FDC HAPPENINGS

October 17, 2022

A woman stands in an auditorium, speaking to people in the seats ahead of her. The camera's focal point is the woman.

Understanding the Impact of Racial Microaggressions and Strategies for Responding

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

Racial microaggressions are the everyday slights, insults, putdowns, invalidations, and offensive behaviors that Black, Indigenous, and Other People of Color (BIPOC) experience in daily interactions with generally well-intentioned White Americans who may be unaware that they have engaged in racially demeaning ways toward target groups. Dr. Uttara Manohar, the FDC's Faculty Fellow for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, is facilitating workshops designed for faculty to effectively recognize and respond to microaggressions in the classroom. These workshops will provide examples of microaggressions in faculty-student interactions and discuss their impact on students and faculty, their sense of belonging, and overall success in institutions of higher education. Click here to learn more or register for the workshops.

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CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS: eFELLOWS GRANT PROGRAM

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The eFellows program supports faculty and full-time lecturers in obtaining the resources needed to successfully pilot innovative technology-based projects that enhance student-focused instruction in courses and curriculum. The overall outcome of this program is to enhance student learning and the scholarship of teaching through the integration of appropriate technology. The eFellows program is provided for tenure/tenure-track faculty and full-time lecturers through the collaboration between the Bruce K. Nelson Faculty Development Center, Faculty Senate, and the Division of IT. The program funding and coordination is administered by the Faculty Development Center.

The goals of this grant program are to:

- Improve instructional practices
- Positively impact student learning outcomes
- Build a collaborative community for instructional activities

Proposals Must Include:

- eFellows Project Summary Sheet
- Project Description
- Project Budget
- Acknowledgment from Department Head/School Director

eFellows Proposal Writing Workshops

Two virtual, drop-in workshop sessions will be offered pre-submission for proposal writing support. These dates are

- November 2, 1:00 PM
- November 3, 9:00 AM

Click here to register or learn more.

Types of Grants Available

Award:	Amount	Dept. Match (if applicable)	eFellows Match (if applicable)	Max. w/ matching
Individual	Up to $3,000	Up to $500	Up to $500	$4,000
Team	Up to $5,000	Up to $1,000	Up to $1,000	$7,000

If you have any questions, please contact:
Jeffrey L. Bernstein, Professor of Political Science and Director of Bruce K. Nelson Faculty Development Center (jbernstei@emich.edu)

Michael McVey, Professor of Teacher Education and Chair of eFellows Committee (mmcvey@emich.edu)

UPCOMING EVENTS

READING IN PRINT?
scan the QR code to access the links in this issue

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Internal Research Awards

October 24 & 25
3:30pm
109 Halle

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 October 24 and/or October 25 to receive feedback on your work. Bring a draft with you to the workshop. If interested in attending, please register here.

Syllabus Focus Group

October 24
5:00pm
109 Halle

The Faculty Development Center will be hosting a student focus group to hear what students look for in a course syllabus, in order to shape our forthcoming course syllabus webpage. Students who are sophomores or above are eligible to participate in this group and will receive $15 for doing so. Students are also eligible to receive LBC credit (Group GELB3A) for their participation, and pizza will be provided for the group. Faculty, please encourage your students to attend. Students can register here.

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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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Research Writer's Collaborative

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

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. Learn more here.

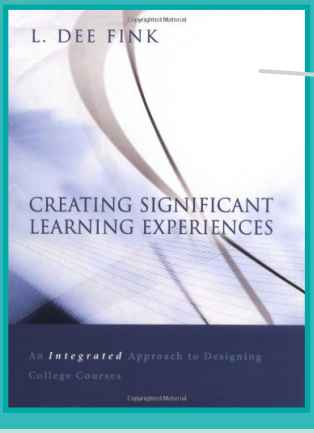
Faculty Support Group

Every other Monday, 11:00am
109 Halle

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. Learn more here.

SPOTLIGHTS

This week's book spotlight is *Creating Significant Learning Experiences* by L. Dee Fink. This book tries to answer the question of "How can I create courses that will provide significant learning experiences for my students?" Fink addresses the question by providing recommendations not only for how instructors can make changes but also how administrators and higher education organizations can support instructors in these changes.
Click here to read the full spotlight or to check out this book, or others, from our library.



Dr. Clyde Barnett III
Full-Time Lecturer
Leadership & Counseling

For this week's Teaching Spotlight, we are highlighting Dr. Clyde Barnett III. In his spotlight, Dr. Barnett talked about the importance of building relationships with students, student agency, and the love he has for EMU and the "magical" community that we have here. To read the full spotlight, click here.

TEACHING BLOG: PEERING INSIDE THE BLACK BOX OF EXPERTISE

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By Jeffrey L. Bernstein

Rogers Hornsby was one of the greatest baseball hitters of all time; among other feats, he has the second highest single-season batting average in history (.424 in 1924, for the St. Louis Cardinals). Following a successful playing career, Hornsby tried managing, where he was not especially successful (side note: Tom Hanks' character in A League of Their Own refers to being one of Hornsby's players). Hornsby's final job in baseball was as hitting coach for the 1962 Mets, who had the worst single-season record in the post-expansion era. He died following the 1962 season, presumably not because of how bad the Mets were.

Hornsby, it turns out, is not unique in being a great practitioner of an art (in this case, hitting a baseball) but not an especially good teacher of said art. Teaching someone to hit a baseball (or solve differential equations, or design a prosthetic limb), as we all know, requires a different skill set than actually *doing* any of these things. Teaching requires us to identify and break down the hidden moves we make in doing the activity; these cognitive moves likely come so naturally to experts (like we are in our disciplines) that we cannot necessarily break down and explain what we are doing.

Quick example: how do you merge onto a highway when driving? Most of us can do this routinely; we might even say we have achieved expertise with this skill. Now try explaining how to do this to a novice. Take it from my personal experience, it is not easy. Breaking down all the steps we are taking, in order, in real time, is hard. Merging onto a highway, it turns out, is much easier than teaching someone how to merge onto a highway (my older son will back me up on this point 100%!).

Taking our expertise and breaking it down so we can teach our novice students is one of the biggest challenges we will face in the classroom. The very nature of our expertise makes it hard to be aware of how we know what we know. When I put tables of quantitative public opinion data up on the screen last week, I knew *exactly* what the numbers meant, and how I was interpreting them. Doing so is as natural to me as walking. There is, however, a great deal of knowledge operating behind the curtain that lets me do this. Knowing, for instance, that a result is statistically significant at the .05 level is not an intuitively logical thing to explain to students, especially because much in my brain invisibly undergirds the entirely obvious (to me!) meaning of this concept. How do I, as a professor, bridge that divide with my students?

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!

Now, think about yourself. What do you know, completely and thoroughly, that is as obvious to you as hitting a baseball was to Rogers Hornsby, but yet is not easy to teach to students (or to me)? The nature of a university – the fact that you have all studied your discipline so much more deeply than I can ever hope to do – means you posses specialized knowledge that few others have. How can experts in specific knowledge domains share their knowledge with relative novices, like our students?

My own approach to this requires "thinking aloud" about the heretofore invisible actions I am performing. For example, after struggling to teach my older son to merge onto a highway, I changed my approach with my younger one. For Bernstein Child 2.0, I would have him sit in the passenger seat, and narrate to him ("thinking aloud") every action I was taking, every direction in which I was looking, every judgment that I was making. In doing so, I hoped he could come to see the task as I saw it. It is amazing how much is going on in your head as you are performing acts of expertise in a particular domain. Try it; you'll be amazed.

Likewise, while I do not do this every single time I teach about quantitative data, I often try to "think aloud" what I am seeing when I work with students. This usually manifests as my putting up the data, asking students to practice their interpretation of what is on the screen ("Turn to your partner and discuss with each other what you think you see here"), and then, later in the discussion, sharing what I am seeing. For instance, "When I looked at the table, I noticed the correlations in the right-hand column are higher than those in the left-hand column. I then asked myself, what does this mean? What do these results imply for our understanding of voter behavior?"

My hope is that after I do this a few times, and they get a feel for what it looks like when an experienced data person confronts a table of numbers, they will then be better positioned to do this on their own one day. My walking them through the hidden process I use helps to unpack the black box of expert thinking, and makes it clearer to students how they can learn to perform the acts that an expert does.

Think about this: our students are often intimidated by the very same material that we find fascinating and, frankly, fairly elementary. They feel this way because they lack the comfort with the material that we have and, lacking this comfort, they cannot find the joy. When we intentionally unpack the black box of expertise that we possess, and make it clear that such expertise is not innate but instead can be learned, we help our students on the path to deep learning of the material. And that, I would assert, is one of the most critical, and rewarding, things we can do as instructors.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jeffrey L. Bernstein is Professor of Political Science and Director of the Bruce K. Nelson Faculty Development Center at Eastern Michigan University. He is fascinated by the different ways that experts and novices approach problems, and by the challenge of moving students along the path to expertise in their fields of study.