best academic environment possible for students, according to NYCPM's Academic Dean, Michael J. Trepal, DPM.

Ms. Lynn is a graduate of Arkansas State University (ASU), where she studied sociology for both her BA and MA, which she received in 2009 and 2012, respectively. She became interested in the sociology of education, especially in smaller schools, earning an Education Specialist in Community College Administration. Currently, she is working on her dissertation for her Education Doctorate in Educational Leadership. Her dissertation topic is Covid and its effect on higher education. It's a phenomenological study, she says, that explores the differences in how public and private institutions have been handling the pandemic.

Her entire work history devoted to supporting students in academic settings, Ms. Lynn worked first at her alma mater, initially as an adviser to non-traditional students in undergraduate school (defined as those over 24 years old, or married, or parents, or working, or not reliant on their parents, or any combination of these), and then as an advisor and adjunct professor in a program designed to help students transition to a profession. She helped students at all ends of the academic spectrum.

She was Arkansas State's first coordinator of student outreach, where she coordinated many programs for both online and on-campus programs and helped plug students into services. She "made sure that students, faculty and staff were all okay." The purpose of the position was "to be there in support of students," and she felt positively re-energized by that purpose.

After several years at ASU, Ms. Lynn came to Manhattan to be director of retention and student services at LIM College, a small business-of-fashion college. There, she was also part of the office of academic advising. Her eyes were opened there to a different student environment, where she dealt with eating disorders and mental health issues in addition to other problems. Despite its size, she found the problems at LIM just as diverse as those at bigger institutions.

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Academic Learning Specialist, cont'd

That position did not survive the pandemic, however, and Ms. Lynn started at NYCPM on March 15. As Academic Learning Specialist, she spends the majority of her time calming students, she says, helping them to study better, utilize better time management, and reduce anxiety. "I'm a person they (students) can come to," she says. She is the students' advocate, helping them to manage their anxieties, and to seek services if needed.

"To students who don't think that anyone cares," she says, "I do!"