

Ed Studies Newsletter

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Dr. Bernard

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Alumni Spotlight: Dr. Audrey Farrugia-Bernard

Dr. Audrey Bernard (Cohort 4) is currently an assistant professor of speech-language pathology in the Department of Special Education at Eastern Michigan University. “The care, respect, and knowledge” she received while in the Educational Studies program has greatly influenced how she continues to educate future teachers and further develop her interests in the scholarship of teaching and learning. Particularly passionate about topics such as inclusion and the disproportionality of students of color in special education, Dr. Bernard most recently presented at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Convention. She credits the program for broadening her

understanding of “the large scope of what the field of urban education entails.” Captivated by the various research interests of her colleagues, which not only influenced her own research, but instilled a vigor for activism, Dr. Bernard states, “I am no longer just talking, I am doing.” To students going through the program, Dr. Bernard expresses the importance of involving family and friends throughout her doctoral studies, emphasizing that “we are all stronger because of it.” She urges current students not limit themselves to simply attending class and writing papers, but to get involved and make the most that EMU has to offer. Dr. Bernard explains, “While arduous, the dissertation process gave me a solid base to begin my career.”

She adds that the process “allowed me a safe nurturing space to create.”

Dr. Bernard also attributes her success to having the support of faculty and fellow students in the program, which has fostered meaningful and lasting connections to this day. While she expresses gratitude “to have had guidance from world-renowned researchers and professors,” she also proudly shares that she has “made strong friendships with students who are the future of the profession.” Dr. Bernard’s dissertation entitled “*You are Coming with Me*”: *A Phenomenological Exploration of Urban Speech-Language Pathologists* is now available via ProQuest.

Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Studies

The Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Studies prepares educators from a variety of community organizations (P-12 schools, higher education and other community contexts) to engage in effective research and practice about teaching and learning within complex social, political and economic systems. A key underlying emphasis of the program is a focus on poverty and its specific impact on urban, as well as suburban and rural communities.

Get to Know Our Education Librarian: Kate Pittsley-Sousa



Kate Pittsley-Sousa,
Education Librarian

Tell us about your experience working with teachers and university students.

I was a teacher before attending grad school to become a librarian. I taught in the Upper Peninsula at the most northern high school in Michigan! Before coming to EMU, I worked as a reference librarian at the University of Michigan and MIT, where I enjoyed working with many PhD students. I also taught graduate courses on government information at U of M's School of Information. On a Merit Network project funded by Department of Education and National Science Foundation grants, I combined my experience as a teacher and librarian to design a large database which aligned free K-12 internet resources with state curriculum standards.

What are things you can help us with as we're doing research projects? What are things you can help us with when instructing a university level class?

I teach students how to find, use, and evaluate information. Because the information landscape is constantly changing, I'm able to help even experienced researchers. When I meet individually with students or faculty, ideally we have a conversation where the researcher discusses their project, I suggest sources and strategies, and we try some searches together. Often these strategies can save a lot of time.

When students have a research assignment, instructors can invite me to assist. This could involve a hands-on session in a computer lab, an online research guide, or just advice on how the library can support a particular assignment. Instructors also ask for help providing affordable class readings—such as help finding open access textbook possibilities, advice on linking to articles in library collections, or requests for library e-book versions of assigned titles.

Tell us about a valuable tool that students in the program might not know about.

It can be so time-consuming to find high quality statistics! A recently acquired database, *Statista*, makes finding statistics more like “googling for stats” and tables/charts are easy to download in different formats. *Statista* credits sources, so you can sometimes go to the source to find recently updated statistics or methodology details.

Can you tell us a little bit about the research you do and how it's useful for PhD students in becoming university level instructors?

I research the college textbook situation: why they've become so expensive, the effects on students, and what might be done to improve the situation. Currently there is rapid change, with both positive and negative effects. Increasingly universities and nonprofits are creating high quality free or low-cost

alternatives, while corporate textbook publishers seek ways to regain control and ensure they earn revenue for each student. Real power to solve the expensive textbook problem lies with faculty collectively, but there are also ways that academic libraries help. At many institutions librarians lead efforts to increase use of open access textbooks and other alternatives. I've developed a tool to help instructors learn about and search for alternatives. You can check it out here: <http://guides.emich.edu/alt-texts>

How do students contact you to make an appointment?

I'd enjoy meeting more PhD students! It's most productive to meet in-person—but for students who don't live close to EMU or those with tight schedules, a phone appointment works better than you might expect. I'm not scheduled at EMU for Summer I, but I'll be at EMU half-time in Summer II. I have [an online appointment calendar](#) or students can email me with suggested times at kpittsle@emich.edu. Additional ways to get help from librarians can be found on the library's [Education Research Guide](#).

Kudos and Congrats!

Yasmin Snounu (Cohort 6) has successfully passed her comprehensive exams!

Educational Studies Student Conference Presentations

Students in the Educational Studies program have presented papers at the [Research Network Forum](#) session at the [Conference on College Composition and Communication Annual Convention](#), the [EcoJustice and Activism Conference](#), and the [Graduate Research Conference](#) this semester, including:

Katy Adams (Cohort 6)

Adams, K. (2017, March 17). *Ten-Acres and a Child: Taking a Personal Approach to Ecojustice Education*. Paper presented at the EcoJustice and Activism Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

Kaia-Marie A. Bishop (Cohort 6)

Bishop, K. A. (2017, March 15). *I Can, But I Think I Can't: The Mismatch Between Writer's Ability and Levels of Confidence*. Work-in-progress presentation at the Research Network Forum session at the Conference on College Composition and Communication Annual Convention, Portland, OR.

Lena Boraggina-Ballard (PhD, Cohort 3)

Boraggina-Ballard, L. (2017, March 24). *Voices of the Invisible: A Critical Ethnography of Youth Put At Risk*. Paper presented at The Graduate Research Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

Nigora Safarovna Erkaeva (ABD, Cohort 4)

Lowenstein, E., & Erkaeva, N. (2017, March 17). *Place-Based Teacher Education: A Model Whose Time Has Come*. Paper presented at the EcoJustice and Activism Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

Kristi George (ABD, Cohort 1)

George, K. (2017, March 17). *Wendell Berry and Health as Holism*. Paper presented at the EcoJustice and Activism Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

Amanda O. Maher (Cohort 6)

Maher, A. O. (2017, March 18). *Reimagining Teacher Education: A Model of Critical Teaching Practice*. Paper presented at the EcoJustice and Activism Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

Maher, A. O. (2017, March 24). *Sociocultural and Cognitive Dimensions of Reading Attitudes and Behaviors*. Paper presented at The Graduate Research Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

Rachelle Marshall (Cohort 8)

Marshall, R. (2017, March 18). *Beyond Payne: An EcoJustice Framework for Understanding Classism*. Paper presented at the EcoJustice and Activism Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

John Mullen (Cohort 7)

Mullen, J. (2017, March 18). *'Anthropo-Harmonism,' the Imagination, and a Practiced Virtue: Reading Wendell Berry for EcoJustice Education and a Pedagogy of Responsibility*. Paper presented at the EcoJustice and Activism Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

Monica K. Shields (ABD, Cohort 3)

Shields, M. K. (2017, March 17). *EcoJustice Teachers: Dismantling Dominant Discourses*. Paper presented at the EcoJustice and Activism Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

Yasmin Snounu (ABD, Cohort 6)

Snounu, Y. (2017, March 18). *Perceptions on disability in college settings: Intersections of disability and EcoJustice Education*. Paper presented at the EcoJustice and Activism Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

Snounu, Y. (2017, March 24). *Perceptions of University Administrators on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in the U.S. & Palestine*. Paper presented at The Graduate Research Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

Jacqueline St. Antoine (Cohort 8)

St. Antoine, J. (2017, March 18). *We are All Wildthings: The Shunning of Disabled, Mad, and Ecological Bodyminds*. Paper presented at the EcoJustice and Activism Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

St. Antoine, J. (2017, March 24). *Criminals, Idiots, Imbeciles, and Rapists: The United States Eugenics Movement and Carrie Buck*. Paper presented at The Graduate Research Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.

Kimberly Tsukiyama (ABD, Cohort 6)

Tsukiyama, K. (2017, March 24). *Centering the Needs of Language Learners Within Educators' Professional Learning*. Paper presented at The Graduate Research Conference, Ypsilanti, MI.