CCTL Conference on Teaching and Learning January 14, 2025

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Abstracts

https://www.niagara.edu/cctl-conference

Scan here for the digital program:

Schedule At-A-Glance

TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
8:00 am	Registration and Breakfast	Glynn, **4th floor**
8:50 am	Welcoming Remarks	Glynn, **room 407**
9:00-10:00 am	**Morning KEYNOTE: Dr. Chris Hakala**	Glynn, **room 407**
10:00 am	*Coffee Break*	Glynn, **4th floor**
10:15-10:45 am	**Morning Breakout Session 1 (AM1)**	Glynn, **2nd & 3rd floors**
10:50-11:20 am	**Morning Breakout Session 2 (AM2)**	
11:25-11:55 am	**Morning Breakout Session 3 (AM3)**	
12:00-1:30 pm	**Lunch/Poster Session**	Glynn, **4th floor**
1:45-2:15 pm	**Afternoon Breakout Session 1 (PM1)**	Glynn, **2nd & 3rd floors**
2:20-2:50 pm	**Afternoon Breakout Session 2 (PM2)**	
2:55-3:25 pm	**Afternoon Breakout Session 3 (PM3)**	
3:30-4:00 pm	**Closing Remarks and Awards**	Glynn, **room 407**

Committee on College Teaching and Learning (CCTL)

CCTL's charge is to build a learning community of faculty who are committed to exploring, developing, and implementing active learning/teaching strategies into their courses by:

- Organizing faculty-led workshops and discussion groups about teaching and learning.
- Providing opportunities for full-time and part-time faculty to share ideas and to support one another's efforts to use and to assess the effectiveness of active teaching/learning strategies in their courses.
- Identifying, describing, and promoting active and integrative learning.
- Organizing a campus-based conference on teaching and learning.
- Coordinating the awarding of CCTL grants.

CCTL Members

- Mitchell Alegre
- Ashley Byczkowski
- Elizabeth Falzone (Co-Chair)
- Haoua Hamza
- Anna McNab

- David Peterson
- Christopher Plantone
- Caitlin Riegel
- Cheryl Rode (Co-Chair)
- David Schoen

- Carolyn Shivers (Co-Chair)
- David Taylor
- Yonghong Tong
- Rachael Webb

Welcome from the Conference Chairs

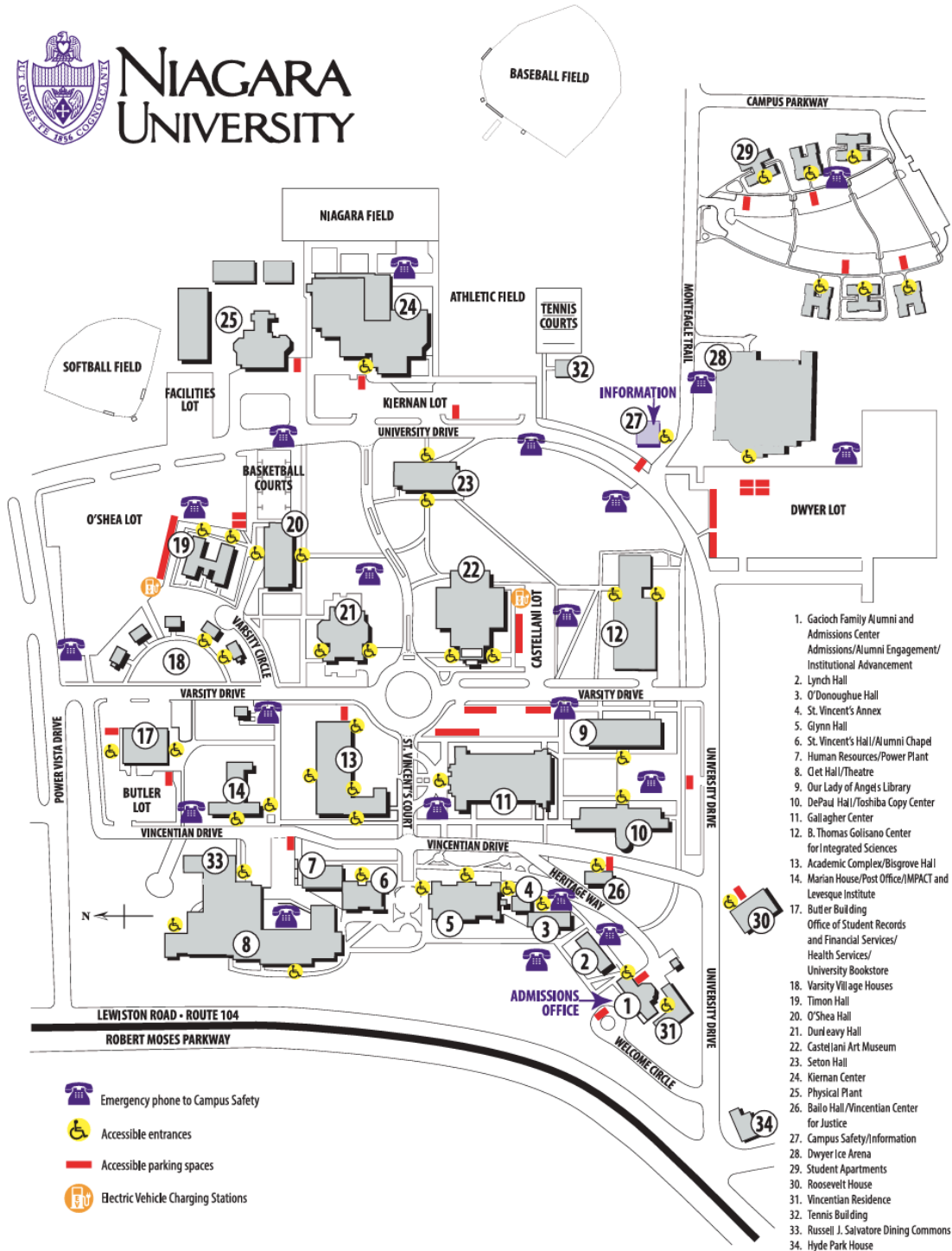Attendees, guests, and colleagues—welcome!

Thank you for joining us as we bring back the CCTL Conference to Niagara University. As co-chairs, we extend our sincerest gratitude to all of you for joining us today as we enhance our teaching through the many outstanding presentations, workshops, and posters we will see throughout the day. Teaching and learning are important to all of us, so we hope you find some great things to take back to your classrooms and offices to help your students be successful.

Please see below for a listing of all events.

Regards,

Dr. Elizabeth Falzone, Dr. Cheryl Rode, and Dr. Carolyn Shivers

CCTL Co-Chairs

Campus Map

1. Gacioch Family Alumni and Admissions Center
   Admissions/Alumni Engagement/Institutional Advancement
2. Lynch Hall
3. O'Donoughue Hall
4. St. Vincent's Annex
5. Glynn Hall
6. St. Vincent's Hall/Alumni Chapel
7. Human Resources/Power Plant
8. Clet Hall/Theatre
9. Our Lady of Angels Library
10. DePaul Hall/Toshiba Copy Center
11. Gallagher Center
12. B. Thomas Golisano Center for Integrated Sciences
13. Academic Complex/Bisgrove Hall
14. Marian House/Post Office/IMPACT and Levesque Institute
17. Butler Building
    Office of Student Records and Financial Services/Health Services/University Bookstore
18. Varsity Village Houses
19. Timon Hall
20. O'Shea Hall
21. Dunleavy Hall
22. Castellani Art Museum
23. Seton Hall
24. Kiernan Center
25. Physical Plant
26. Bailo Hall/Vincentian Center for Justice
27. Campus Safety/Information
28. Dwyer Ice Arena
29. Student Apartments
30. Roosevelt House
31. Vincentian Residence
32. Tennis Building
33. Russell J. Salvatore Dining Commons
34. Hyde Park House

Emergency phone to Campus Safety

Accessible entrances

Accessible parking spaces

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Chris Hakala
Director, Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship and
Professor of Psychology
Springfield College

Introduction by Dr. Dave Taylor

AI can do that? What's left for student learning? Well, a lot, actually

Since the introduction of widely available AI tools, faculty have consistently expressed concern over the use of AI in their courses. The biggest concern has been that students will use the AI tool to not engage in the content and students will not learn what they are expected to learn. In this workshop, we will discuss ways that faculty can actually leverage AI into their teaching, with a focus on the science of learning. Specifically, we will discuss how students learn, and how AI can support that learning by removing cognitive load on some areas to allow learning to occur with the skills and knowledge that are actually part of the learning objectives of the course.

Awardee
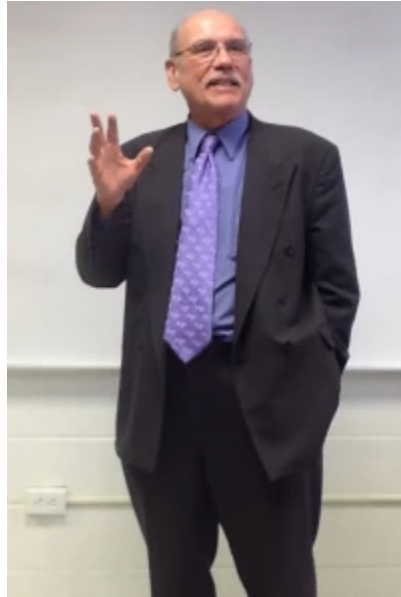
Dr. Paul Vermette
Professor Emeritus

Introduction by Chris Plantone

A piece of advice: set goals, treat others well, and laugh a lot.

Paul Vermette has been a dedicated professional educator for over five decades, beginning his career in 1971 and joining Niagara University in 1985. A renowned leader in cooperative learning and effective teaching strategies, Paul has authored or co-authored 6 books and over 100 publications, leaving a lasting impact on the field of education. His contributions extend beyond the classroom, including his instrumental role in the development of the Committee for College Teaching and Learning (CCTL). This year, we are proud to honor Paul Vermette with this award, celebrating his outstanding achievements and enduring commitment to excellence in education.

Schedule

	Morning 1 (AM1) 10:15-10:45 am	Morning 2 (AM2) 10:50-11:20 am	Morning 3 (AM3) 11:25-11:55 am
Room 201	**201-AM1:** *Panel* Examining disability justice relationships and opportunities for accessing an inclusive college experience for everyone. *Dennis Garland, Niagara University*	**201-AM2:** *Paper* Unpacking the Inclusive Excellence Framework: Faculty Members' Journey Toward Collaboration for Inclusive International and Transformative Pedagogies. *Haoua Hamza, Niagara University*	**201-AM3**: *Paper* Reflective Practices as Reciprocal Feedback: Using Formal and Informal Reflections to Guide Student-Centered Teaching and Learning *Natasha McCandless, Niagara University*
Room 206	**206-AM1:** *Paper* Strengthening Academic Integrity: Strategies for Recognizing AI-Generated Submissions *Humberto Hernandez, D'Youville University*	**206-AM2:** *Paper* Leveraging VR and AI for Immersive Spanish Learning: A Preliminary Exploration *Elizabeth Dudek, D'Youville University*	**206-AM3:** *Paper* Bridging Human Creativity and Generative AI in Interior Design *Sandra Reicis, Villa Maria College*
Room 301	**301-AM1:** *Paper* Fostering Faculty Collaboration and Consensus Through a Structured Course Revision Process *Karen Poland, Niagara University*	**301-AM2:** *Paper* Lessons from the Subterranean World: Teaching the History of U.S. Conspiracy Theories in the Disinformation Age *Robert Kane, Niagara University*	**301-AM3:** *Paper* Using Equity Challenges to Prompt Discussion on Social Justice Issues *David Taylor, Niagara University*
Room 306	**306-AM1:** *Workshop* Learning Through Discussion - we can teach new dogs old tricks! *Martin Kelly, D'Youville University*	**306-AM2:** *Workshop* Creating an Inclusive Online Learning Environment: Tips and Strategies *Amy Nwora, Niagara University*	**306-AM3:** *Paper* Student presentations in Foundations of Mathematics *Joel Louwsma, Niagara University*

	Morning 1 (AM1) 10:15-10:45 am	Morning 2 (AM2) 10:50-11:20 am	Morning 3 (AM3) 11:25-11:55 am
Room 315	**315-AM1:** *Workshop* The Teacher's Toolbox: Strategies that Enhance Learning *Chris Plantone, Niagara University*	**315-AM2:** *Workshop* Online Course Development: Insights from UB's MBA and MSBA Programs *Jeanne Myers, University of Buffalo*	**315-AM3:** *Workshop* Peer Tutoring: An Evidence-Based Practice to Promote Student Success *Susan Mason, Niagara University*

	Lunch & Poster Presentations **12:00 - 1:30**		
Glynn Hall, 4th Floor	**P1** Chalk Walk: does the public presentation of scientific information improve learning outcomes for science majors? *Katie Bryant, Mark Gallo, & JT Graham Solomons Niagara University*	**P2** The Impact of Campus Educational Events on Community Connections *Michael D'Angelo, Niagara University*	**P3** Transforming Education through Faculty Development and AI-Driven Course Design *Humberto Hernandez & Shannon McCrory-Churchhill, D'Youville University*
	P4 Affective Readiness for Kindergarten Prepares a Student's Social and Emotional Development *Meagan Walker, Niagara University*	**P5** Understanding the Academic Impact of English Language Proficiency on English Language Learner Students *Lauren Garabedian, Niagara University*	

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

	Afternoon 1 (PM1) **1:45-2:15 pm**	**Afternoon 2 (PM2)** **2:20-2:50 pm**	**Afternoon 3 (PM3)** **2:55-3:25 pm**
Room 201	**201-PM1:** *Paper* Disability-Informed Pedagogy: A Narrative Inquiry into the Experiences of Neurodivergent and Disabled Faculty Members in Teacher Education Program *Laura Sarchet, Niagara University*	**201-PM2:** *Workshop* Student-Choice Assignments: A Step by Step Guide to Adopting Inclusive Assessment without Compromising Rigor *Carolyn Shivers, Niagara University*	**201-PM3**: *Workshop* Building a More Equitable Learning Environment through Community Guidelines and Course Design *Said Sidani, Niagara University*
Room 206	**206-PM1:** *Workshop* Beyond the Lecture: Integrating Awe-Based Pedagogy in The Classroom *Christina Taylor, SUNY Niagara*	**206-PM2:** *Workshop* Picturebooks for Social Justice in the Higher Education Classroom *Norline Wild, Niagara University*	**206-PM3:** *Paper* ~~Pedagogical Approaches and Behaviors That Elicit Student Appreciation~~ *Shawn Bielicki, Liberty University*
Room 301	**301-PM1:** *Paper* 10 Proven Strategies for Innovating Online Teaching: Specific Approaches for Engaging and Preparing 21st-Century Students in College Courses *Caitlin Riegel, Niagara University*	**301-PM2:** *Workshop* Art as a Catalyst: Interdisciplinary Learning Through Visual Thinking Strategies at the Castellani Art Museum *Evan Wright, Niagara University*	**301-PM3:** *Paper* Enhancing Special Education Through Technology: Identifying Needs and Creating Digital Solutions *Yonghong Tong, Niagara University*
Room 306	**306-PM1:** *Workshop* The results were significant, but what did other studies find? Highlighting context to improve student interpretation of scientific research *Burt Thompson, Niagara University*	**306-PM2:** *Paper* Transforming Academic Assessment: The Role of AI in Student Work and Faculty Evaluation *Humberto Hernandez, D'Youville University*	**306-PM3:** *Workshop* Restorative Practices: Creating an Inclusive Classroom *Nicole Menting-Wilson, Daemen University*

Room 315	315-PM1: *Paper*	315-PM2/3: *Workshop*
	[Trauma-Informed Pedagogy in Higher Education: Reflections on Faculty Development and Resource Mobilization](#)	[Unboxing Information Literacy: Encouraging Creativity and Exploration for First-Year Students](#)
	Dana Capell, Trent University	*Devon Cozad, Daemen University* Note: This is a one-hour workshop

Abstracts

Morning 1 Breakout Sessions
10:15-10:45 am

201-AM1

Examining disability justice relationships and opportunities for accessing an inclusive college experience for everyone.

Dennis Garland, Caitlyn Bukaty, Haoua Hamza, Yonghong Tong, Carolyn Shivers, Renee Rudniski, Cary Newman, Kelly Adams Engert, Nicole Granto, Cassie Slaiman, Charles Dieteman, *Niagara University*

Institutions of higher education have been responding to the need for promoting inclusive practices in multiple ways. When individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) are included and have a sense of belonging, they tend to be at lower risk for mental health difficulties and are more likely to have success in the workplace (Zhao et al., 2021). At Niagara University, relationships have developed that demonstrate support for the development of an inclusive postsecondary education (IPSE) program for individuals with IDD.

For example, a Special Olympics college course has made a positive difference in the attitudes of the students who take the course toward individuals with IDD. Providing college students with inclusive experiences among individuals with IDD increases their knowledge of causes of IDD, increases sensitivity and tenderness, reduces discomfort toward individuals with IDD, increases interactions with individuals with IDD, and improves knowledge about their capacity and rights. Results of a study conducted by Garland (2023) provided optimism about more inclusive opportunities for individuals with IDD on college campuses.

During a Vincentian social justice disabilities studies course, students explore the historical treatment of people with disabilities and learn about their legislative victories toward access to a dignified life. The students engage with disability experts and evaluate their own perceptions about disability justice and inclusion of individuals with disabilities. Collectively, they consider academic, social, and structural accessibility recommendations for providing an inclusive college experience to all who desire it.

Each of the panelists are experts who have an active agenda related to the education and inclusion of individuals with disabilities. During this session, the panelists will describe their experience and respective roles at the university and in the disability community. Discussions will highlight intersections that provide the foundation for development of an inclusive postsecondary education program for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

206-AM1

Strengthening Academic Integrity: Strategies for Recognizing AI-Generated Submissions
Humberto Hernandez, *D'Youville University*

With the increasing prevalence of artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT in educational settings, ensuring academic integrity has become a growing challenge. Existing AI detection tools such as GPT Zero and Turnitin offer automated solutions, but their accuracy is often inconsistent, leaving educators with the need for additional strategies to effectively identify AI-generated content. This presentation, Strengthening Academic Integrity: Strategies for Recognizing AI-Generated Submissions aims to provide educators with practical approaches for detecting AI-created work by focusing on non-technical indicators that complement automated tools.

The session will explore three primary detection categories: stylistic, linguistic, and content-based indicators. Educators will learn to recognize stylistic markers, such as the use of contractions, possessives, and unique formatting elements, as well as linguistic patterns like unusual grammar structures and repetitive phrasing. The presentation will also delve into content-based signs, including identifying generic information, logical inconsistencies, and factual errors. Real-world examples drawn from anonymized student submissions will illustrate these techniques and offer actionable insights.

By the end of the workshop, participants will have a clearer understanding of the limitations of current AI detectors, practical methods for assessing the likelihood of AI involvement in student work, and recommendations for establishing fair and effective academic policies regarding AI use. This session is tailored for faculty, instructional designers, and administrators dedicated to upholding academic integrity in an AI-driven educational landscape.

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

301-AM1

Fostering Faculty Collaboration and Consensus Through a Structured Course Revision Process

Karen Poland, Norline Wild, Jeff Faunce, & Thomas Sheeran *Niagara University*

Revising an institution's curriculum and courses to ensure they remain current and contemporary can be a daunting task, especially when faced with differing opinions. However, developing a structured process for course revision can facilitate a collaborative journey marked by constructive discussion and collective effort that values faculty expertise and acknowledges diverse perspectives. As a result, compromise and collective buy-in are achieved. The structured approach presented here was used to update two existing foundational courses in a teacher education program, leveraging data from a variety of sources, including the New York State (NYS) Educating All Students (EAS) exam, employer feedback, and faculty input. This presentation outlines the key steps of the course revision process, including its alignment with institutional strategic goals such as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts and the lessons learned by those participating in the course revision process. By aligning course content with evolving educational and industry expectations, the revised curriculum not only maintains relevance but also enhances student engagement and learning outcomes. Through this systematic approach, courses are continually refined and improved, ensuring they meet the needs of today's learners and prepare them for future challenges.

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

306-AM1

Learning Through Discussion - we can teach new dogs old tricks!
Martin Kelly, *D'Youville University*

Don't you hate it when you've assigned a reading for discussion and your students sit there like the Easter Island Moa – stone faced. Did they even read the assignment? Can you tell? Don't you wish there was a way to get all students to read, to prepare for discussion, to discuss, to learn, and to do this every week of the semester. Dr. Martin Kelly (martink@dyc.edu) is presenting a student managed discussion practice (William Fawcett Hill's Learning Through Discussion) that he used as a graduate student. He was so impressed with these discussions, that he kept his copies of the discussion guide and worksheet. When he could use this discussion tool in his teaching (1998, a 4th year course on Evolution) he transcribed and edited the discussion guide and worksheet for his students. Those students used one 50-55 minute class every week of the semester to read and discuss Charles Darwin's On the Origin of Species. Since then he has successfully used Learning Through Discussion with Upward Bound High School students (The Martian), non-major undergraduates in an introduction to Mendelian Genetics (Genetic Dilemmas: Reproductive Technology, Parental Choice, and Children's Futures and Am I my Genes), non-major undergraduates in Environmental Science (Annual Editions: Environment 12/13 and The Cartoon Introduction to Climate Change), non-major students in Evolution and Human Heredity (When a Gene makes you Smell Like a Fish, and Why Evolution is True), 2nd year Biology students in Evolution (On Natural Selection, Why Evolution is True, and The Tangled Bank-An Introduction to Evolution 2e), 3rd year Biology students in a seminar (How to Write a Scientific Paper), 3rd year Biology students in Evolution, Ecology, and Behavior (Evolution: A Short Introduction, Ecology: A Short Introduction, and Animal Behaviour: A Short Introduction), and most recently graduate students (The Chicago Guide to Science Teaching).

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

315-AM1

The Teacher's Toolbox: Strategies that Enhance Learning
Chris Plantone, Lillian Budde, & Samantha Jurczak *Niagara University*

Our education class engaged deeply with Frank Lyman's *100 Teaching Ideas that Transfer and Transform Learning*, a resource filled with practical strategies that enrich classroom learning. Recognizing the value of Lyman's ideas, we took his work a step further by placing these strategies into a digital guide, making the concepts accessible to all educators. This guide, hosted on Padlet, includes Lyman's insights and promotes thoughtful, engaging learning experiences across diverse educational settings all done by these future educators.

The digital guide organizes Lyman's strategies into focused categories, including techniques that enhance students' thinking, reading, speaking, and engagement in the classroom. Each section is designed with the K-12 classroom in mind, yet adaptable for college-level education. Throughout the presentation, we will highlight standout student contributions and delve into selected strategies that hold particular relevance for college instruction.

This class project was guided by the Gold Standard of Project-Based Learning, a formula designed to foster meaningful and impactful scholarship. This presentation will highlight PBL Gold Standard and break down how it was implemented in this college-level course. The goal of this session is to inspire other instructors to adopt this replicable framework to cultivate higher-order thinking in their classes.

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

Morning 2 Breakout Sessions
10:50-11:20 am

201-AM2

Unpacking the Inclusive Excellence Framework: Faculty Members' Journey Toward Collaboration for Inclusive International and Transformative Pedagogies

Haoua Hamza, Dennis Garland, Yonghong Tong, Mitchell R. Alegre *Niagara University*

The purpose of this panel is to facilitate a conversation about approaches to developing inclusive pedagogies. The paper is the result of four faculty members' collaboration after an active participation in several workshops on inclusive pedagogies. This paper uses a qualitative methodology to address two research questions: how does Inclusive Excellence (IE) permeate NU policies, resources and programs? and how are some core principles of the framework integrated in instruction? Data sources include DEI/climate survey and focus groups along with content analysis.

In addition to the Framework for Inclusive Excellence (Alma Clayton-Pederson (2005), the panel examines the following: Bennett's (1986) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), Cushner et al.'s (2024) Culture Learning Process and Human Diversity in Education Models, Banks' (1993) Knowledge Typology, Banks & Banks' Framework for Integration of Multicultural Content (CATS), and Hanvey's (1975) Framework for An Attainable Global Perspective. The panel seeks to create a dialogue on steps toward retooling and transforming one's pedagogy.

The panel will share insights into (1) alignment of NU's initiatives for inclusive excellence (IE) with various elements of the framework, (2) a variety of frameworks for illustration and conceptual understanding of approaches to integration of multicultural content and global perspective in the curriculum, (3) approaches to inclusive and innovative teaching, and (4) instructors' challenges and steps to retool their own practices.

Preparing the next generation of teachers and graduates in general, in a complex 21st century international classroom in the context of a binational university requires a pedagogical shift to recalibrate one's practice. A faculty vision informed by equity pedagogy that transcends bias to make diversity functional in our practice benefits all students.

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

206-AM2

Leveraging VR and AI for Immersive Spanish Learning: A Preliminary Exploration
Elizabeth Dudek & Humberto Hernandez, *D'Youville University*

As educators continue to explore innovative ways to engage students, the integration of emerging technologies like Virtual Reality (VR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers exciting potential for transforming language learning. This presentation will explore our ongoing development of an immersive language-learning environment designed to enhance Spanish conversation practice using VR, AI, and digital educational tools such as ThinkLink.

In this conceptual phase, we aim to create a dynamic platform where students can engage in Spanish conversation within simulated real-world contexts. VR will provide an immersive environment, allowing students to practice speaking in authentic scenarios such as ordering in a restaurant or navigating a marketplace. AI will serve as a conversational partner, offering real-time interaction and adaptive feedback to help students improve fluency and build confidence. Tools like ThinkLink will enable instructors to create interactive learning experiences that guide students through these virtual environments and enhance their overall engagement.

While this project is still in the exploratory stage, we believe it represents a promising approach to language learning by integrating active, experiential learning and cutting-edge technology. In this session, we will discuss our vision for this initiative, the challenges and opportunities we've encountered in the development process, and the future direction of this research. Attendees will have the opportunity to share feedback, explore the possibilities of using these tools in their own classrooms, and engage in discussions on the evolving role of technology in education.

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

301-AM2
Lessons from the Subterranean World: Teaching the History of U.S. Conspiracy Theories in the Disinformation Age
Robert Kane, *Niagara University*

Teaching about the history of modern U.S. conspiracy theories provides the opportunity to deeply engage student learning through a fun and fascinating lens. Questions such as who really killed JFK and what does the government know about aliens are interesting in their own right. But in order to separate fact from fiction, we must be able to locate reliable knowledge, maintain rigorous standards of evidence, and appreciate our own biases. In terms of content, the course chronicles the gradual loss of public trust in the federal government over the past several decades due to the real abuses of power and secrecy of an ever-expanding national security state. We explore how citizens, often very creatively, have tried to piece together through the available evidence what the government was not telling them. But more recently, the search for the truth has coincided with a politically motivated push into mainstream society by what one historian calls the "subterranean world of pathological fantasies." These malignant conspiracy theories, often based on no evidence, have had an extremely divisive impact on U.S. politics and society in our own times. In terms of methodology, the course utilizes historical case studies, such as Watergate, Iran-contra, and 9/11 to show how citizens made sense of their worlds as the future unfolded in real time. We now know that oftentimes in the past, very thin lines separated conspiracy theories from real conspiracies. These lines become all the more blurred as we move into our contemporary age when the flow of time and emotions impact our analyses, too. The historical case studies help us discern fact from disinformation in assessing current conspiracy theories in context. This presentation offers lessons about what I have learned from designing and teaching the course in the fall of 2022 and spring of 2024.

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

306-AM2
Creating an Inclusive Online Learning Environment: Tips and Strategies
Amy Nwora, *Niagara University*

With the growth of diversity in academic institutions, equity and inclusion have become essential components of the educational experience. Teachers across the academic continuum are searching for innovative ways to offer curricula that are focused on quality, while being cognizant of learner differences and needs. Exacerbating this issue is the expansion of online learning, where asynchronous classes can further alienate students who struggle with engagement and inclusion. Developing inclusive online classes has become a national imperative for student success.

The purpose of this workshop is to explore strategies to enhance community and engagement in the online learning environment. Particularly, the workshop will focus on the following objectives:

1.)   Development of an inclusive syllabus that offers a variety of viewpoints and provides opportunity for interaction and feedback.

2.)   Working within the online class to establish behavior guidelines for communication.

3.)   Incorporating anti-bias grading procedures using the tools provided in the learning management system.

4.)   Management of "awkward moments" within the class in a culturally sensitive manner.

315-AM2
Online Course Development: Insights from UB's MBA and MSBA Programs
Jeanne Myers & Jamie Tabone, *University at Buffalo*

This presentation will introduce a model for developing modular online learning courses. We will draw from our recent experience with UB's School of Management's new Online Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Online Master of Science in Business Analytics (MSBA) programs. These are designed as 2 or 3-year master's programs, and currently serve a growing number of students, to date over 200. Our first courses launched in Fall 2023, the degree programs feature rolling admissions, with three intake cycles per academic year, and 6 or 7-week semesters.

Starting in Spring 2023, our team of learning designers collaborated with faculty to create 23 online courses for the MBA/MSBA programs. We aim to share an effective model for modular online learning, highlighting the simultaneous development of multiple courses. Our approach includes the creation of a flexible Brightspace template, a systematic method for building high-quality, engaging online courses, and a Time on Task spreadsheet for assessing student engagement hours to ensure compliance with Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI).

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

Morning 3 Breakout Sessions
11:25-11:55 am

201-AM3
Reflective Practices as Reciprocal Feedback: Using Formal and Informal Reflections to Guide Student-Centered Teaching and Learning
Natasha McCandless, *Niagara University*

In order to create student-centered spaces, educators need feedback from students about their experiences in the classroom. As part of my research toward constructing pedagogical spaces that facilitate student wellness, I examine strategies to develop a culture of reciprocal feedback: where students not only receive feedback from the instructor on their performance, but also encounter opportunities to share feedback of their own in return. Combining my expertise in education and process-based art-making, I consider the research question: How does the practice of reflection facilitate student-centered teaching and learning? The practice of reflection - including a range of responses, from formal assignments to intentional conversations in shared space – has become integral to how I meet this goal as an instructor. Capturing reflections through both formal and informal means allows for real-time adaptation of pedagogical approaches in response to student needs and facilitates assessment of the group's learning. By examining the use of reflection across course curriculum (including assignments, assessments, and individual lesson plans), I provide a framework of concrete strategies for student-centered teaching and learning.

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

206-AM3

Bridging Human Creativity and Generative AI in Interior Design
Sandra Reicis, *Villa Maria College*

This presentation will focus on exploring the potential of using AI to assist with the design process and will address deliberations that include:

§ normalizing and navigating these tools within the academic world
§ pushing the boundaries of design innovation through technology
§ expand base knowledge to enhance creativity and problem-solving

Methodology: As AI continues to gain in popularity and in quality, it is becoming imperative that we teach students how to use AI ethically and with integrity and provide opportunity to explore the performance capabilities of this rapidly emerging technology. In the spring of 2024 I introduced an education experiment in a Junior level studio

Although faculty have been provided with syllabus statements that define several tiers of allowed (or not) use of generative tools in student work there is little guidance or examples for maximizing the potential for use in conjunction with student creativity and original outcomes and artifacts. Students must develop a foundation of knowledge that expands beyond understanding and includes application to be prepared for the future.

The presentation will include the structuring the project requirements and the challenges of implementation and integration. Samples of student outcomes and exit surveys will be shared. The methodology for this study includes student generated keywords supporting the conceptual, cultural and practical requirements for a hotel design located in Florence, Italy. The resulting AI generated images were evaluated for performance, aesthetics, accuracy and feasibility.

Outcomes: The capability of text-to-image platforms such as Stable Diffusion, Midjourney and DALLE-E2 were evaluated for potential of each as tools for interior design conceptualization and idea generation. The findings of this experimental project emphasized the necessity of a human interface to evaluate and modify results for realistic and functional designs. Exploring AI in this project provided rich context for this type of exposure.

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

301-AM3
Using Equity Challenges to Prompt Discussion on Social Justice Issues
David Taylor & Azhané Bridges, *Niagara University*

The 21-Day Racial Equity Challenges have been used by non-profits, corporations, professional associations and others to examine issues around social justice, racial injustice, gender issues, transgender issues, issues across class and religion, and even food justice. The presenters will share their experiences teaching a freshmen level seminar using the 14-Week Racial Equity Challenge, edited to fit a traditional university academic semester. The presenters will also share a collaboration using an equity challenge to support and create an impactful project-based learning opportunity.

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

306-AM3

Student Presentations in Foundations of Mathematics
Joel Louwsma, *Niagara University*

I will discuss my Foundations of Mathematics course, which is centered around student presentations. The primary objective of this course is to develop the ability to write mathematical proofs. In preparation for each class meeting, students are asked to try to prove several results. They fill out a survey in advance of class indicating which proof attempts they are prepared to share, and at the beginning of class I post the list of presenters for the day. These students project their work using the document camera, and we have a whole class discussion about it, pointing out both flaws and aspects to be emulated.

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

315-AM 3
Peer Tutoring: An Evidence-Based Practice to Promote Student Success
Susan Mason, Joseph Martino, & Heidi Pauta *Niagara University*

Students influence each other in a variety of ways. In this session, we focus on the ways that students contribute to the academic success of their peers. There are basically three types of academic relationships that may develop between two students. In the first type of relationship, one student views another student as a leader or a role model. In the second type of relationship, one student views another student as a colleague. Finally, in the third type of relationship, one student views another student as part of the support system. Peer tutoring can involve all three types of relationships, in that peer tutors may be viewed as role models, partners, and supports.

In the workshop, we examine the research and our own experiences demonstrating the value of peer tutors. The presenters are a professor who teaches a statistics course and two students who serve as peer tutors for the course.

We consider the challenges and benefits of assigning upper-class students to serve as tutors for courses they themselves have successfully completed. Considerations include costs, planning/scheduling, the selection of tutors, the responsibilities of tutors, and the benefits to tutees, tutors, and the professor.

Workshop participants are invited to share research findings, experiences, and views related to undergraduate students serving as peer mentors and tutors.

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Posters
12:30-1:30 PM

P1

Chalk Walk: does the public presentation of scientific information improve learning outcomes for science majors?

Katie Bryant, Mark Gallo, & JT Graham Solomons *Niagara University*

Recently, there has been a shift in higher education away from passive learning approaches towards a student-centered teaching models, which focus on active learning and engagement strategies. Providing students a choice of topic, encouraging peer-to-peer instruction, and employing learning strategies in the upper echelons of Bloom's taxonomy, such as analysis, synthesis, and creativity, have all been proposed as effective means to improve learning outcomes. To investigate the effectiveness of these strategies, we developed an assignment called "Chalk Walk" for the Microbiology lecture course (BIO212), where students are asked to create chalk drawings, illustrating a microbe or disease of their choice, on the sidewalks of Niagara University. We hypothesized that the creative aspect of the assignment would facilitate deeper student engagement with the topic, enhancing student retention and recall of the content, while the public display of the assignment to the broader audience of the university could be an effective means of increasing the students' intrinsic motivation. We will assess the learning outcomes of our "Chalk Walk" assignment by comparing the students' end-of-semester performance on topics covered in this assignment against material covered in the lecture course with more conventional, passive instruction methods.

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P2

The Impact of Campus Educational Events on Community Connections
Michael D'Angelo, *Niagara University*

This poster will explore research investigating how campus educational events promote deeper engagement within the community, including students, faculty, and local residents.

This poster will highlight research related to the content, structure, and accessibility of such events and how they can act as powerful catalysts that inspire participants to connect more meaningfully with the community and strengthen their civic responsibility. It will focus on specific event characteristics that impact participants' sense of belonging, the perceived relevance of event content to local needs, and the accessibility of events, which all influence attendees' motivation to attend future engagements. It will showcase one specific event example from Niagara University's campus, Story Lane on Ice, and discuss insights from event participants regarding their sense of community connectedness, views on the event's relevance, and perceptions of the role of such events in enhancing civic responsibility. The poster will also address how these experiences contribute to the development of lasting connections between the university and the broader community, promoting increased local engagement and partnerships.

This poster will provide recommendations for educational institutions to design events that are not only accessible and relevant but also capable of fostering sustained community involvement. By doing so, it aims to offer a practical framework for enhancing the effectiveness of campus events in building community ties, encouraging civic responsibility, and supporting a robust partnership between universities and their surrounding communities.

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P3

Transforming Education through Faculty Development and AI-Driven Course Design
Humberto Hernandez & Shannon McCrory-Churchhill, *D'Youville University*

In early 2024, a faculty member collaborated with an instructional designer to explore how AI could assist in course design. This partnership revealed gaps in the literature on using AI to support course creation in nursing and higher education, highlighting the benefits of faculty and instructional design collaborations. The project underscored AI's potential to save time without compromising course rigor, while also addressing faculty concerns about AI's role in education. The generated course materials included a syllabus, modules, and assessments. Although AI provided a solid foundation, faculty input was essential to ensure quality and alignment with course objectives. This session will discuss key insights from this project and suggest frameworks for integrating AI with instructional design, enhancing faculty development, and addressing AI's challenges in higher education.

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

P4

Affective Readiness for Kindergarten Prepares a Student's Social and Emotional Development

Meagan Walker, *Niagara University*

This poster will explore research related to the integration of social-emotional learning in educational frameworks to better prepare students for both academic success and meaningful community involvement.

This poster will highlight research related to the critical role of home environments in shaping students' initial social exploration experiences, particularly the influence of parental interactions on social readiness (Andersson et al., 2024). It will emphasize how gradual exposure to new transitions significantly enhances students' emotional well-being and adaptability within the educational setting (Estrada & Rabara, 2024). It will illustrate that difficulties in social adjustment can adversely affect communication skills, limiting students' participation in discussions and collaborative efforts, which can lead to academic setbacks (Daunic et al., 2023) and how strong social and emotional development skills are foundational for building resilience and fostering positive relationships, which correlate with academic success (Besi & Sakellariou, 2019; Brigman & Webb, 2003). It will also highlight, how effective social-emotional skills are essential for maintaining attention during lessons and active engagement in classroom activities (Vitiello et al., 2022) and how emotional challenges can impede students' learning focus, hinder friendship formation, and complicate their adjustment to school life.

This poster will advocate for school environments that prioritize social and emotional skill-building, recognizing that such initiatives not only bolster academic performance but also foster stronger peer relationships and enhance students' ability to engage with their communities (Jones et al., 2015).

[BACK TO SCHEDULE]

P5
Understanding the Academic Impact of English Language Proficiency on English Language Learner Students
Lauren Garabedian, *Niagara University*

This poster presents literature examining the impact of English language proficiency on academic achievement among English Language Learners (ELL) students. It will focus on achievement gaps, the importance of holistic assessment, and the linguistic disadvantages on content area assessments. Research consistently shows despite being considered reclassified or commanding in English proficiency, ELL students are still below achievement level compared to their peers because of how their level of English proficiency translates into a mainstream classroom. This is a result of ELL students having to achieve English proficiency simultaneously with academic proficiency. Accommodations such as extra time, setting or bilingual glossary do not fully level the playing field for ELL students. Research also demonstrates linguistic disadvantages where ELL students consistently interpret test items incorrectly leading them to answer a different question than the one proposed. ELL students have also demonstrated content knowledge orally but still proceed to answer test items incorrectly. Finally, content vocabulary words are not translatable into ELL students' home language sometimes, therefore comprehension can be difficult because of this. The literature further reveals that there should be more consideration of the time they arrive in the U.S., as well as cultural and linguistic differences when developing content-area assessments.

This poster aims to inform higher education faculty about the academic challenges ELL students face due to varying levels of English proficiency. Recommendations will include differentiating instruction and anecdotes with alternative content of vocabulary that will level the playing field but not "water down" the content they are learning. Strategies such as handing out notes/powerpoints ahead of time so students can be prepared with the dense vocabulary needed in class, as well as recording all lectures for reference and targeted interventions. Faculty should work to assess a student's knowledge in various forms because it's essential in identifying validity amongst ELL students.

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Afternoon 1 Breakout Sessions
1:45-2:15 pm

201-PM1

Disability-Informed Pedagogy: A Narrative Inquiry into the Experiences of Neurodivergent and Disabled Faculty Members in Teacher Education Program
Laura Sarchet, *Niagara University*

Research has shown the importance of diversity representation in education both in PK12 and in higher education, but disability and neurodiversity have often been left out of the DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) conversations in higher education. Disabled and neurodivergent faculty members in higher education face barriers and stigma, and they respond to these inequities in a variety of ways. However, disabled and neurodivergent teacher education faculty members in higher education represent a gap in the existing literature. This narrative inquiry study explored the experiences of six neurodivergent and/or disabled teacher education faculty members in New York State colleges and universities using flexible-format interviews and artifact collection. Participant experiences were consistent with the existing literature, but a grounded theory analysis revealed a new theory of Disability-Reflective Pedagogy, which is a novel way of explaining how these educators use reflection to make connections between their disability-adjacent experiences and their own teaching practice, to the benefit of themselves and their students. Conclusions share directions for future research and practical implications in higher education and PK12.

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206-PM1

Beyond the Lecture: Integrating Awe-Based Pedagogy in The Classroom
Christina Taylor, *SUNY Niagara*

This interactive workshop explores how educators can intentionally cultivate experiences of awe in their classrooms to enhance student engagement, foster deeper learning, and develop emotional and intellectual growth. Recent research demonstrates that awe experiences can increase critical thinking, allow students to feel more connected to humanity as a whole, and enhance prosocial behavior – all important goals for higher education. By attending this session, participants will understand the psychology behind why awe makes learning stick, share stories and strategies that work across different disciplines, and discuss potential challenges in bringing awe into our teaching.

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301-PM1
10 Proven Strategies for Innovating Online Teaching: Specific Approaches for Engaging and Preparing 21st-Century Students in College Courses
Caitlin Riegel, *Niagara University*

The shift to online learning has brought about unique challenges and opportunities in higher education, prompting instructors to explore innovative strategies that keep students engaged and prepare them for the demands of the 21st century. This session will provide college instructors with actionable, evidence-based methods to enhance their online teaching practices. Drawing from both research and practical experiences, the session will highlight strategies that have been successfully implemented in a college setting, including methods for creating interactive content, fostering collaboration, integrating digital tools, and personalizing learning.

Specifically, participants will gain insights into several effective techniques that engage and prepare 21st-century college students, such as developing video based discussion boards, implementing virtual learning contracts, utilizing interactive content (presentations and videos), incorporating complete/incomplete assignments, using flipped classroom assignments, creating social-emotional reflection assignments, building AI simulations, and rethinking traditional office hours. Additionally, the session will cover the integration of specific technologies to support the identified strategies. Participants will also learn how to balance synchronous and asynchronous activities to optimize flexibility and maintain a high level of student interaction.

By the end of this session, participants will leave with a toolkit of innovative teaching practices designed to increase student engagement, improve learning outcomes, and better prepare college students for success in a rapidly changing world.

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306-PM1

The results were significant, but what did other studies find? Highlighting context to improve student interpretation of scientific research
Burt Thompson & Milen Radell, *Niagara University*

This workshop is designed for instructors of college classes that examine scientific research. It will be most relevant to instructors who teach applied statistics, research methodology, or discuss research results in content courses related to the social and behavioral sciences.

Although science and technology are central to many important societal issues, misconceptions about science and scientific research are widespread among students and other members of the general public. This workshop will assist instructors in helping students learn about an important, yet often neglected, aspect of scientific research: the context in which research findings occur.

The workshop will lead participants in activities and discussion to review common myths that may cause students to misinterpret research results commonly found in news reports and journal articles. The materials and resources for these activities, which have been used in the classroom to highlight the importance of context, will be provided at the workshop and online. Participants will have the opportunity to assess their learning via these examples, and feedback about the workshop will be gathered from discussion and a feedback form.

The workshop facilitators are college professors in psychology who have taught courses in statistics, research methods, and a variety of content areas such as introductory psychology, behavioral neuroscience, psychopharmacology, and cognitive psychology. They have published several studies on the workshop topic.

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315-PM1
Trauma-Informed Pedagogy in Higher Education: Reflections on Faculty Development and Resource Mobilization
Dana Capell, Lillian Chumbley, Devon Stillwell *Trent University*

In the past five years, higher education faculty have turned to trauma-informed pedagogy (TIP) to respond to student needs in the wake of COVID-19 and with attention to the ongoing oppressions and traumas of marginalized groups. TIP centers trauma, adversity, and resilience in student experiences, and incorporates consideration of these experiences into course design and classroom practices (Carello & Thompson, 2021; Thompson & Carello, 2022). To respond to the need for trauma-sensitive approaches at Trent University, the Centre for Teaching and Learning supported the creation of trauma-informed resources for faculty in consultation with subject matter experts. The result was the creation of two workshops on TIP that explore the prevalence and impact of trauma in higher education, and how to incorporate trauma-informed approaches into university teaching. We are currently working to assess the impact of these workshops (offered in Spring 2024) and answer our central research question: How does trauma-informed training affect faculty understanding of, and attitudes towards, TIP?

Our presentation will share reflections and early results from this study. We will focus on our use of phenomenological research methods including surveys, reflections, and interviews to assess whether training affects faculty plans related to the frameworks, policies, and content of upcoming courses. We will also discuss faculty impressions of what opportunities for, and barriers to, adopting TIP may exist.
Our paper will pursue the following learning goals for attendees:
1)   Understand the basics of, and rationale for, TIP in higher education.
2)   Develop insight into the process for developing and mobilizing resources in TIP.
3)   Consider how phenomenological research methods can be used to better understand faculty attitudes and behaviors, and the impact of professional development programming.
4)   Understand how training affects faculty attitudes toward TIP.

Afternoon 2 Breakout Sessions
2:20-2:50 pm

201-PM2
Student-Choice Assignments: A Step by Step Guide to Adopting Inclusive Assessment without Compromising Rigor
Carolyn Shivers, *Niagara University*

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) requires multiple modalities for expression of learning (Rose, 2000). However, due to time constraints, lack of inclusive training, and desire to maintain equality of rigor, among others, many instructors rely on the same types of assignments for all students. These assignments usually include timed tests and exams, written papers, and/or presentations. All of these types of assignments have value for the demonstration of learning, but they are not all equitably accessible for students with disabilities. For example, presentations may penalize students with speech or hearing disabilities, as well as students for whom English is not their native language.

Student-choice assignments provide students with a menu of different options to demonstrate their learning in ways best aligned with their skills and preferences. The fundamental requirements remain the same; students must demonstrate mastery of course materials and understanding of topics. However, by allowing students to provide evidence of learning in different ways, we eliminate often-extraneous requirements and standards that may not have anything to do with how much students know about our course.

In this presentation, attendees will be given several examples of student-choice assignments and how to implement a student-choice system that is equitable and rigorous. We will address different types of assignments that adhere to students' needs and skills while still demonstrating the learning required in class, such as brief presentations, personal application, and video analysis. We will also discuss how to set up this grading system in Canvas and how to design assignments to be worth equitable points across different modalities.

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206-PM2

Picturebooks for Social Justice in the Higher Education Classroom
Norline Wild, *Niagara University*

Picturebooks are powerful tools that offer rich opportunities to foster social awareness and critical thinking. Through stories, readers of all ages can see themselves represented and be challenged to consider the perspectives and experiences of others. In this workshop, we will explore how interactive read-alouds in higher education classrooms can create a learning community that nurtures and supports students' development of social justice awareness and critical consciousness.

We will specifically examine how picturebooks, paired with intentional activities, can help students deepen their understanding of identity, celebrate diverse backgrounds, and recognize systemic inequities and injustice. This process supports their evolving sense of self and empowers them to become advocates for social change. Drawing from my experience of incorporating picturebooks into coursework, I will share strategies that invite students to critically engage with material and reflect on broader sociopolitical and historical contexts that influence education.

The workshop will also include an interactive read-aloud experience, modeling how this technique can foster dialogue and collective meaning-making. Together, we will explore how reading both the word and the world from a critical perspective encourages learners to confront injustice and ignite transformative social change. Participants will leave with practical strategies for incorporating picturebooks into their teaching and a deeper understanding of how to build inclusive educational spaces that prioritize equity and justice.

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301-PM 2
Art as a Catalyst: Interdisciplinary Learning Through Visual Thinking Strategies at the Castellani Art Museum
Evan Wright, *Niagara University*

The integration of arts-based learning into higher education curricula presents a compelling opportunity to enhance student engagement and deepen understanding across disciplines. This presentation examines the successful implementation of interdisciplinary learning initiatives at the Castellani Art Museum (CAM), where Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) and collaborative faculty partnerships have transformed traditional classroom experiences into dynamic, multi-faceted learning environments.

Through carefully designed class sessions spanning diverse fields—including biology, mathematics, theater, business, education, and history—CAM has developed an innovative educational model that transcends conventional disciplinary boundaries. By leveraging themes of social justice and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA), the museum has established meaningful connections between artistic expression and complex academic concepts. This approach enables students to investigate and internalize new ideas through the critical analysis of artwork.

The presentation will showcase specific case studies demonstrating how the unpacking of artistic works serves as a powerful tool for concept exploration and knowledge acquisition across various fields of study. We will discuss the methodology behind these interdisciplinary collaborations, their impacts on student learning, and strategies for implementing similar programs at other institutions.

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306-PM2

Transforming Academic Assessment: The Role of AI in Student Work and Faculty Evaluation

Humberto Hernandez, *D'Youville University*

The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) in education is reshaping the way assessments are designed, delivered, and evaluated. With tools like ChatGPT and other AI platforms becoming increasingly accessible, both students and faculty are navigating a new landscape of academic assessment. This presentation explores the evolving role of AI in student assignments and faculty grading practices.

The session will examine the impact of AI on traditional assessment methods, addressing the benefits and challenges of using AI to enhance grading efficiency, promote authentic learning, and personalize feedback. Attendees will learn about innovative strategies for integrating AI in course design, including approaches that prioritize desirable difficulty" in assessments to optimize learning outcomes. The presentation will also discuss the practical considerations for faculty.

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315-PM 2/3
Unboxing Information Literacy: Encouraging Creativity and Exploration for First-Year Students
Andrea Sullivan & Devon Cozad, *Daemen University*

Daemen University's First Year Experience (FYE) seminar brings students into conversations with professionals across campus as they learn vital foundational skills for college life. Andrea Sullivan, Head of Research and Instruction, and Devon Cozad, Research and Instruction Librarian, lead the Information Literacy component of FYE consisting of an asynchronous online module and an in-person class session.

Inspired by the Thinking Routines of Harvard Graduate School of Education's Project Zero and the WNY Higher Ed Camp, what first began as a basic follow-along database orientation session in 2022 shifted into a highly successful hands-on workshop. This semester, we asked students to form groups and gave each a mystery box containing two items. Their task: to create lists of keywords that literally or figuratively described these items, and using their terms, begin scoping a college-level research topic. The end goal was to find three journal articles or scholarly resources from the library databases that they might use if they actually were developing that topic.

Fall 2024 students responded to this latest iteration with enthusiasm, creativity, and humor. All students participated and contributed to classroom discussion. Faculty observed that students had greater autonomy and ownership in the activity while learning basic database searching strategies critical for first-year assignments. We also observed that students are still eager for hands-on learning and gamified experiences. Critically, all groups successfully met our expectations shaped by the ACRL Frameworks for Higher Education and Constructivist classroom theory.

In this one-hour workshop, participants will be asked to form small groups, each receiving a Mystery Box. Can you pursue a college-level research topic inspired by the two items inside? From this starting point, we will focus on brainstorming keywords, conducting pre-research, basic database searching, and resource retrieval.

Come see what shifted the FYE Information Literacy conversation at Daemen!
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Afternoon 3 Breakout Sessions
2:55-3:25 pm

201-PM3
Building a More Equitable Learning Environment through Community Guidelines and Course Design
Said Sidani, *Niagara University*

In this session, participants will engage in dialogue around creating and maintaining inclusive and equitable learning environments. The use of community guidelines as an approach for engaging in constructive classroom discussions will be presented using a real-life case study from an undergraduate course on Equity and Diversity in Education at the University of Toronto. The benefits and affordances of implementing community guidelines rooted in key concepts of equity and diversity will be discussed as a means of honouring students' lived experiences and ensuring that classroom discourse never debates any one person's or group's humanity.

Participants will engage in 'taking stock' as they examine how their current pedagogies are influenced by their own identities and those of their students. Participants attending this workshop will also have the opportunity to investigate and assess different strategies for discussing tough topics while remaining unequivocally committed to maintaining a safe learning environment. Although avoiding difficult conversations and controversial topics with our students may seem appealing for a range of reasons, this session argues that in order to best meet the needs of our students, familiarity with their intersectional identities can facilitate the aforementioned conversations in service of the overall student experience.

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206-PM3
Pedagogical Approaches and Behaviors That Elicit Student Appreciation
Shawn Bielicki & Alexandra Barnett *Liberty University*

When college students are given an opportunity to express gratitude, their perception of instructional effectiveness increases, making them more satisfied with the courses they are taking (Biber et al. 2020). Recognition programs have also been shown to improve faculty motivation (Hollinger-Smith et al. 2021) and reduce turnover (Rombaut & Guerry, 2020). This study qualitatively analyzed student responses to a teacher appreciation program to identify desirable teacher behaviors and pedagogical approaches. 2127 students expressed their appreciation to specific faculty members over 18 months using an online form. Center for Teaching Excellence printed the appreciation notes to look like old-fashioned telegrams and delivered them to faculty at school/college and department meetings. Upon analysis of students' responses, the following themes of faculty pedagogical approaches and behaviors that elicited appreciation emerged: a) faculty personal characteristics, b) spiritual disciplines demonstrated by faculty, c) efficient course design, d) faith learning integration, and e) active learning.

*NOTE: Now being shared as a poster

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301-PM3

Enhancing Special Education Through Technology: Identifying Needs and Creating Digital Solutions

Yonghong Tong & Dennis Garland, *Niagara University*

Special education classrooms face distinct challenges, such as diverse student needs and limited educational resources to effectively support students with an array of disabilities and personalize their learning experiences. The increasing accessibility of mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets presents new opportunities to address these challenges through applications that can enhance both teaching and learning. These mobile applications can integrate algorithms, artificial intelligence, evidence-based learning theories, and teaching strategies specific to special education, allowing classrooms to have the capabilities to provide personalized support. There are two stages in this study: First, we will identify the specific challenges and barriers encountered by educators and students in special education settings. Second, by applying special education principles, we will design and develop mobile applications to provide both the educators and students to improve the teaching and learning effectiveness. These applications will then be implemented in special education classroom settings to evaluate their effectiveness based on real-world practice. After the practice, we will adjust the functionality based on the real-world practical experience. The research aims to improve instructional strategies, support inclusive learning environments, and provide digital solutions to better support the diverse needs of students in special education. Findings from this study will offer valuable insights for future innovations and best practices integration technology in special education.

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306-PM3

Restorative Practices: Creating an Inclusive Classroom
Nicole Menting-Wilson & Lori DeCarlo, *Daemen University*

Restorative practices are known to elicit voice, strengthen relationships, and build community. The importance of these factors to teaching and learning cannot be underestimated.

Learning is social and feeling a sense of belonging is key. Students who feel accepted and valued are more likely to be cognitively, affectively and behaviorally engaged.

The isolation of the pandemic halted students' social-emotional growth and ability to develop positive relationships. This impact is especially true for students from low-income backgrounds, students of color, students with disabilities.

Schools across the world have started to embrace restorative practices to create trusting, respectful and inclusive school and classroom environments and help strengthen students' social-emotional learning. Join us in a restorative circle and explore the potential of restorative practices in creating an inclusive classroom.

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