FDC HAPPENINGS

October 10, 2022

A group of 3 women and 3 men talking to each other in a classroom, looking at laptops and notepads as they talk.

Mini-Grants to Support Student Wellness

Applications are due by Thursday, October 13 by 5:00pm. Applicants will be informed of their status by Friday, October 28th

The FDC and the Office of Wellness and Community Responsibility are seeking applicants for mini-grants of up to $250 to help instructors support student wellness in their classrooms. If we are able to do more to help with the stresses that student face, we should do that. Even the smallest things can end up making a huge difference! This funding will be for the Winter 2023 classes, so that instructors can initiate practices in their classroom, see how they have helped, and share them with others.

To learn more about the mini-grants, or to apply, please visit our website.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS:

TRY ONE THING

A few weeks ago, the FDC launched our "Try One Thing" series, to help educators identify small things they can do in their classrooms to help students. This week, we bring you three more ideas for one thing you can try to foster student belonging.

From the FDC

AMANDA MAHER, HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

Try using the Canvas module of your course shell to signal students that their well-being and success matters. I titled mine Useful EMU Resources, and it contains direct links to Swoop's Food Pantry, Counseling & Psychological Services, Writing Support, library services, Holman Success Center, and the Title IX reporting and resource page. I recently added the link to the EMU software licenses when I learned that some students cannot afford some software.

CHRISTINE NEUFELD, ENGLISH

At the beginning of each semester, I send my classes a google form inviting them to share their preferred names (with tips on how to pronounce them), pronouns, and other helpful contextual information. I include an optional final question: Finish this sentence: "It would be helpful if my professor knew …"
The responses I get help me connect with students who need (or would like) my attention, while just posing the question communicates to everyone that I care.

DIBYA CHOUDHURI, LEADERSHIP AND COUNSELING

I do a midsemester check in with my students. We do fishbowls, where rotating groups of students meet in the middle to discuss a question for 6 minutes, while everyone else observes. I put variants of three questions on the board: a) what's going well in this class; b) where are the struggles and challenges, and what could the instructor do differently; and c) what could you do differently to get the most out of the course? I keep time, thank each group when they are done, and take notes. I summarize after 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of discussion. If you ask students to do this and they see you implementing the changes, you will have students who both trust you and commit to the course.

What's your "one thing?"

Do you have one thing you do in your classroom that you believe fosters student belonging, engagement, learning or that offers innovations in the assessment of learning? If so, please email us at faculty_development@emich.edu to be featured in an upcoming newsletter.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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Are grant proposal rejections getting you down? Eighty percent of faculty who come to these sessions receive the award, because they get up-to-date information on writing a successful proposal and get important feedback on how their proposals will be reviewed. Our first series of presentations focuses on the Summer Research Award (application due October 31st). Please join us on October 24 and/or October 25 to get feedback on your work. If interested in attending, please register here.

Internal Research Awards

October 24 & 25
109 Halle, 3:30pm

This workshop will provide examples of common microaggressions in faculty-student interactions and their impact on students' sense of belonging, engagement, and overall success in institutions of higher education. The workshop will also address the impact of microaggressions on BIPoC faculty and will provide resources for effectively responding to and mitigating the negative effects of racial microaggressions. Click here to learn more.

Understanding the Impact of Racial Microaggressions and Strategies for Responding

October 28 & November 9
11:00am
109 Halle and Zoom

Secondary Teacher Preparation Program

October 28, November 11,18 &
December 9
109 Halle (300 Halle on Oct. 28)
See website for times

In 2018, the Michigan Department of Education announced their updated "students-first" teacher certification system. Since then, faculty across EMU's colleges and departments have taken this opportunity to revitalize our teacher preparation program to incorporate the new professional standards and state requirements. Join us as we describe the blueprint of the program, introduce our guiding principles, and review core teaching practices. Faculty and lecturers will receive an honorarium for participation in each session.

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The Faculty Development Center invites you to join us for a chance to reflect with others about any struggles that you might face in your role as faculty. Our group will be facilitated by Dr. Quentin Hunter. Join us for our next meeting on October 17 or click here to learn more.

Faculty Support Group

Every other Monday, 11 am
*109 Halle*

Research Writer's Collaborative

Every Thursday
via Zoom,
1:30 pm -3:30 pm

The Research Writers' Collaborative is an opportunity for EMU faculty to support each other while achieving realistic writing goals (i.e. developing a conference paper, drafting an article, revising a book chapter, etc.). This community also provides an opportunity for participants to give and receive helpful feedback on their writing as well. Click here to learn more.

SPOTLIGHTS

This week's book spotlight features *Teaching Effectively with Zoom: A practical guide to engage your students and help them learn*, by Dan Levy. This book guides educators on teaching effective online classes and gives advice on questions such as "Why and how to use breakout rooms?" and "How do you build community in a virtual classroom?"

Click here to read the full spotlight or to check out this book, or others, from our library.

2nd edition

Teaching Effectively with Zoom

A practical guide to engage your students and help them learn

Dan Levy
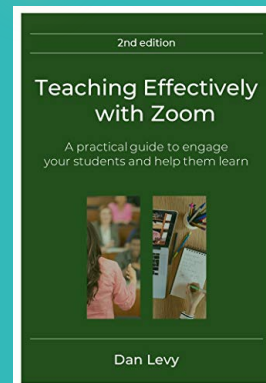
For this week's Teaching Spotlight, we are highlighting Dr. RJ Koscielniak. In his interview, Dr. Koscielniak talked about his connection to Eastern Michigan students and the life experiences that his students bring to the classroom and how he can use these connections to better teach the material. To read the full spotlight, click here.

Dr. RJ Koscielniak
Assistant Professor
Geography and Geology

FACTS, FEELINGS, AND THE CHALLENGE OF INFORMATION LITERACY

What do conspiracy theories about the 2020 U.S Presidential elections, researching for a paper, and preparing for a job interview have in common?

By Amy Fyn

Each is an opportunity to put information literacy skills to the test. But what does information literacy look like? And how can we as faculty support its development in students? Information literacy is broadly defined within disciplines. To librarians, info lit is acknowledged as a "set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning" (Association of College and Research Libraries' Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education). At EMU, the library suggests a longer-term goal that extends beyond the classroom and matriculation: "Information literacy is the set of capacities that students must develop to become wise consumers of information and life-long learners" (Information Literacy research guide). Few, if any, would argue that these are undesirable skills, yet we may not see how to integrate this development into our classes or how to make the connections clear to our students.

The problem with info lit lies not in the definition, but in the ways in which we interact with information in formal and informal situations. Especially when we have an emotional response or investment associated with the topic, we all struggle sometimes to separate fact from fiction. How do we overcome our confirmation bias telling us that information is accurate if it aligns with our own beliefs? Evaluating sources has changed in response to the proliferation of websites, self-published materials, and predatory journals (journals that promote profit over accuracy and valid research methods, better defined by Nature here). Beyond dialing back our feelings, we also need to update our evaluation methods. Checklist-based strategies developed before the internet became social, such as the memorable "CRAAP Test", don't address the sheer volume and variety of information sources we have at our fingertips. While information literacy in each of our disciplines contains discrete nuances, cross-pollination and reinforcement helps us all contribute to this critical component of student skills.

Consider the example of the U.S. presidential election of 2020 to illustrate the challenges faced by many who were unsure how to wade through the rhetoric, claims, and counterclaims. Was the election stolen? How can you tell? An analysis from multiple disciplinary lenses that dissects mis-and disinformation would make a fascinating book. Until that's written, try one fast, effective strategy: lateral reading. While reading or viewing news or social media claims, open a browser and check facts, figures, writers, and organizations for independent confirmation of data, reputation of sources, or reviews of sites or publications before accepting or sharing information.

SUBMIT A BLOG POST

We welcome blog posts from faculty, lecturers, staff, and students 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!

Mike Caufield, director of blended and networked learning at Washington State University Vancouver and author of Web Literacy for Student Fact Checkers promotes lateral reading in addition to four moves for evaluating sources. These moves—Stop, Investigate the source, Find better coverage, Trace claims, quotes, and media to the original context, or SIFT (read more about this strategy here) - can be applied to conspiracy claims about the election, or stories that tug at your heart, and mediate some personal bias. Caulfield models fact checking-strategies and other info-lit-adjacent topics such as recognizing common tropes used by conspiracy theorists. Class discussions could focus on a number of examples, such as this Scene-Level Trope: Voting Location Cameras Covered Up.

Reliable nonprofit organizations, including some founded by journalists, maintain fact-checking pages that can be referenced or used as examples in a class discussion or assignment. Politifact devotes a page to coverage of the 2020 election and continues to cover statements made by both Biden and Trump. Similarly, Factcheck.org maintains an Archive of Election 2020 (and its aftermath) coverage, continuing to follow stories related to claims

about the election.

Resources supporting the growth of an information literate person can be more hands-on, too. These recommendations can inspire or fit into curricular content by being integrated into a class session, or assigned to students in groups or individually:

- Evaluating News Sources, one of our library tutorials, uses real-world news examples to practice determining what is news and what is not.
- Factitious is a gamified challenge to determine if brief, published news articles are real or fake. I enjoy this format so much that I've toyed with making my own version to use with classes.
- The Crash Course catalog includes the Navigating Digital Information series, ten videos focusing on specific topics such as Data and Infographics, and Using Wikipedia. These free and engaging videos each run about 15 minutes or less.
- COR for the Science Classroom provides lesson plans for developing evaluation skills using examples pulled from science-related topics such as climate change and using lateral reading about renewable energy.

We can continue to develop our skills and those of our students through discussions, modeling, and projects designed to advance information literacy abilities. Information literacy is, at its best, a skill set that helps us all overcome our biases and limitations to more effectively determine the accuracy of a piece of information, no matter where the information originates. Many of the current strategies focus on evaluating news, entertaining stories, and other content found online; few delve into evaluating the types of sources that librarians often help students find to meet assignment requirements or quality standards.

Want to dig deeper into information literacy? Collaborate with your department's librarian subject specialist (find us here). We can discuss assignments, resources, research sessions, and other ideas that support your students' further development of these lifelong skills, and help you enhance how you treat information literacy in your classes.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amy Fyn is an Assistant Professor and the Business Librarian at EMU. Before joining Halle Library, she was the Coordinator of Library Instruction at Coastal Carolina University, and was a Reference and Instruction Librarian at Bowling Green State University. She's taught courses on information seeking, academic research and business research. Her research interests include academic librarian retention, misinformation, and information literacy in higher education.