

MARCH 7, 2022

Happenings at the *Faculty Development Center*

734.487.2530 | faculty_development@emich.edu | www.emich.edu/facdev/

Effectively Teaching Honors Courses

Monday, March 14, 2022, 12:30-1:45pm | 109B Halle, virtual attendance available via Zoom



Click or scan the code for more information on this workshop, or to register to attend!



Teaching an honors course comes with its own set of challenges, especially in the age of online and hybrid teaching and learning. This program is a chance to discuss what makes for a successful course with Honors instructors as well as Honors students. The conversation will focus on enhancing these courses, and provide multiple perspectives and approaches to create a flourishing Honors classroom. The session will take place in the FDC Collaboratory, with the opportunity to participate through Zoom.

Faculty Scholarly and Creative Activity Showcase

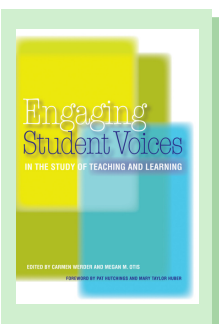
Thursday, March 17, 2022, 4-6:30 pm
Student Center Ballroom

Join us for the showcase and strolling reception hosted by the FDC and the Office of Research Development and Administration. This event celebrates disseminated research, scholarship, and creative activities completed by EMU faculty during the 2019, 2020, and 2021 calendar years.

Click or scan the code for more information on this event!



book spotlight



This week we feature *Engaging Student Voices in the Study of Teaching and Learning*, edited by Carmen Werder and Megan M. Otis.

This work highlights the importance of student voices, the focus of this week's blog post and a key topic discussed at the CONNECT teaching conference.

click [here](#) to read the full spotlight or to check out this book, or others, from our library

teaching spotlight



Dr. Julie Becker

Professor, Interim School Director & TRTI Director

Technology and Professional Services Management; Textiles Research and Training Institute

click [here](#) to read about Dr. Becker and how she brings her industry experience into her classroom

Teaching Blog: What Your Students Wish You Knew

Jessi Kwek and Hannah LaFleur



Jessi Kwek & Hannah LaFleur

Student workers at the FDC

Generation Z knows how easy it is to forget that behind every online interaction is a whole human being – we've been dealing with the complexities of online identities since we could remember. In these last two years, Zoom and asynchronous online courses have proven this once again. This time, though, the anonymity is not taking place on social media or in a game. Instead, it's taking place in a setting we never expected it might, one that used to be quite intimate: the classroom.

We recognize that we are not alone in our struggles – faculty have also been presented with countless challenges in the last two years – as we try to traverse this uncharted territory without adjusting our expectations for productivity or the way we measure it

There's been no shortage of acknowledgement about [COVID-19's impact on mental health](#), feelings of isolation, and disconnection from our peers and colleagues. [Dr. Mays Imad](#), the keynote speaker for the FDC's CONNECT Conference, has been one person leading the charge on this issue. One way that she's been doing this is conversing with students around the country, and our conversation with Dr. Imad and six other Eastern students about our experiences over the past two years made clear that this widespread acknowledgement by teachers, administrators, and peers has in many cases not translated into tangible action to recreate those connections and curb those feelings of isolation.

In the experiences of this group of students, synchronous Zoom or in-person classes, and to a greater extent asynchronous classes, have felt like our person matters less than our EID. For many, asynchronous classes have meant we are handed a list of deadlines and left to our own devices (literally) to teach ourselves the material and stay on pace with little to no guidance from our professors. Even in the most "normal" scenario – fully in-person classes – interaction with teachers and classmates outside of direct class time is more limited and more formalized. In every one of these scenarios, there is less of an opportunity to see students as whole human beings, which is what we have been missing the most. It feels as though the student voice has been reduced to a whisper; we feel less connection to the university, our teachers, and those who could help guide us through these times.

This is not to say that the burden should fall entirely upon teachers – far from it. Faculty are, in many cases, facing similar challenges with pandemic teaching as students are with pandemic learning: disconnection, distractions at home, and interactions that have lost their depth. Students understand that. The problem is that students are feeling overlooked in almost every aspect of their lives.

While mental health has become a priority in our broader community, students in this conversation reported facing [CAPS](#) waiting times of up to four to six weeks. While essential workers were hailed early in the pandemic, that sentiment has worn off, but many EMU students still have no choice but to

work these low wage jobs where they cannot work from home, and they have no choice but to prioritize their employment over their safety. While the university previously implemented policies to ease the struggles of students, such as waiving online class fees and expanding pass/fail options, these have expired and we are once again subject to these less flexible conditions despite the fact that obstacles that warranted this response have not gone away. Students' options for advocating for themselves have thinned – one student in our discussion even shared an experience where she was turned away by the office of her college dean without having an opportunity to be heard.

Faculty enter this conversation because they have more opportunities to see students as whole people, and to understand that the problems we are facing outside of the classroom are not separate from those we face in the classroom. Some teachers already make an effort to do this, and please trust us when we say that that effort does not go unnoticed, no matter how it presents itself. We've had teachers who set aside the first ten minutes of class for students to talk about current events. We've had teachers who know that sharing questions or comments is harder over Zoom, so they offer anonymous feedback options at the end of each class. We've had teachers who leave the Zoom meeting open after class ends, so students have the chance to stick around and chat after class if they'd like to. We've even had teachers who do something as small as asking us how we're doing each class, and meaning it, and maybe even extending an invitation to talk if we feel the need to. Meeting students with humility and grace is powerful, and may look different for each individual.

We notice each one of these gestures and deeply appreciate them. These simple efforts send the message that a classroom is a safe space to acknowledge and balance issues from all parts of our lives, rather than being expected to leave whole parts of ourselves at the door to clear space for a single class. Allowing students to take up space and to bring our whole selves into the classroom has an incredible effect on our ability to learn in a more meaningful way, much as Dr. Imad suggested. Many of us are struggling to feel like a valued part of this institution, and struggling to balance the role of 'student' with many other roles. Each of these efforts to show students that we are seen as whole, valuable human beings on our own goes a long way. Knowing that we have a voice somewhere among the often overwhelming feelings of powerlessness makes all the difference. We want to thank the teachers who go out of their way to connect with us beyond course material, and encourage those who may not have realized how much we need this to do so, in whatever way you can. We promise you, it will be worth it.

Submit a Blog Post

We welcome blog posts from faculty, lecturers, and interested others on teaching and learning topics. Email us at faculty_development@emich.edu with your blog post idea for the opportunity to be featured in future newsletters!



Student participants pictured with Dr. Mays Imad
Participants named left to right: Luis Romero, Mays Imad, Anna Bowling, Sonya Liggins, Jessi Kwek, Cedrick Charles, Eamon Conner, Jeffrey Hoang, Hannah LaFleur

What's Coming Up

Click or scan the QR codes for more info

Fulbright Grant Application Workshop

March 11, 2022, 3-4:30 pm | via Zoom (rescheduled due to snow day)

- Through this informational workshop, participants will hear several experts talk about the various types of Fulbright grants, how to navigate the application process through EMU, as well as hear personal success stories of recent EMU faculty Fulbright grantees.



Introduction to LGBTQ+ Identities and Inclusive Language

Wednesday, March 23, 2022
4:00-5:30pm via Zoom

- The Spectrum Center's Introduction to LGBTQ+ Identities & Inclusive Language Workshop is designed to support an individual, department, or organization in their knowledge and development of LGBTQ+ terminology, inclusivity, and advocacy.



Addressing Misinformation, Bias, and News Literacy Session #3

March 17, 2022, 2-3:30 pm | via Zoom

- People frequently perceive and allege bias in news coverage, but what does this really mean? In this session we'll help you teach this vital, controversial, complex topic in ways that empower students to meaningfully evaluate the fairness and impartiality of news coverage.



Thank an Eagle: Call for Nominations

Nominations due March 18, 2022

- We are still accepting nominations from students for Thank an Eagle! Encourage your students to recognize those who are meaningful to them by sharing the online form. The recognition ceremony is scheduled for April 8th.



Universal Design for Learning Session #3

March 18, 2022, 12:30-1:45 pm | 109B Halle - virtual attendance will be facilitated over Zoom

- This session will focus on strategizing ways to create an educational environment that is inclusive of students from a variety of backgrounds, including race, gender, and learning abilities. This session will focus on the in-person classroom.



How to Use R for Statistics: A Two-Part Workshop

Monday March 28, 2022, 3:30 pm
and Monday April 11, 2022, 3:30pm

- A two part workshop to introduce users to R, and develop a base-level knowledge on its functions. These workshops are co-sponsored by the Faculty Development Center and the Office of Research Development & Administration. In person, as well as virtual attendance will be available.



Brought to you by the EMU NEXT Scholars: Ed-Talks: Decolonizing College of Ed

Saturday, March 19, 2022, 9am-2pm
Porter Building

- The NEXT Scholars invite you to attend a student-led journey about the transformative changes the upcoming generation is bringing to education! The conference is free to attend and breakfast and lunch will be provided.

