

FDC HAPPENINGS

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*Group of individuals high fives in a circle.

2025 Mini-Grants to Support Student Wellness

The Bruce K. Nelson Faculty Development Center and the Dean of Students Office, with support from Rec/IM, Eagle Nutrition Services (ENS), and E|Dining, invite faculty and students to collaborate on implementing wellness practices in the classroom or outside the classroom. Faculty can receive up to \$250 to introduce these practices during the fall 2025 term, aiming to enhance student wellness and foster intellectual engagement and curiosity. Strong student-faculty partnerships are essential for success and meaningful engagement in the classroom.

Applications will be judged on the quality of the idea, the plan to evaluate its impact, and its scalability for other classes. Applicants are expected to share their results on the FDC website, blog, or at future CONNECT or New Beginnings conferences, and are encouraged to present their ideas outside EMU. Faculty, lecturers, and graduate teaching fellows can work alone or with a student, who would receive a \$100 honorarium for their participation.

Applications for this funding are now open for the fall 2025 semester. Students with wellness ideas can choose a faculty member to work with or request to be paired with one. This initiative aims to support student wellness and build strong partnerships for academic success.

Click [here](#) to learn more or to apply.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

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WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Tuesday, April 29 to Friday, May 2

9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day

In-person, highly interactive sessions



The WAC Spring Institute is a professional enrichment experience designed to help faculty plan, create, and scaffold meaningful writing experiences for their students. Open to all faculty members and lecturers, this program is especially beneficial for those teaching Writing-Intensive (W) courses.

From the Office of Campus & Community Writing

Participants will have the opportunity to develop or refine writing assignments for their courses. Topics include:

- Integrating writing outcomes with other student learning outcomes
- Planning and developing effective assignments
- Supporting student writing through scaffolded instruction and feedback
- Using formal and informal writing
- Grading and assessing student writing
- Ethical and responsible use of GenAI in teaching and learning

Application Deadline: Friday, February 21, 2025

Apply early as the cohort may be capped based on available funding. Attendees are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Click [here](#) to apply.





upcoming EVENTS

CHECK OUT OUR UPCOMING
EVENTS WE ARE HOSTING AT
THE FDC! FOR MORE
INFORMATION OR TO
REGISTER, CLICK "READ
MORE".

SAVE THE DATE: OPENING DAY CELEBRATION

- Thursday, March 27 @ 2:30 - 5 PM
- Open to Everyone!
- Come to the FDC and celebrate baseball's Opening Day! We will bring the food and the baseball coverage, and secretly mock Jeff for his obsession with the Mets...

Stay Tuned

RESEARCH WRITERS' COLLABORATIVE

- Tuesdays @ 11 AM - 1 PM on Zoom
- Open to Faculty, Lecturers, and Department Heads
- Opportunity for EMU faculty to support each other while achieving realistic writing goals

[Read More](#)

STAY TUNED

THRIVING IN ACADEMIA: EMPOWERING FACULTY SUCCESS

We will soon be hosting a series of programs around supporting you in your faculty experience. This semester's programs include:

- Professoring and Parenting
- How to Make the Most of a Research Leave
- Congratulations You Got Tenure! Now What?

Stay Tuned for Details

APPLICATION FROM FRIENDS: UPSHUR INSTITUTE CIVIC AWARDS

- Applications due Friday, March 14
- Open to Faculty and Staff
- Apply for project proposal funding through the Upshur Institute for Civic Education for the 2025-2026 academic year

[Read More](#)

INCLUSIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES WORKSHOP

- Wednesday, February 19 @ 11 AM - 12:30 PM (Lunch Provided)
- Open to Faculty, Lecturers, and any Instructional Staff
- Learn tips on how to integrate inclusive practices in easy and manageable ways

[Read More](#)



Scan the QR code
to access the links
in this issue



EMU UP: UNIVERSITY PREPARED

- Friday, March 7 @ 9 AM - 1 PM
- Open to Full-Time Faculty and Full-Time Lecturers
- Explore creative and innovative solutions to revise or create new programs in ways that are attractive to students

[Read More](#)

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES FOR EMPOWERED TEACHING PROFESSIONALS

- March 14 & April 4 @ 11 AM - 2 PM
- Open to Faculty, Staff, Lecturers & Graduate Assistants
- Explore how to integrate healing-centered practices into your professional and personal life

[Read More](#)

THANK-AN-EAGLE

- Nominations due March 17 @ 12 PM
- Open to Faculty, Lecturers, Students & Staff
- Submit a "thank you" to someone to someone in the EMU community who has helped you! Please share this opportunity with your students!

[Read More](#)

SUMMER/FALL 2025 PROGRAM PROPOSALS

- Application due March 24 @ 5 PM
- Open to Faculty, Lecturers & Staff
- Submit a program funding proposal to host a learning community, workshops, etc., at the FDC

[Read More](#)

Spotlights



Dr. Sydney Batchelder and Grant Saba

Department of Psychology

In this partnership spotlight, Grant Saba (R) and Dr. Sydney Batchelder share their research partnership at Eastern Michigan University. They discuss their collaborative study on e-cigarette use and alcohol demand among college students. Click [here](#) to read the full spotlight.

Supporting Student Wellbeing: The Importance of Communication

By Islam Ramadan

Mental wellbeing and a healthy, balanced academic life seem to be a challenge for many individuals, particularly in a post-secondary learning environment. My presentation during the Flipping the Script Conference, titled, “I’ll Step in Your Shoes, and You’ll Step in Mine; Supporting Student Wellbeing in the Classroom,” aimed to address the gap between educational avenues of support and Gen Z students accepting an outreached hand. By discussing the internal conflict of self-sufficiency that many students battle, we begin to brainstorm ways that faculty can implement simple interventions into their classroom, to satisfy the balance between mental wellbeing and a healthy academic life.

One activity that I did during the presentation was to have all participants in the room write down one thing that they struggle with in a classroom that others should know—this can be not knowing how to accommodate student needs, it could be the uncertainty of what to say when you’re ready to ask for help, or explaining how you can be supported in your academic journey. Each small bit of information bridged the gap just a little more, between educator and student, student and faculty, or even educator to educator. This sparked conversation at each table, as each individual thought aloud and discussed what they struggled with; some were able to instantly write down a challenge they faced, while others took a moment or two to ponder.

After collecting the multi-colored sticky

notes, I asked the room if we should read a few responses together. Upon hearing a chorus of yesses, I shuffled them all up and chose the first one: “[I struggle with] Not knowing how to identify who needs help.” This response garnered a series of nods of approval, a few ‘mhm’s’, and one “That’s mine!” The room began to look forward to hearing more responses, to see if someone had the same challenge as them, or to learn something new.

I shuffled the sticky notes again and read the note at the bottom of the pile: “As a teacher, I want my students to give me honest feedback on the things they learned or did not learn.” Now, this sticky note caused a controversy—some individuals reacted with ‘ooh’s’, a few tables across the room were sharing their experiences, and the only group of students in the room silently discussed amongst themselves.

This was a key moment for me that still replays in my head. Each individual in the room held experiences unique to one another, from various positions in life (i.e., Educator, Student, Social Worker), and, as a whole, provided insight to each personal issue. When almost every educator in the room shared a challenge they

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!

faced, more than half had to do with student feedback—or the lack thereof. Each faculty member was curious about ways they could improve by supporting students in their classroom, and editing their assignments based on what did or didn't work for students during the semester. To this challenge, almost every student in the room responded similarly: "You never asked" or "The course surveys don't have that question," among other things.

One key factor that seemed to resonate with all participants in the room is, "What is help, and how do I recognize the fact that I need it?" This thought echoed in the minds of many, released into the safe space that was Student Center Room 330, and was a key question that I strived to answer during the "Your Shoes + My Shoes: Dual-Perspective Solutions," portion of my slideshow.

Taking these factors into consideration, it seems like a larger challenge of supporting wellbeing in the classroom begins with communication. Consider the toughest thing to do for a student - sending an email from your phone whilst laying in bed. I'm serious—as a Gen Z'er, we dread sending emails. We never know if the tone should always be formal, how to properly address the recipient, or how to get straight to the purpose of the email without coming across as rude! As an individual who values independence and has had the trait of self-sufficiency ingrained into her head since, well, forever, I'd rather struggle after trying every possible solution, than become vulnerable and communicate my needs, Horrible, I know!

I thought that this Gen Z desire to figure out everything on our own, was something well known, but after discussing this with my mentor, Dr. Caren Putzu, she was shocked! It was then a lightbulb went off in my head, and I knew that this would be the main lesson for participants to consider when they wonder why students don't reach out for help.

Now the secret's out: we must address the importance of acknowledging the unseen struggles, and figure exactly

how to support student wellbeing. One example that faculty can consider integrating into their path to student wellness is adding a dedicated 'breathing exercise' at the beginning or end of the class. To best showcase the results, I encouraged conference participants to engage as I explained how the activity worked.

The breathing exercise consists of 3 simple steps: Breathe in through your mouth for 3 whole seconds, hold your breath for 3 whole seconds, and then slowly exhale through your mouth for 3 whole seconds—repeat for 3 sets. Our lucky number 3 leaves participants feeling relaxed, their breathing at a steady pace, and the mind readjusted and ready for the next topic of conversation. This simple activity took less than a few minutes of the presentation time and gave each individual the opportunity to decompress from a day's long worth of listening and speaking. Small interventions like this can make a huge impact!

About the Author



Islam Ramadan, a First Generation Palestinian-American & college student, is a Secondary Education Teaching and Learning, English Major who strives to support diversity and inclusion in the classroom. Through highlighting the importance of balancing mental wellbeing, Islam strives to encourage critical-thinking, and establish a new way of learning.