

FDC HAPPENINGS

September 6, 2022



Photo of a student and professor sitting on the couch and talking.

Call for Students

Teaching and Learning Together (TaLT)

Applications due September 12

First meeting for students will be on September 19

As we begin this academic year, we are asking instructors to help us in our search for students who could take part in our Teaching and Learning Together (TaLT) Learning community. Although the deadline for faculty applications for the learning community has already passed, we hope you will encourage applications from students who have something to contribute to this conversation. Please consider talking to your students in class, or reaching out personally via email or Canvas message, about this opportunity. Student applications are due September 12 and can be found [here](#).

Information on TaLT, the work we are doing and the requirements for students can be found on the [Teaching and Learning Together](#) webpage

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CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS:

TRY ONE THING

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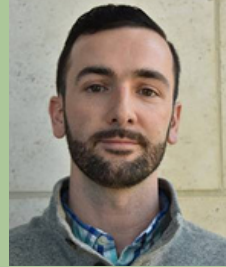
Teaching is hard. There is no denying it. While you have many ways to enhance what you are doing while also balancing what already works well in your classroom, change can get overwhelming. That is why, this fall, the Faculty Development Center is encouraging instructors to "try one thing," to support continuous improvement in a nondisruptive manner. We reached out to some members of our community to hear one thing they've done in their classroom that they are pleased with and want to share it with you today!



Cam McComb, Associate Professor of Visual Arts Education

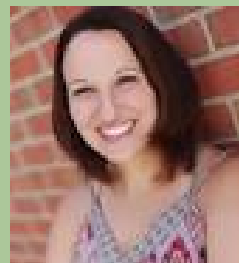
This semester I scheduled one class session for in-person whole group instruction and one class session for online small group work.

Teaching online during the pandemic taught me how to use Zoom breakout sessions to promote meaningful group work. Before class I prepare 1-3 Google slides for students to document their breakout room conversations. As the conversations happen I can "see" how students are interpreting the prompts based on the thinking made visible in the Google Slides. I can then sit back and allow the conversation to continue, or I can join a breakout room to redirect or comment on what I am seeing.



Peter Blackmer, Assistant Professor of Africology and African American Studies

This semester students in my AFC 101 course are creating "zines" on a topic of their choice related to class content. The intention is to give students space to explore their interests and present their research in creative ways, while creating educational materials that can be shared with their communities.



Audrey Farrugia, Associate Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders

I had my students write down two songs they are

really into right now. I put these songs into a class playlist. At the beginning of class, during individual/small group work, and at the end of the class I am playing our playlist as a way to incorporate music and different styles into our learning space.

Thank you to everyone who shared their "one thing" with us. If you have something you'd like to see highlighted in a future version of this feature, please email us at faculty_development@emich.edu

UPCOMING EVENTS

READING IN
PRINT?

scan the QR code to
access the links in
this issue



Learning Communities

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Equitable Educators Learning Community

*Applications due
September 15*

Led by the FDC's new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion faculty fellow, Dr. Uttara Manohar, this group will bring together educators who want to develop cultural humility and commit to creating inclusive spaces and equitable outcomes for students. Apply or learn more [here](#).

These learning communities offer opportunities to share learning activities and enrich our GE teaching and learning practices at EMU. This semester we will focus on three new communities: Global Awareness, US Diversity, and Arts. Learn more or apply for the learning communities [here](#).

General Education Professional Learning Communities

*Applications due
September 15*



Caption: A group of people conversing around a table and keeping notes on laptops.

New Faculty Learning Community

*First meeting
September 23
2pm-3:30pm in 109 Halle*

In this learning community for first year faculty, we'll discuss how to lay the groundwork for a successful career, in terms of teaching, research, and service, and how you find the right balance. Together, we will support one another as we dive into an unknowable but exciting future. Learn more or register [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

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Join us for this workshop to learn specific and practical communication tools based on Nonviolent Communication (NVC) in order to support an open, inclusive, and respectful classroom environment. This workshop will be led by Dr. Paula Willoquet and Dr. Jenny Kindred. Learn more here.

Meaningful Conversations: Facilitating Empathic Listening and Mindful Expression

September 30,
9am-1pm, in 300 Halle

Save the Date: Internal Research Award Writing Workshop

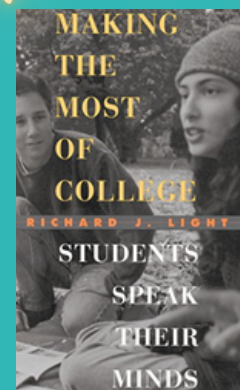
October 6, 3:30pm-4:45pm,
in 109 Halle and via Zoom

Join us for our first in a series of workshops focusing on Summer Research Award applications (due October 31st), intending to inform attendees on the application process itself and provide feedback on any materials provided. Learn more about this session, and other sessions to be offered in the series, here.

SPOTLIGHTS

Read the spotlight on "Making the Most of College," an "oldie but a goodie" by Richard J. Light. In this book, Light reflects on a project intended to "evaluate the effectiveness of what the university does, and to devise ways to improve it." Light offers valuable answers to questions like "Do our faculty members help students become more effective students? How can we do this even better?"

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



Dr. Andreia Gendera Part Time Lecturer Management

Read Dr. Gendera's full teaching spotlight here to learn about how she uses her experience in the business world to better prepare her students for life after graduation. Also read about how she gets her students engaged in the classroom, and hear her reaction to her recently earned teaching award!

TEACHING BLOG:

WHY MENTORING MATTERS!

By Sadaf Ali and Dyann Logwood

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What is mentoring?

Rather than only focusing on scholarly research, we decided to directly ask the people from whom the mentoring was designed: our students.

During our two-day workshop, we invited a group of students of color from a variety of backgrounds, including first generation, single parent, international, and “traditional” students, to participate in a panel discussion. They shared their experiences at Eastern Michigan University and what they look for in a good mentor. We received a variety of answers.

Some students wanted a mentor who worked with them on an educational and personal level. These students didn’t necessarily have family or a support network they could turn to for help in navigating college life. They wanted someone who they felt would have their back and who really had their best interests at heart. They wanted their faculty mentors to be part of their support network. From this diverse student panel discussion, we learned that finding faculty mentors who understand and empathize with the unique challenges our students face is critical.

Other students, like the more “traditional students,” wanted a faculty mentor who specifically focused on things like career advice and research opportunities and were less inclined to discuss personal matters. These students generally came from backgrounds that already provided them with the support that their less privileged peers needed or wanted.

Both ways of mentoring are acceptable and valued. As part of thinking about our students in a holistic manner, we know that they have a variety of strengths and challenges, including socioeconomic, cultural differences, physical abilities, etc. It’s up to mentors to work with their mentees to create an action plan that works best for both parties.

What is intersectional mentoring?

Intersectional mentoring is transformative, impacting how faculty design curriculum, provide tools for creating safe and accessible learning communities, and promote positive interactions between faculty and students in the classroom and on campus.

As mentors, we each focus on mentoring individuals from traditionally underrepresented and marginalized groups, and also on teaching mentees how to navigate obstacles they may face due to their identities. It’s more than just surviving; this is how you create a culture of belonging. It’s about allowing students the space to feel empowered and viewing our students from a broader perspective.

SUBMIT A BLOG POST

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

For example, LGBTQIA+ students need more than career and class advice. They may also need faculty mentors who are allies and can provide safe spaces.

Students may also require resources for academic, financial, and emotional support. Faculty can be a real source of comfort for students who are having difficulty navigating college life.

Why does mentoring work?

Mentoring, when done intentionally and thoughtfully, allows students to take a central and active role in their education. We all know education is more salient when it's hands on. Atkins and colleagues and Strayhorn note that mentored students tend to have a stronger sense of belonging at their chosen institutions and have a stronger sense of future goals. Mentors, especially those of us with connections outside of EMU, can take an active role in connecting our student mentees to amazing social and economic opportunities, as well as personal growth. We have seen students in our departments take skills they learned in the classroom, projects, and even university clubs and apply them to real-world jobs. And as a teacher, nothing is more rewarding than having a former (or current) student tell you how much of a difference you made in their lives. These comments validate our decisions to go into teaching and education.

Why does EMU need quality mentors?

We have a unique student body that has a lot of unique needs. We also have amazing faculty who want to make a difference (that's why we did the workshop). Faculty of color are often approached by students of color for mentoring.

Sadaf: For some of these students, in particular South Asians and Muslim (I'm Pakistani and Muslim), this is the first time they are meeting a faculty member who looks like them teaching their media classes. During undergrad, I had a few Asian professors, but the first time I had a Black professor was in a journalism graduate class.

I didn't see another Black, female professor until I met Dr. Doris Fields (Interim Chief Diversity Officer) in CMTA. While she wasn't my professor, she took me on as a mentee; she helped me navigate the tenure track as a new professor. I have since been working with other amazing female faculty members like Dyann and Barbara Patrick (DH in Political Science).

Dyann: Over the years, students have come to my office hours to meet me because they heard that one of the professors in the Women's and Gender Studies Department is African American. In addition, I have encountered students from a variety of backgrounds who note that I am their first Black teacher. Several of these students remain in contact with me, asking for letters of recommendation, assistance with research, career advice, and mentoring beyond their time at EMU.

Ultimately, as our own individual experiences make clear, we want education to be a rewarding experience for both faculty and students. Supporting mentoring initiatives is the key to that success.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Sadaf Ali is a Associate Professor of Electronic Media and Film Studies at Eastern Michigan University

Dr. Dyann Logwood is Assistant Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at Eastern Michigan University.