

FDC HAPPENINGS

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*Five individuals gather around a laptop with a chalkboard behind them

Winter 2024 Program Proposals

Each semester, we seek proposals for sustained learning communities or seminars, or for a more involved series of workshops, or for hosting a significant one-time event (such as bringing in a prominent speaker). Our budget provides funding for such activities, and we are grateful to the Office of the Provost for their generous supplement to this funding.

We award up to \$5000 per program, which can include an honorarium for a facilitator or speaker, honoraria for participants, supplies, travel expenses, etc. This funding can enable you to make a meaningful commitment of time and resources, enabling participants to learn together, develop new skills, collaborate, and innovate.

All faculty, lecturers, and staff are eligible to submit a Program Request Form. Past recipients of this award are ineligible to be funded in two consecutive application cycles. Preference will be given to new proposals as opposed to those repeating past programs. Significant modifications of past programs will be treated as if they were new programs.

Click [here](#) to visit the website for more information.

Click [here](#) to view the application.

Proposals are due **TOMORROW, November 14, by 5 PM.**

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CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

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From Jeffrey L. Bernstein

Hi everyone.

I'm sharing this note with you today to ask a favor. As many of you know, the Faculty Development Center is committed to respecting and giving prominence to the student voice in teaching and learning. Faculty clearly are the content experts in their classrooms, and often are pedagogical experts as well. But the student voice is valuable in enhancing our teaching effectiveness; our students have a unique perspective on their learning, on their wellbeing, and on creating a sense of belonging, and we would do well to listen to them.

To this end, on December 1, we will be hosting Flipping the Script, a student-led teaching conference. This conference will feature 16 presentations from EMU students, as well as a plenary session and panel discussion. These sessions will help us to enhance our practice, aided by the unique perspectives and wisdom our students bring.

We have a full day of sessions for you, and we obviously hope you can be with us all day. But knowing it's a busy Friday, I'm asking a personal favor of you to try and **join us for any part of the day that you can**. We'll have breakfast, lunch, and (no surprise if you know me) plenty of snacks. **Come for the food. Stay for a session or two.** And, invite your students! They can get LBC credit for attending. **We just ask that all attendees register so we can be sure to have enough food.**

Your presence sends a powerful signal to our students that we respect and value them as partners in the teaching and learning process. Our students are excited to share their experiences and research with us, and being there supports the connections between students and faculty that are so near and dear to many of our hearts.

I hope to see you on December 1.

Thank you,
Jeff

Click [here](#) to view the Flipping the Script Program.

Click [here](#) to register.

upcoming EVENTS

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November 15 @ 3:30
109B Halle and Zoom

TEACHING AND THE HIRING PROCESS

Whenever we hire a new faculty member, we necessarily place much stock in our ability to predict if they will be an effective teacher. This workshop will explore various means of assessing the teaching potential of a job candidate, including guest lecturing in classes, teaching mock classes, pedagogical colloquia, and others. No method is perfect, but we will explore the benefits and drawbacks of each, and help participants to determine which approaches will work based upon what they wish to learn about their candidates. Click [here](#) to register.

eFELLOWS GRANT

Applications are due November 27
Click [here](#) to apply

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 improve and enhance student learning and the scholarship of teaching through the integration of appropriate technology. The eFellows program is available 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. To learn more about the Grant Application Process, view the [eFellows Proposal Instructions](#).

November 30 @ 2:00 PM
109B Halle
Click [here](#) to sign up

GEN ED COURSE PROPOSALS

At the FDC, we often hear from faculty that they would like their courses to become part of the General Education program, but are unsure how to make that happen. Join us for this workshop, which will offer insights and instruction on the process of developing and proposing courses with general education designations. Participants will learn about the expectations and requirements for Gen Ed proposals and can workshop ideas for creating new courses or revising existing ones. The session will be facilitated by John Koolage, Gen Ed Director, and will also feature faculty who have successfully navigated this process.

upcoming EVENTS

scan the QR code to
access the links in
this issue



SMART CONNECTIONS INITIATIVE

November 30 @ 2:30 PM
109B Halle

Our new College of Business Faculty Fellows, Shiri Vivek and Morgan Milner, are piloting their initiative entitled Smart Connections. As the College of Business moves towards its new main campus home of Pierce Hall, this initiative aims to positively impact the COB community, fostering a sense of awareness through technology education and a sense of togetherness through connection. Shiri Vivek and Morgan Milner invite stakeholders from the College of Business to meet with them on November 30, from 12-2:30 PM, at the FDC, to discuss ideas for their work. Stay tuned for opportunities to participate in Smart Connections!

Tuesday, December 5 @ 2:30 PM
109B Halle or Zoom
Click here to register

Lots of us have been wondering how the emergence of generative AI tools will affect our teaching going forward. A first step in thinking through this question is trying out a generative AI program, such as ChatGTP. What can it do? What can it not do? How can you work with it to enhance what you do in the classroom? Join Professors Raed El-Jarrah and Christine Clark for a hands-on session to explore generative AI and reach your own conclusions about its affordances and constraints.

PLAYING AROUND WITH GENERATIVE AI

VALUE OF A FOUR-YEAR DEGREE CONVERSATION GROUP

Click here to apply
**Spots are limited and will be filled
first- come, first-served**

Starting at the end of this semester and running through the winter 2024 semester, four conversation groups with up to 10 individuals each, including faculty, lecturers, administrators, and staff, will meet to engage in reading and conversation around the question “What is the value of a four-year degree?” Our hope is that these groups will create an intellectual exchange of ideas, at the big-picture level, that will guide future conversations at the university.

Teaching Spotlight



Dr. Brendan Fay

**Associate Professor
Art History; Foundations**

In this spotlight, Dr. Brendan Fay discusses his viewpoints on participation and in-class discussions, the impact his Linguistics professor had on his teaching style, and his involvement with the General Education program. Click here to read the full spotlight.

By Dr. Amanda Maher

A State of Denial. If someone a year ago had predicted that I would be writing a blog about using ChatGPT in the classroom, I would have guffawed. Four months ago, I was enjoying a comfortable state of denial about all things Artificial Intelligence (A.I.). One would have thought that the New York Times's [A.I. Poses 'Risk of Extinction,' Industry Warns](#) would have jolted the ostrich from her hole, but once I read the quote from industry leaders who compared A.I. to “societal-scale risks, such as pandemics and nuclear war,” I moved on to the crossword. Tackling ChatGPT would mean more online learning, and I was not sure if my brain could absorb any more tech or “societal-scale risks.”

Facing Fears. Now I am writing this blog sharing my experience using ChatGPT in one of my courses, and perhaps you are wondering what happened. Was it my neighbors at our block party who were all describing how they use ChatGPT in their professional roles? Nope but the conversation did perk up my ears. Was it my colleagues sharing their struggles with students turning in work that was written by an A.I. bot? A little but only because it made me realize that my head-in-the-sand approach had an expiration date. What changed my stance was when my middle school-aged son told me how he was using Chat GPT for a project. As I made an indictment about cheating, my son rolled his eyes at me and explained that they were

New to ChatGPT? Start with Small Steps

using A.I. to assess the effectiveness of it as a tool. Fortunately, my child did not have an ostrich teacher, and if middle school students are tackling the big, scary ChatGPT, I can do it too.

For my entrée into ChatGPT, I attended the [Faculty Development Center's summer session](#), and was relieved to learn that I was not alone in my trepidation. I was also reassured that there is no one right way to craft syllabus language, use ChatGPT, or adopt methods. My next move was to sign up for a ChatGPT [account](#) and to see what it could do.

Begin by Asking. Once I had done some playing around with ChatGPT, I decided to prepare a class discussion that simply started by asking students in my secondary methods course what they knew and thought about ChatGPT. These are students who will be teaching secondary social studies, and like our EMU colleagues, their knowledge and engagement with ChatGPT varied. The focus of our conversation touched on school district policies dictating

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!

ChatGPT use. One student reported that a district where he works has issued a total ban. Others did not know enough about the topic and had lots of questions, “What does it do? Why is there a ban?” We agreed we should do some work together over the semester learning how to use ChatGPT and evaluate the potential value and harm to our classrooms. Is it friend or foe?

A Learning Activity: Using ChatGPT to Improve Writing. A few weeks later, when my students had a major paper due, I told them I would provide them with a former student’s essay to review. There was no ‘former student’ because what I did not tell them was that I pasted the assignment into ChatGPT. The result was mediocre at best, and I looked forward to students’ evaluations of it. Would they figure it out? Before we read the paper in class, students created rubrics because I wanted to use this task to push them into thinking like teachers and assessors as well as writers.

They felt that the “author” completed the task and seemed to know the content, but one student spoke for them all when he asked, “Is this supposed to be good?” I pushed them to return to their rubric criterion and posed, “how could the author seem to know the content, follow the instructions, employ correct grammar, yet write a poor paper?” Another commented, “I never knew what teachers meant by voice, but this paper definitely does not have it.” They brought up the paper’s weak transitions, lack of citations, and overall lack of development of ideas. I finally told them that I had used ChatGPT to write the paper to a chorus of “ah, yeah, of course.”

Overall, the rubrics they created were sound and captured elements of writing that would separate just ticking-the-boxes paper from a solid, well-supported piece of writing. By using ChatGPT in this way, I pushed them to assess like a teacher, consider the implications of A.I. in their future classrooms, and to reflect about improving their writing. I can attest that they submitted higher quality pieces with voice and critical thinking. I have used ChatGPT to write discussion questions, and not only do we engage in the discussion; we also critique the use of A.I. as professional tools. In a few weeks, we will be using ChatGPT in class to write lesson plans, test other recommendations being used by PK-12 educators, and evaluate levels of accuracy and effectiveness.

Start with Small Steps. If you are like I was a few months ago, I urge you to commit to taking small steps to learn more about ChatGPT and what it means in your discipline and the future professions of your students. I suggest beginning by talking to your students. Mine appreciated a space to think about A.I. as professionals and citizens who are also grappling with what A.I. means to our work and world. If you are struggling where to start, check out these [ChatGPT discussion questions](#)—written by ChatGPT.

We are all figuring this thing out, and you are not alone.



About the Author

Amanda Maher is an assistant professor (social studies methods) in History & Philosophy and teaches courses in teacher preparation.