What have you found different about teaching in the UK?
The format of teaching is not so different to North America but what I have found that’s different is that there’s a lot more pastoral duties involved. Even though Nottingham as a very big University, the pastoral duties are much more akin to a small college in the North American style so that every academic member of staff has a number of personal tutees with whom you are supposed to meet probably twice per semester, to talk about their marks and their progress, you are supposed to get to know them a little bit and help them, if they have like a personal crisis, the personal tutor can be their first point of contact.

What differences have you found in the way students learn between the UK and your home country?
One thing that I have struggled to get used to is that students in the Humanities depend on having essay titles given to them and they usually expect it to be in the form of a question. And if you want them to think of their own titles for written work, you really have to force them to do that. As far as how they learn, they take notes, they talk in seminars, they read books, it’s not too different in the Humanities, at least.

Is there anything you would wish you had known or been prepared for before you came to the UK?
One of the biggest culture shocks was the much more collaborative process of almost everything. Every piece of work is second-marked by someone else usually in the same department, but not necessarily in your same specialty. All the exam questions go to an outside external examiner for approval, and then the external examiner is also involved with the final marking process for the exams. So be prepared to give up some of the autonomy that you may be used to having.

Do you have any other tips for international staff coming to teach in the University of Nottingham?
If you are in the Humanities, do get in touch with the library in advance and don’t assume that they have all the books that you will need. They are very good about ordering new things, you’ll need multiple copies of basic textbooks, but that can take a while particularly if the books are from a north American publisher, and you might need to negotiate with them a bit about if books are particularly
expensive, so the earlier the better.

**Were there any new skills that you needed to enable you to teach effectively in the University?**

If you are coming from North America, you will find that you have more or less all the skills you need. People with North American academic training will be used to running seminars, they work in more or less the same way and lectures are pretty much the same. Although, you might find you have a lot less contact time, formal class hours with the students. The typical North American model of maybe three hours a week for one class, here it might be just an hour and a half per week, so you might find that you have to condense a lot of your teaching into much shorter amount of time per semester.

**Can you talk about the support available within the University around learning and teaching, and any advice or support that you received?**

I was mostly supported informally by my department when I was preparing to come. My Head of Department made a real effort to help me get settled and get my modules up and running.