

SEPTEMBER 3, 2024

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FDC HAPPENINGS

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Click [here](#) to visit our website to keep up with our Center's work this semester.

*Many people sitting at a table with computers and notebooks.

Fall 2024 Learning Communities!

We are excited to announce our upcoming fall 2024 learning communities. To visit each learning community's webpage, click each hyperlinked title.

- **Engaging in Inclusive Practices amid Challenging Times Learning Community**
Applications are due Thursday, September 5th, 2024.
- **General Education Professional Learning Community**
Applications are due Friday, September 6th, 2024.
- **Persisting Together: Increasing Student Retention through Connections**
Applications are due Tuesday, September 10, 2024.
- **Digital Humanities Learning Community**
Applications are due Friday, September 6th, 2024.
- **EMU-UP! Program Support Learning Community**
Applications are due Friday, September 13th, 2024.
- **Academic Leadership Community of Practice**
Registrations are due Friday, September 6th, 2024.

If you have any questions about these opportunities, please contact us at faculty_development@emich.edu.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

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Once a month, the FDC and the Office of Campus & Community Writing will be holding events to bring our EMU community together in fun ways. Please see info on our first event below. We hope to see you there!

From the FDC and
Campus &
Community Writing

COME CELEBRATE NATIONAL PUNCTUATION DAY (WITH THE FDC & C2W)



WE VALUE COMMUNITY!! AT THE FDC AND THE C2W! JOIN US; FOR “CASUAL CONVERSATION” AND... DONUTS AND COFFEE! (PROBABLY GOOD ONES?) TO KICK THE YEAR OFF: RIGHT! WILL WE SEE YOU THERE? WE SURE HOPE SO...



TUESDAY
SEPT. 24TH



8:30-10:00
AM



THE FDC
109 HALLE



Our Next Event: National Dessert Day

Save the Date!

October 16
3:30 - 5:00

***USUALLY CELEBRATED
OCTOBER 14, MOVED
DUE TO FALL BREAK***

upcoming EVENTS

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TEACHING IN TURBULENT TIMES

*Friday, September 27th @ 12 - 3:30PM
300 Halle Library*

As instructors, we are sometimes placed in the difficult position of teaching immediately after (or during) an unnerving event or a crisis—and it seems these situations are happening more and more frequently. Amidst our heated and contentious political climate, this program offers guidance for instructional staff in thinking about the 2024 election, and other stressful local, national, and world events, in our classrooms. Click [here](#) to register. Full program details will be available on the website mid-week.

Click [here](#) to register.

TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY PROGRAM

This program, facilitated by EMU library faculty Kate Pittsley-Sousa and Julia Nims, is aimed at encouraging, assisting, and developing skills in EMU instructors related to the adoption of free or more affordable course materials. EMU instructors will be introduced to key concepts of open educational resources and will practice different methods of finding affordable reading materials. The goal of this program is for each participant to discover an alternative text that they would consider adopting. All sessions will be held virtually over [Zoom](#). Attendees will receive a \$100 honorarium for participating in this series. To view session dates/times, click [here](#).

FACULTY RESEARCH SHOWCASE

Tuesday, October 29 @ 3-5PM

Each year, the FDC works with [ORDA](#) (the Office of Research Development and Administration) to host the Faculty Research and Creative Activity Showcase. This year, we are moving the event to the fall (Tuesday, October 29, from 3 PM to 5 PM), and inviting students to visit tables highlighting faculty work. We hope to create opportunities for faculty to network with other faculty, and with interested students, to build partnership. We particularly invite recent recipients of EMU Internal Research Awards to join us and display some of their work in progress. Please save the date and plan to join us for good conversation. Details to follow.

Click [here](#) to register.

GACET/FDC FALL 2024 LUNCH PRESENTATION CENTERS

The GameAbove College of Engineering and Technology and the Faculty Development Center are looking forward to hosting a lunch presentation series for faculty in the College. This series will include four different sessions focusing on Accessibility Best Practices, Building A Caring Classroom, How Culture Influences Perception and Communication, and Using Your Syllabus to Welcome, Engage and Support Your Students. To view session presenters, as well as dates/times, click [here](#). We are grateful to the GameAbove Faculty First Fund for supporting this series.

upcoming EVENTS

scan the QR code to
access the links in
this issue



Click [here](#) to access the
mentor interest form.

OPPORTUNITY TO MENTOR NEW FACULTY

Much of the literature on faculty success speaks to having not just one mentor, but rather a cluster of mentors to guide you during the early years of a career. To help support our junior faculty, we are soliciting faculty or academic administrators who might be willing to be a mentor for our new (first or second year) faculty. We will present a list of possible mentors (with bios) to these newer faculty, and they will have the opportunity to reach out to someone to get coffee. And, get this: the first cup of coffee is on us! Interested? You can fill out [this form](#), by Wednesday, September 4th, to volunteer to be part of the list of potential mentors. If you want to know more, just ask us.

Announcement

Welcome

We are elated to welcome Dr. Sarah Ginsberg to our team as our Faculty Associate Director! Sarah has played an essential part in developing the TaLT initiative, and we are excited to have her officially become part of the team! Welcome to the FDC, Sarah!



Spotlights



Dr. Kristopher Phillips

Department of History
and Philosophy

In this teaching spotlight, Dr. Kristopher Phillips, a relatively new professor at EMU, shares his stories and experiences with the teachers and mentors that had an impact on his life and his career. He also shares his advice on staying flexible with your students and showing up as a human in the classes you teach. Click [here](#) to read the full spotlight.

Inclusion in the Classroom One Step at a Time

By Selyna Pérez Beverly

Before I went to school to get my doctoral degree, I was an academic advisor for a number of years. Through this experience working mostly with STEM students, I realized that so many students (particularly those underrepresented) were encountering very hostile environments. When I would advise students, it became clear to me which professors I should steer students away from and which I should recommend. The professors that were highly recommended were those who showed understanding, care, and concern for students. In STEM environments, and sometimes in other majors, there can be a culture of “weeding out” students that says “Pick yourself up from your bootstraps!” and “If you can’t make the cut, then you shouldn’t be here!”

In the work that I did as an advisor, I realized that instructors have a powerful and privileged position in which they can really make a difference for a student. I constantly saw students who were struggling because they were working multiple jobs, had a family, were first-generation, and/or a student of color. These students were able to realize their full potential when they were supported by an instructor who showed compassion, understanding, and flexibility. Often, in the classes that did not do these things, most students failed and those that didn’t walked away with a bitter experience.

It was this personal experience that led me to my current research on teaching and learning in STEM. Research indicates that instructors do indeed have a substantial impact on not only student learning but their beliefs about themselves, their confidence, and their sense of

belonging in their major. My research focuses on understanding how instruction in STEM affects underrepresented students and how instructors conceptualize and implement inclusive practices. This is important work because it can improve both student retention and persistence.

The big secret here is that when I talk about inclusive practices, they aren’t actually that hard to do. You may have taken some active learning workshops or learned about evidence-based teaching practices, which are all great tools to enact in the classroom. Inclusive teaching takes things a step further, with you first recognizing and being sensitive to the diverse needs of your students. For some students, showing that you care by, for example, asking students how they are doing with the stress of the semester and then adjusting your assignments, can be a valuable action that supports student success. Inclusive teaching is about recognizing the whole student and how you can show care, empathy, and consideration. bell hooks explains that treating students like “passive consumers” is not effective and that as instructors, we need to build a community where students feel that they belong and have a voice. In order to create this, inclusive practices in teaching can be effective.

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!

Inclusive practices are not limited to the classroom but can also be translated into various faculty roles and responsibilities including research mentoring, advising, and leadership. It is important for faculty to recognize their role in creating classrooms and environments where students feel welcomed, cared for, and supported. Currently, students are experiencing high levels of stress and anxiety that was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Other world events have not helped to decrease the anxiety and mental health struggles our students are still encountering. With a pivotal election coming up, lack of food and housing security, and wars in the Middle East and in Eastern Europe, our students face even more stress.

We as instructors can truly make a difference by considering small things we do in the classroom. Viewing our classrooms as a community can really help shape the student experience. When students have positive experiences, they are more likely to thrive and move forward successfully. The community you build in your classroom could make a difference in a student's life.

As already mentioned, inclusive practices are not limited to teaching but can be enacted outside the classroom as well. Just being more aware of the diverse backgrounds of our students can make a difference in how we approach others. We also shouldn't make assumptions. If a student comes to your office hours and hasn't shown up to class, rather than confronting them, asking the student if they are ok may be a better approach. Our students are struggling and that dose of empathy from an instructor can go a long way.

I will close with one story that comes to mind when I think of inclusive practices. When I entered into my position as an academic advisor, I had taken over another person's role

who had retired. She was well-known for not being the nicest or most helpful advisor. Often she would tell students that

they might as well quit because they just weren't good enough. A few months into the beginning of my role, a student stopped by and asked for the previous advisor. When we told him she had retired he shared, "She told me that I should drop out because I would never get a degree in engineering, and I just stopped by today to tell her that I'm graduating this semester with my degree." This story shows that this student was able to take those negative comments and prove someone wrong. But, unfortunately, many students do not do that and will end up dropping out because of how they are treated.

Let's think more carefully about our roles as instructors; our positionality, power, and privilege. We can make a difference in student's lives, so let's try our best to think deeply about inclusion in our faculty roles.

About the Author



Selyna Pérez Beverly is an Assistant Professor in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Program in the Department of Leadership and Counseling. Broadly, her research is focused on improving teaching and learning in STEM to support underrepresented populations.