



Dr. Rentaro Hashimoto
Distinguished Lasallian-Educator
2005-2006

You were first affectionately called Hashi by Mary Vaughn, the longtime secretary of the School of Arts, whom you drove home every day. Ann Campbell, whose voice is still heard on your voice-mail answering machine, picked up the Hashi, as has Nancy Cave, at whose office you still stop in every morning before going to class. This nickname, which was soon adopted by the entire faculty, staff and students is an indication of the warmth, affection, and high esteem in which you are held by the Manhattan College community. You have been teaching continuously (never taking a sabbatical or a leave) for over 40 years, bringing boundless enthusiasm, energy and dedication to all your endeavors.

Your contagious love for philosophy has infected many students - who initially had no interest in the discipline - to become not only faithful adherents, but to pursue philosophy at the graduate level. Initially your focus was on Plato, your favorite philosopher whose cave experiences you acted out on top and under the desks in the classroom, on Aristotle, Socrates, Nietzsche, Camus, Sartre and the existentialists, to name a few. Over the years you have broadened your curriculum offerings to include the philosophy of the colonized, non-western, enslaved and dominated world: Mao, Giap, Fanon, Fredrick Douglass, and the French feminist, Simone de Beauvoir, who you sometimes teach in French.

Your teaching experience also includes the philosophy courses in the Core curriculum which you were instrumental in designing. You have assisted the Government Department by frequently teaching its Western Political Thoughts course and you continue to play a critical role in the Global Origins Core course. You have visited every section of it that has been offered in the last 15 years, in order to share your experience of Japanese interment during WW II, as well as our society's perception of the "other."

As true disciple of Jean Baptiste de la Salle, your commitment to teaching the children of the poor is made manifest every summer, as you enthusiastically teach a course to HEOP students. As if that were not enough, you have been a trusted mentor to a great many students, some of whom have special needs and spend countless hours in your office. Indeed, your dedication to students is absolute. You attend and support every student activity from plays to international nights and even serve as a judge at students' fashion shows. And what would our annual graduation week celebrations be if they did not include a party at your house?

As the longest serving Chair, a Speaker of the Senate, a member of myriad college committees, including President and Treasurer of the AAUP, a founding member and president of the Manhattan College chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, you have initiated and supported over the years, many important initiatives that have improved the quality of life of the entire community.

You are one of the kindest, most congenial members of the Manhattan College community, a true friend, a chauffeur to many, a music and opera lover, and a coffee service provider for the faculty on the 4th floor of Miguel Hall. You lift our spirits with your contagious laughter and your unique sense of humor. Your philanthropic efforts are also legend, as you are known to subsidize students in need and to support the community service initiatives of your colleagues. Your spirituality runs deep and is evidenced not only by your regular church attendance, but by your financial generosity and stellar leadership.

For all your efforts, dedication and commitment to liberal education, we are proud to call on Brother Thomas to present you with the award of Distinguished Lasallian Educator.