

JANUARY 29, 2024

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# FDC HAPPENINGS

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\*A group of five individuals sit with coffee and talk.

## Relationship-Rich Education: A Campus Conversation

The FDC's 2024 CONNECT Conference will focus on the importance of creating and enriching connections in higher education. With this theme in mind, we ask faculty, staff, and students to join us for a conversation based around the ideas expressed in Keynote Speaker Peter Felten's co-authored book, entitled *Connections Are Everything*. This event will include a presentation and discussion about the importance of connections for students, faculty, and staff. Attendees will then participate in table discussions about what all of us can do to improve connections on campus.

Please consider attending this event yourself, as well as encouraging your colleagues and students to attend. Students can receive LBC credit for attending. We hope to use this conversation to create a set of recommendations to help us make connections more central to our work here at EMU.

Click [here](#) to register.

Click [here](#) to visit our webpage to learn more about our CONNECT conference.

This event will take place on Thursday, February 8, at 4 PM in Room 310 A/B of the Student Center. Light refreshments will be provided.

# CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

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## From the FDC

**We are excited to announce that the Faculty Development Center has been awarded a 2024 Women in Philanthropy Grant!**

The grant will enable an extension of our Teaching and Learning Together (TaLT) initiative. We are grateful to Women in Philanthropy for their support of our work.

Our project, entitled “**An Exploration of Eastern Michigan University Student Attitudes and Behaviors**,” seeks to understand barriers and opportunities for student-faculty partnerships through a series of focus groups with EMU students.

The goal of this project is to create a report that will explore opportunities for these partnership and allow us to gain a different perspective surrounding the obstacles that exist in developing them

This project will be led by FDC student workers Liv Overbee and Trinity Perkins, as well as Professors Jeffrey L. Bernstein and Sarah Ginsberg.

**We encourage you all to share this focus group interest form with your students who may wish to be a part of this project.**

**Each focus group will be an hour-long session. Students will receive a \$20 honorarium, as well as LBC credit, for their participation.**

**Click [here](#) to access the form!**



# upcoming

# EVENTS

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**Friday, February 9th in Halle Library**  
**Click [here](#) to register.**

## **2024 CONNECT CONFERENCE**

Join us at our CONNECT Conference to learn about what your colleagues are doing, to share your own insights on the work we share, and to think deeply about how we can be better at what we do when we do it together. We are especially excited to have Peter Felten join us to talk about the importance of relationships in higher education. Click [here](#) to view the schedule.

## **INTERNAL RESEARCH AWARDS**

**Click [here](#) to register.**

**Click [here](#) to visit our website.**

In the fall, we hosted a series of presentations about Internal Research Awards, focused on the Summer Research Awards. Our second round of presentations will focus on applying for Sabbaticals and Faculty Research Fellowships. The two feedback sessions will take place on Monday, January 29, and Tuesday, January 30, both at 3:30 PM. Bring your current draft of your application (no matter how complete it is!) to get expert feedback on your work at one or both of these workshops.

**Click [here](#) to participate.**

**Group meets Wednesdays from 1-3 PM**

## **RESEARCH WRITERS** **COLLABORATIVE**

Join Sarah Walsh to block out the time to set and achieve our writing goals, even given the other pressures we all face. The [Research Writers Collaborative](#) is an opportunity for faculty and full-time and part-time lecturers to support each other in setting and achieving realistic writing goals (i.e., developing a conference paper, drafting an article, revising a book chapter, etc.). These groups meet every Wednesday- join us as often as you can for these virtual sessions.

## **GENERATIVE AI SPEAKER SPOTLIGHTS**

**Program #2 : February 6th @ 11 AM**  
**109B Halle Library or [Zoom](#)**

During the winter 2024 semester, the Faculty Development Center and the Office of Campus & Community Writing will host a series of four sessions related to generative AI. Click [here](#) to visit our webpage to learn more about each session. Program #2, facilitated by Rania Spantidi (rescheduled due to the snow day), will demystify the technology behind generative AI and provide real-world context for its applications. Click [here](#) to register if you plan to attend this or any of these programs.

**March 13 @ 12:30 PM**  
**109B Halle and [Zoom](#)**

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING** **THROUGH ESPORTS**

[EMU Esports](#) is on the fast track to become a top North American esports program. The program regularly redefines the scope of collegiate esports by working closely with academic and institutional departments alike. Join Zach Lewis, Esports Coordinator at EMU, for this informative session to learn how esports can be applicable to you in your teaching.

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# upcoming EVENTS

scan the QR code to  
access the links in  
this issue



**Click [here](#) to register.**  
**February 19th @ 3-5 PM**  
**109B Halle or Zoom**

## **BUILDING A CARING CLASSROOM**

Join Dr. Cirleen DeBlaere and Dr. Jesse Owen from The Steve Fund for their faculty workshop, hosted by Ron Flowers' "Building a Caring Classroom" series. The Steve Fund is the largest non-profit mental health organization focusing on the mental health of students of color. The Steve Fund prioritizes diversity and inclusion, ensuring that mental health support is sensitive to the experiences and needs of marginalized students.

## **WAC SPRING INSTITUTE**

**Click [here](#) to apply.**

On behalf of Ann Blakeslee and her team, we are excited to share the application for this year's WAC Spring Institute. We hope you will consider participating and that you will also share this information with your colleagues. Click [here](#) for more information about the WAC Institute. The program will run Tuesday through Friday, April 30 to May 3, 9 AM to 3:30 PM, each day. Sessions will be in-person. The application deadline is February 23.

**Click [here](#) to submit a proposal.**  
**Due February 9th**

## **MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY SEMINAR**

Please join us for this upcoming Seminar on Teaching Media & Information Literacy. Bringing together faculty both curious about M&IL as well as those already practicing innovative pedagogies, the event will include engaging activities. A poster session will showcase teaching strategies that faculty across the curriculum use to help students, whether in general education, academic majors, or at the graduate level. If you currently teach any aspect of media and information literacy, please consider sharing your pedagogy by making a poster for the event. The seminar will take place on March 8 from 10 AM to 3 PM in 300 Halle. Click [here](#) to register for the seminar.

## *Partnership Spotlight*



### **Professor Robert Erlewine & Meg Bernstein**

**Department of History  
and Philosophy**

In this partnership spotlight, Professor Robert Erlewine (R) and Meg Bernstein discuss their partnership work within the Center for Jewish Studies, and how important their partnership is in boosting the presence of Jewish Studies at EMU. Click [here](#) to read the full spotlight.



## **Queer Talks: Uniquely Queer, Uniquely You**

**By Nick Malendowski**

Queer Talks – what a fascinating name for an on-campus conference. I’m sure, as you read the title, you may be thinking “What could this possibly entail?” I was certainly intrigued when I found an old program from November 2018 when I first started in my role at the Honors College, and ever since then, I’ve made it my mission to bring this event back – and larger than it has ever been, thanks to a [Women in Philanthropy Grant](#) from EMU. The purpose of Queer Talks is to give a platform for queer advocacy and representation. During this one-day conference, faculty, staff, students, and community members will have the opportunity to attend educational sessions, hear from impactful speakers, connect with peers, and learn more about issues impacting the queer community.

When I first started thinking about this event, I immediately reached out to Emma Mentley Wuetrich, Coordinator of the [LGBT Resource Center](#). One of my primary goals for this year in my position was to engage in more cross-campus partnerships, and this felt like a perfect event for our offices to jointly support. With her support and equally collaborative mindset, we hit the ground running with a series of ideas, entertainment, information sessions, and more. Once we had the shell created and received a Women in Philanthropy Grant to do more for attendees, we did just that – MORE. With this additional sum of money, for which we are EXTREMELY grateful, we plan to bring in local drag queens, an exceptional keynote speaker, and have a few more tricks up our sleeve that you will need to attend the conference to find out about!

For many queer students, feelings of isolation arise when they do not feel supported, resulting in increased mental health issues, disengagement, and fears of inadequacy. According to one study by [BestColleges \(2022\)](#), more than 1 in 4 LGBTQIA+ college students have considered dropping out of college due to mental health issues stemming from their queer identities. Among these students, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) students are more likely to say their mental health had worsened since starting their college education. As I’m fairly new to my job (I’ve almost hit a year!), I’ve had the chance to chat with many students about their experiences on campus and attend events celebrating students for their authentic selves. Through all of these conversations and events, I have seen a new side of students when they can just be who they are, whatever that may mean for them.

This is why our theme for the conference this year is “**Uniquely Queer, Uniquely You.**” As a queer person myself, I remember growing up and never fitting in with most of my peers. These feelings lasted until I found a queer community myself, connecting with different folx from different backgrounds and identities. Once I

### **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](mailto:faculty_development@emich.edu) with your blog post idea for the opportunity to be featured in future newsletters!

found myself within this community, I found my life to be more fruitful, engaging, and exciting, as I felt I could be my authentic self in most situations. Although this is not the case for everyone, diving into my queer identity has made me proud to be queer – and as the theme suggests – uniquely queer.

Now, I know this is a teaching blog, and is focused on teaching and learning topics, so I think it's important to bring an additional educational tie-in, too. Around the country, queer people are under attack for simply living authentically. Queer people are being subject to bills, laws, and regulations that aim to limit their ability to be who they are. According to GLAAD (The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation), 2023 was a record-setting year for state legislation specifically targeting LGBTQIA+ children and adults in healthcare, entertainment, education, and more. Knowing the harm these kinds of laws could do to young people, **I urge educators to advocate for the students they teach**, both inside the classroom and out. Whether you are voicing your support publicly, online, through monetary donations, or in the voting booth, it is time to stand up, stand out, and be heard.

Queer Talks will be held on Wednesday, March 6th in the Honors College from 4:00-9:00pm. We are accepting 30-minute session proposals through Monday, February 5th, 2024, and highly encourage you to submit a proposal! Students, faculty, staff, and community members are all welcome to submit a proposal. Some topics to consider include:

- Queer Identities
- Queer Advocacy Efforts/Ways to Advocate
- Intersectionality
- Queerness in Academia
- Queerness as Art
- Queerness in the Workplace
- And more!



Past presentation titles include:

- “Beyond Chaz: Trans Masculine Contributions to Society”
- “So Where Do I Put my Pronouns on My Syllabus?”
- “The Future is Queer, Decolonized, Regenerative, and Solarpunk”
- “Tracing the Etymology and Contemporary Uses of the Word Queer”

The proposal form asks about what your session will entail, its objectives, and how the proposal relates to the theme of Uniquely Queer, Uniquely You. To submit a proposal, you can do so here!

Not interested in presenting, but still want to attend? RSVP via this link! Sign-ups will close on Friday, February 23rd. All are welcome to join us, whether you identify as a member of the queer community or not.

## About the Author



**Nick Malendowski** (He/Him) has served as the Assistant Director of the Honors College at Eastern Michigan University since April 2023. As a first-generation college student, Nick aims to make higher education more accessible and equitable for all students. Outside of work and school, Nick enjoys trying out local (iced) coffee shops, watching reality TV, and discovering new places!