FDC HAPPENINGS

March 6, 2023

A group of eight individuals stand facing towards a blackboard with their arms around each other.

Thank-an-Eagle

Click here to submit a nomination.
See our website for more info.

Here at EMU, there are many people who help us succeed. Now is your chance to say "thank you" to the ones who have made an impact! The Faculty Development Center is honored to host a university-wide event called Thank-an-Eagle, where EMU community members have a chance to thank an instructor, staff member, coach, GA or mentor who has helped them during their time here at EMU. For many instructors and mentors, an unsolicited "thank you" from a student is a highlight of their semester's experience. The instructor or staff member you thank receives a formal Thank-an-Eagle letter of recognition from the Faculty Development Center that includes the remarks about the honoree. We encourage you to use this form to nominate a noteworthy colleague for this recognition, and to share this opportunity with your students. Nominations are due on Friday, March 31.

MINI-GRANTS TO SUPPORT STUDENT WELLNESS

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From the FDC & OWCR

The Faculty Development Center and the Office of Wellness and Community Responsibility, in collaboration with the Department of Recreation and Intramurals (Rec/IM), invite faculty, lecturers, and graduate teaching fellows to apply for mini-grants of up to $250 to support student wellness in their teaching.

Applications for this funding will be judged based on:

- the quality of the idea;
- the proposals' plan to evaluate the impact of the innovation;
- the ability of the idea to be scaled up to work for larger numbers of students in different classes.

Your innovation should take place during the Summer or Fall 2023 semesters. Applicants will be expected to share results of their innovation, perhaps on the FDC website, in the FDC blog, and/or at future CONNECT or New Beginnings conferences. They will also be encouraged to share their ideas outside EMU, in conference presentations or publications. We will work with awardees to pursue Human Subjects approval for their evaluation plan if needed.

Interesting in applying?

Click here to apply.

Click here to see our website and previous awardees.

If you would like to discuss a possible application, contact us at faculty_development @emich.edu

UPCOMING EVENTS

READING IN PRINT?
scan the QR code to access the links in this issue

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

March 8
6 - 7 PM
Location: Zoom

The New Tradition of the Non-Traditional Student
Program 3: Work/Life/School Balance

NEXT WEEK'S EVENTS

Daily stressors require self-care for one's mental health and wellbeing. Join Special Education Professor John Palladino, a certified pet therapy handler for his two dogs, in a session detailing his research with implementing pet therapy in the classroom. John extends to the EMU community the opportunity to interact with his dog "Kevin," a Toy Fox Terrier, and discuss the certification process. Click here to visit our website for more information.

Pet Therapy
March 14 @ 11 AM - 12:30 PM, 1st Floor Halle Library

PLEASE APPLY

Faculty Scholarly and Creative Activity Showcase

We invite all tenured, tenure-track, emeritus, and lecturers to display posters, journal articles, books, artwork, and videos or compact discs of performing art, etc., that highlight scholarly activities that were disseminated or completed during 2022. To apply or see more details, click here.

Applications due March 15 @ 5 PM
Event: Thursday, March 23 @ 4-6 PM

Program Proposals

We invite proposals for sustained learning communities or seminars, or for a more involved series of workshops, or for hosting a significant one-time event. To learn more about proposals or to apply, please visit our website. We welcome you to contact us at faculty_development @emich.edu to discuss any ideas.

Applications due Wednesday, March 15 @ 5 PM

Inclusive STEM Teaching at EMU

We invite you to participate in this learning community designed to advance ability and awareness for cultivating inclusive STEM learning environments. The EMU Learning Community will meet from March 10 - April 21. Completed work will receive a $200 honorarium. To apply or for more details, please visit our website.

Applications due Wednesday, March 8th @ 11:59 PM

UPCOMING EVENTS

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Join us at the Faculty Development Center to celebrate our most important holiday, Opening Day of Baseball Season! We'll have snacks (including apple pie!), good company, dispensing of wisdom on baseball and teaching, selfies with Eggbert, and, of course, a chance to watch the first pitch of the New York Mets season together! A good time will be had by all! #LGM #YaGottaBelieve

Opening Day

Thursday, March 30 2 PM - 5 PM

LGBTQ+ Programming

*Register here March 27 @ 3:30-4:45 109B Halle Library or Zoom*

Join us for the last session, "Faculty-Student Interactions", where you will hear first hand how students and faculty can create inclusion through partnership.

Are you a faculty member who has ever received a Fulbright grant in any category (i.e. via another institution or in a student category)? If so, please contact the FDC to become a part of the EMU Fulbright family that helps inform others of the program.

Calling all Fulbrighters

SPOTLIGHTS

This week's book spotlight is *How Colleges Change: Understanding, Leading, and Enacting Change* by Adrianna Kezar. This book describes the ways higher education can adapt to the ever-changing climate of education with practices backed by case studies, research-based principles, teaching questions, and more. This book is a staple for all of higher education. Click here to read the full spotlight or to see other books in our library.
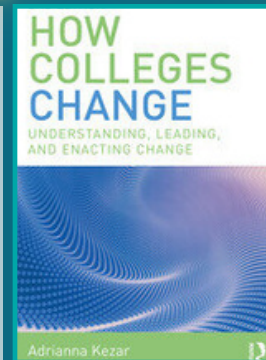
This week we are spotlighting Dr. Ildi Porter-Szucas. In this spotlight, she shared her experience with teaching the English language at Eastern and at international levels, her experience with student-faculty partnership, and how she has changed her teaching style over the years. To read the full story, click here.

Dr. Ildi Porter-Szucs Professor ESL/TESOL

TEACHING BLOG: LET'S CHAT ABOUT CHAT … (GPT)

By Michael McVey

In a record-breaking two months, the Chatbot driven by artificial intelligence and trained on a huge language model drawn from across the Internet reached 100 million users. It took TikTok almost a year to reach that many and Instagram over two years.

The present trend in many articles written about ChatGPT is to begin with a tongue-in-cheek disclaimer that the article you are about to read was not generated by artificial intelligence.

I should not have to make such a claim since most readers of this blog post are faculty members with years of experience crafting the English language and bending it to their academic will. They will recognize in an instant that my left-branch sentence structure, my subtle literary allusions, and my 'perplexity' of word use will assure any mathematical algorithm that a human wrote these words.

To be assured that I am, indeed, a human being, at the end of this post I will run Edward Tian's freely available test from GPTZero and share the resulting score with you. The test reviews structures unique to human writing, specifically perplexity and "burstiness," a sort of randomness indicator. Similar tests for humanity check for the presence of artifacts such as correct grammar, standard spelling, proper punctuation and coher-

ent writing around a theme, skills which would obviously indicate a piece was written by a computer and not an undergraduate.

I will pause to let that settle in.

As you well know by now, the ChatGPT site will craft a written response to almost any conceivable prompt. I say 'almost' since there are now a few guardrails that safeguard against violence and racism. One of the major downsides of the tool is that those of us who face students trained in the treasured and timeless five paragraph essay are quickly realizing that those same students will find that ChatGPT has the potential to make quick work of responding to an uninspired writing assignment.

At the Faculty Development Center's most recent CONNECT Conference, I shared the floor in one session with colleagues Susan Bushinski (Nursing) and Ann Blakeslee (English) to offer suggestions for reimagining and reconsidering our writing assignments. Writing as a process, as Ann noted, is essential to learning and critical thinking.

Colleagues from all over the world have responded to the call for reconsideration of some of our heirloom assignments. If I could be so bold as to clump several of the better ones into one category, they would be to develop and use academic tasks that are iterative in nature, building gradually upon a simple framework, and elaborated upon throughout the semester. This is what I do with my major end-of-semester project. I take pride in watching my students build on

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael McVey is a professor in the Teacher Education Department and specializes in educational technology. Beyond EMU, he serves as the elected President of the Saline Area Schools Board of Education. He also serves as a Director for the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE).

a simple lesson structure, which they then infuse with the new tools they have learned and review in terms of sound pedagogical planning. ChatGPT can even play a minor role in fleshing out their ideas in the early stages and I am not discouraging its use.

However, my own personal aversion to quizzes has been aggravated by ChatGPT, lest any reader think I have been smitten by this tool. It is possible to input a large chunk of text, such as some pages from a reading from class, and invite some AI tool (and there are many that can do this already) to generate a quiz for students. As time-saving as it may seem at first, quizzes are not necessarily designed to address misconceptions about a topic, they focus primarily on immediate recall, and they usually do not serve as a tool for developing learning. I worry about my teacher candidates taking the easy route by using such tools.

Gloom and worry aside, there are some joyous and fresh approaches to teaching that center writing as a process that have been championed by colleagues leaning in to use ChatGPT and incorporate it with a clear recognition of its inherent weaknesses. What follows are some of my favorites.

Prompt Dissection takes the prompt that a student provides a Chatbot, then, after reviewing the inconsistencies or inaccuracies

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!

Are you interested in chatting more about ChatGPT and its implications for teaching? Please join Ann Blakeslee and Jeff Bernstein for "More Good Chat About ChatGPT" on Wednesday, March 22, at 12:30 PM, in the Faculty Development Center and on Zoom. We'll focus on best practices in designing writing assignments for a ChatGPT world. View our website for more details and to register for this event.

in the response, they work to improve on the response to the prompt. Each successive response helps them figure out where the weaknesses in their own queries resided.

Find the Biases is an opportunity to have learners engage in discussions to work on recognizing blind spots in the Chatbot's responses then figuring out how to incorporate multiple viewpoints.

Spot the Human is a great opportunity for students to dive deep into a text and try to ascertain if it was generated by artificial intelligence or a human. They will have to focus on nuance, passion, and even fallibility for clues as they reach their conclusions.

The use of AI-driven tools derived from large language models to generate text is at once exciting and ripe with the potential to alter the landscape of teaching and learning.

But back to Edward Tian's GPTZero tool. After reviewing this blog post, its perplexity (the general randomness of my writing) is scored at 98.258 and its burstiness (the variation in my perplexity) is scored at 69.562.

I am delighted to report that according to the algorithm the blog post you just read is ". . . likely to be written entirely by a human."

Not sure I appreciate the term 'likely' but I'll take it.