



Signature

TO TEACH, TO LEARN, TO INSPIRE ... AT AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**B.a
J.E.D.I.**

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 **Aims**
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SIGNATURE

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Aims Community College is committed to providing quality education for our students. Our institution continues to make substantial investments in teaching and learning. This magazine is one of those efforts. Our annual teaching and learning magazine, *Signature*, is aimed at providing information about teaching and learning strategies and highlights our important work in this area.

Learning College Vision Statement

"The role of the Learning College at Aims Community College is to contribute and shape scenarios that empower learning through discovery, shared learning environments, and construction of knowledge."

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EDITOR'S LETTER

From Kendra Griffin & Brian Seemann:



This year's theme of Belonging, Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (B. a J.E.D.I.) encompasses such a wide range of crucial values and social concepts that capturing its importance in any single letter seems a daunting task. The submissions we received this year were extremely thorough and robust and suggest that our contributors approached the topic with a sense of deep respect for its significance.

At Aims, we understand that it is the institution of education, more than any other, that can allow the B. a J.E.D.I. values to bloom, for it is education that fosters the critical thinking and reasoning skills that allow a person to take that first

footstep in another's shoes. As an experiment, think back to the first book you read as a child that helped you realize that a person other than yourself, and possibly quite different from yourself, was real. That moment when you truly empathized with a character, when you engaged, knowingly or not, with the human condition, changed and enlarged you. It made you a kinder and more compassionate citizen of the world. And it's the reason that we as an institution of higher learning have dedicated ourselves — staff and faculty alike — to sharing our passion for our disciplines and our unique talents for supporting students throughout their educational journey.

Meanwhile, while we at Aims have strived this past year to examine ourselves, our worldviews, and our connections with students, the world around us has again changed so rapidly that we can barely find time to react, much less act thoughtfully and purposefully. Advances in artificial intelligence have both stymied and intrigued us as we continuously adapt to meet student needs. Significant changes in enrollment trends have challenged and inspired us to refine our curriculum and approach to education. And an ever-evolving climate of social change has reminded us of the larger purpose of our jobs — to prepare students to navigate a complicated and complex world with agency and informed insights.

In 2023, the Signature team thanks you for your service, and we wish to remind you that you can "Be a JEDI" by sharing your authentic self with your colleagues, students, and larger community.

Kendra and Brian

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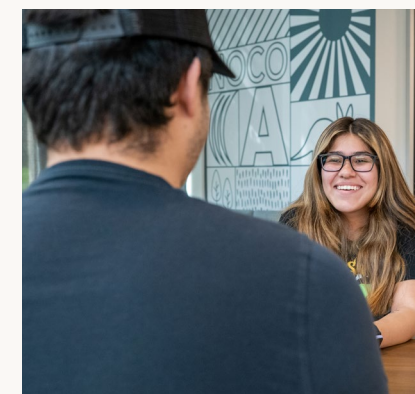
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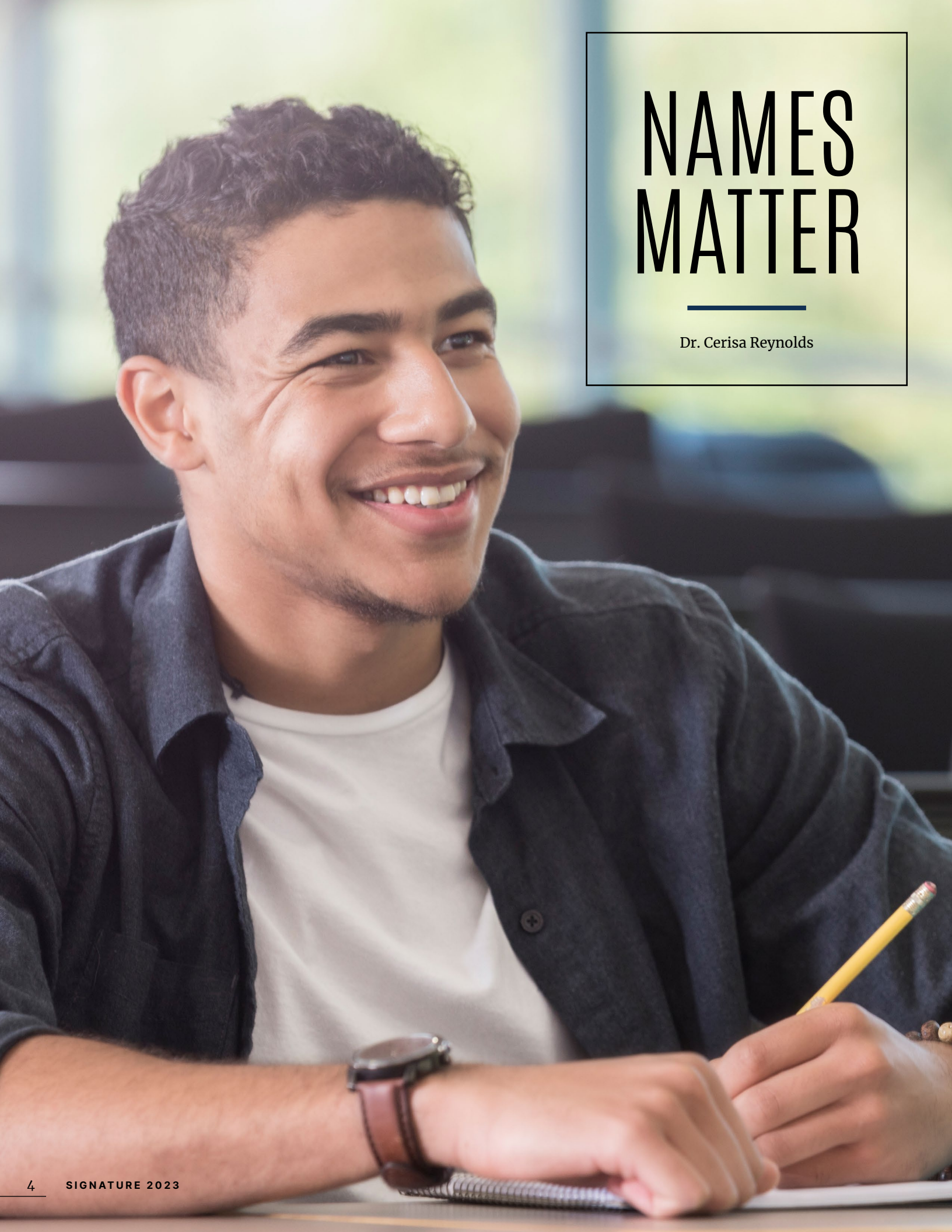
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Thank You to Our Contributors



NAMES MATTER

Dr. Cerisa Reynolds

Words are never just words. What we say and how we say it matters. Immensely. The words we use (verbally and in writing) can make people feel welcome or excluded, seen or invisible, cared for or disregarded. And in our classes, we have the ability and responsibility to foster an environment that recognizes the power of words. Here, we'll explore the power of using a very specific type of word: names.

A person's name is integral to who they are, and learning student names is a powerful and all too taken-for-granted way we can show students that they matter and that they belong in our classes. This is vital, as research reveals that a sense of belonging is a crucial contributor to both retention and student success (McGlynn, 2011). But to do this with inclusivity in mind, we must first ensure that we are using the names that students want us to use, and that we are pronouncing their names correctly.

Using the Right Name: Learning our students' names is incredibly important, but we cannot rely upon our rosters or D2L classlists alone to help us do this. In fact, there are a variety of reasons why a student may use a name different from that on the roster. Some may simply prefer other names and would not mind hearing you call them by the name on the roster before correcting you. In contrast, others may not feel comfortable correcting you in front of the entire class and/or may even be emotionally harmed by hearing the name given for them on the roster. This can stem from a variety of situations, each of which can cause pain and harm to a student if they are called by their legal name and/or put in a position to publicly correct you. These situations include, but are not limited to the following: a student who has not yet changed their legal last name after a divorce; a student named after an abusive relative; or a transgender or nonbinary student who uses a name different from their legal name.

Rather than verbally working our way through a roster, we can support our students and avoid causing harm by giving students the opportunity to tell us what name to use when speaking or writing to or about them. Here is a simple way we can do this:

- On the first day of class, give students index cards and ask them to write down their answers to the following three questions, assuring them that these index cards are only going to be seen by you:

1. How is your name listed on the roster or in D2L?
 2. What is the name you would like your instructor and others in this class to use when speaking to or about you this semester?
 3. Is there anything you would like your instructor to know about you as a learner, student, human, etc.?
 - » The open-ended nature of this last question gives your students agency in shaping what you learn about them at the beginning of your journey together, and many students will take advantage of this opportunity to share important details that will enable you to better know and support them in your class. Of course, you can also ask students any other questions you would like to, like their preferred method of communication or what they hope to learn this semester. And if you are teaching online, this same process—asking students questions like these—can take place through D2L's Quizzes or Surveys tools, in a Google Form, or over email.
- Collect the index cards without reading them out loud. You can use these after class to take attendance, privately making note of any names that are different from the name on the roster. Then, commit to only using the names provided in response to Question #2. Whenever you take verbal attendance, use the names given in response to Question #2. When speaking to a student or about a student, or when writing to them, use the name they provided in their answer to Question #2. This act of respect will be appreciated by all of your students and will be the foundation upon which your professional relationship is built. And crucially, research has shown that the affirmation educators provide when using the chosen names of transgender students in particular is "associated with lower depression, suicidal ideation, and suicidal behavior" (Russell et al., 2018).

Learning Their Names: After you have collected the index cards, reintroduce yourself to your students, sharing what you would prefer your students call you. Being transparent about how you would like students to address you can erase some of the anxiety students often have about addressing us in person or over email, giving them one less thing to worry about. If you feel



A person's name is integral to who they are, and learning student names is a powerful and all too taken-for-granted way we can show students that they matter and that they belong in our classes."

safe doing so, also share your pronouns with students. Then, make a “name tent” to display your name by folding a piece of paper and writing your preferred name or title and (if you would like) your pronouns on one side of it in large font. Prop the “tent” up at the front of the classroom where students can see it. Next, you can give students their own paper on which they

can make name tents. Ask them to please write the name they gave in answer to Question #2 above (the name they would like everyone to use when speaking to or about them) on their name tent, and let them know that if they wish, they can write their pronouns under their name. (See the “Pronouns as optional?” sidebar for more on this).

At the end of class, collect the students’ name tents. Until you have learned all of their names, you can start the following classes by handing these out to

students. The process of finding students while you hand the name tents out will enable you to learn their names, and having them keep the tents placed in front of them during class enables everyone in the class to learn each other’s names, too.

Taking verbal attendance at the start of each class (using only the names provided in the answer to Question #2 above) is also a great way to learn names. This seems simple, but it can feel all too easy to pass around a sign-in sheet instead. Until you know everyone’s name, take attendance—even if you don’t assign a grade for attending—as a way to learn names. Importantly, even if you give points for attendance, be open and tell your students that you are taking attendance verbally to help you learn their names. Show them that you are trying.

If you choose to follow the above steps, this does indeed mean that—until you learn all of their

names—you are both taking verbal attendance and seeking each student out to give them their name tent. It is remarkable how quickly you can learn names and how much you can connect with students when you combine these two tactics! And bonus: your starting the semester being vulnerable in front of your students as you try to learn their names fosters an environment that views making mistakes and being vulnerable as valuable to the learning experience—a win-win!

Practicing Pronunciation: Correct pronunciation can be difficult, but repeated mispronunciation and a lack of effort to learn correct pronunciation can be harmful (see Mitchell, 2016). In addition to learning our students’ names, we can all work hard to make sure that we are pronouncing their names correctly. In fact,

“taking that extra moment to pronounce an unusual name correctly or a name that you’re not very familiar with correctly is one of those ways that you can really practice anti-racism and practice allyship in the moment ... this is one of those ways that really makes a difference day to day on creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels like they are part of it and belong and can contribute” (Tulshyan as quoted in Wazwaz, 2021).

Here are some things to keep in mind when creating an environment that respects identity through correct pronunciation:

- “Make learning to say names right a positive experience for yourself and those whose names you are trying to honor” (Panwar, 2022). Ask students to pronounce their name for you and repeat it back to them. Then, thank them for pronouncing their name for you and practice it with them, saying it a few times out loud. As you practice, check with them and then thank them for correcting you (Panwar, 2022). You can even write out notes to help you remember correct pronunciation, checking with your student to see if your notes are accurate. This can be especially helpful for names you have never heard before or for names that have several

common options for pronunciation. For example, if you were struggling to remember how a specific student pronounces the name spelled L-E-N-A (Lena), you could ask, “Did I write this correctly? It is pronounced Layn-uh, not Lahn-uh or Le-nna?”

- Don’t otherize someone by calling their name “exotic” (Wazwaz, 2021). You may be saying this as a compliment, but it could result in a student feeling out of place and as though they don’t belong.
- Don’t change their name to make it easier on you (see Ochoa, 2019 and Panwar, 2022). “Simply put, anglicizing names undermines inclusivity. When you refuse to make an effort to pronounce someone’s name correctly, it suggests that you’re choosing your own linguistic comfort over their identity. It shows that their identity is not important enough to expel the energy—and that makes your behavior a microaggression” (Panwar, 2022). Instead of saying “oh, I’ll never get that—what else can I call you?” value and honor the person by saying, “I want to get this right. You should be called by *your* name” (Ochoa, 2019).
- Normalize the process of working to pronounce names by providing the phonetic spelling of your name or other clues on how to pronounce your name when you introduce yourself to your students, in your email signature, on your syllabi, and in any other welcome materials you might provide students with (Panwar, 2022).

If you are like me, and learning names is something you struggle with, the process described above will take effort, and you will make mistakes, but trying matters. Learning our students’ names matters. Correct pronunciation matters. Words matter. And through these seemingly simple actions, we are showing our students that we believe that they matter.

Pronouns as Optional?

Why not simply require everyone to share their pronouns? Though that has often been recommended in efforts to create an inclusive and supportive environment, it can actually

have the opposite effect (see Hamison, 2018 and Hamison & Airton, 2019). For example, since students have no way of gauging how safe the classroom environment is on day one, some students will not feel safe sharing their pronouns on the first day of class, or at any point throughout the semester. Others may not yet know their pronouns, may not use a fixed set of pronouns, may not want to be placed in a position that has previously resulted in them being pressed to explain their pronouns, or may simply not wish to share their pronouns (see Murphy, 2019). For these and a variety of additional reasons, “questions about pronoun use can be painful to the very people to whom we are trying to signal support” (Levin, 2018). As explained by Plowe (2022):

“It might seem counterintuitive that emphasizing pronouns may actually fail to make gender queer students feel more comfortable—some instructors even have students repeat their pronouns at the beginning of every class, perhaps to make space for students’ gender fluidity. I love this idea. At the same time, gender queer students might feel painful pressure to continuously present themselves to the classroom as being non-conforming. Every gender queer person is different and might hold a different opinion; this is why it’s so important to add ‘if you feel comfortable sharing.’ ... When asking others to share their identity or story, the best thing you can do for LGBTQ+ students, and perhaps other students of marginalized identities, is to give students maximum opportunity to choose whether they participate. As instructors or as leaders looking to be more inclusive, the most kind thing to generate in your space is the freedom for students to say ‘no, I don’t owe you that information.’”

If a student does choose to share their pronouns, commit to using those pronouns when speaking about or referring to that student. If you have not been told a student’s pronouns, refer to them by name when speaking to or about them, rather than assuming their pronouns and potentially misgendering them. 🗣️



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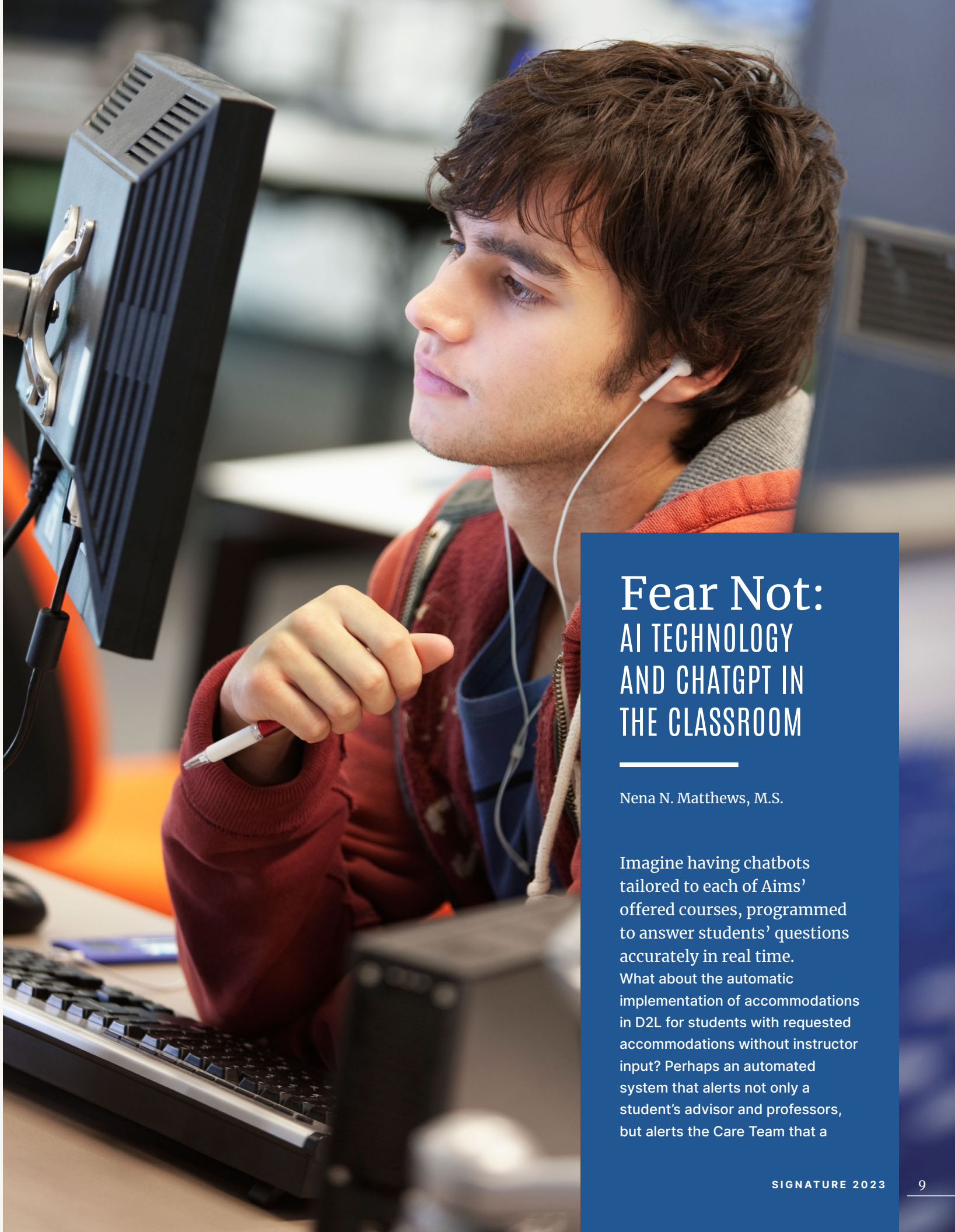
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Fear Not:
AI TECHNOLOGY
AND CHATGPT IN
THE CLASSROOM

Nena N. Matthews, M.S.

Imagine having chatbots tailored to each of Aims’ offered courses, programmed to answer students’ questions accurately in real time. What about the automatic implementation of accommodations in D2L for students with requested accommodations without instructor input? Perhaps an automated system that alerts not only a student’s advisor and professors, but alerts the Care Team that a

student has fallen behind in their classes the second grades get updated? All of this is possible, and already happening, through the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in institutions of higher education.

Artificial Intelligence has the potential to become a key element in the transformation of education, providing new unexplored avenues that can revolutionize the learning experience in college classrooms for both students and instructors. As the field of Artificial Intelligence and education continue to converge, it is crucial to explore how AI can contribute to the increased focus on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). This article dives into the applicability of AI technology in the classroom for students and instructors, examining the potential benefits, challenges and ethical considerations in the context of DEI.

The implementation of AI technology into current learning environments has the opportunity to provide robust, personalized, adaptive, and inclusive education. Its ability to address language barriers, promote accessibility, and tailor itself to individual learning styles can enhance student engagement and success. Not only does the technology have the potential to be transformative to our students but to instructors as well. AI-powered tools that cover plagiarism detection, content accessibility, and student intervention offer an immense opportunity for instructors and student success staff to automate administrative tasks, be more confident in identifying plagiarized work, provide more timely feedback on submitted work, and offer more personalized support to our students.

This article will cover specific examples, research findings, and practical use cases to demonstrate

the potential of AI technology to build a robust, inclusive, and empowering educational environment at Aims. Moreover, it will explore how AI addresses DEI goals as well as its impact on student success.

Understanding Artificial Intelligence (AI)

As Artificial Intelligence continues to grasp society's fears and attention, what it actually is can get lost in the conversation. Many of us associate the term only with the likes of ChatGPT and robots, but the technology goes far beyond science fiction. The concept of AI has formally existed since the 1950s and was coined by Emeritus Stanford Professor John McCarthy who defined it as “the science and engineering of making intelligent machines” (Manning, 2020). While this definition is broad, it encompasses the many facets of the technology in its ever-evolving state. From navigation assistance with apps such as Google Maps and Waze, autocorrect on cellphones to personalized recommendations on streaming services such as Spotify and Netflix, AI technology has already been deeply integrated into our daily lives. AI in its purest form is simply software that is programmed and trained on immense, relevant subject-matter or output specific databases that create simulated intelligent behavior with the ability to learn as it receives new information—emphasis on "simulated."

Like most technologies, it is imperative that one recognize that AI is an evolving field, continuously getting better through the integration of cutting-edge technologies and ongoing research. Today, AI is the worst it will ever be. Consider the first computers released in the early days of the internet compared to the

computing power of the phones we have today, or compare vehicles from the early days to now. The evolution of technology has to start somewhere in order to end up somewhere better. As AI technology improves, it grows its ability to adapt, learn and improve performance of its assigned tasks, be it text generation, auto-correct, or just a more human experience with a customer service chatbot. Its dynamic nature assures that AI technology will continue to be at the center of innovation, producing new possibilities and applications in education, DEI, and beyond.

Through the understanding of the elementary concept of Artificial Intelligence Technology and its applicable uses, one can appreciate the potential to restructure the education sector in innovative and profound ways. In the sections to follow, specific opportunities and benefits that come with the implementation of AI in college classrooms will be explored, focusing on the creation of an inclusive, enhanced, and personalized experience for learners and instructors alike.

Benefits and Opportunities of Artificial Intelligence in College Classrooms

The implementation of Artificial Intelligence in the classroom has numerous documented benefits for both instructor and student. AI (in its current state) has the ability to provide more engaging, personalized, and enhanced learning experiences for students and instructors; increase accessibility; complement individual learning styles; and increase efficiency of instructors, which saves time (Gururaj, 2023).

One of the most transformational and inclusive advantages to having

Artificial Intelligence in the classroom is a personalized learning experience for each student. Educational tools powered with AI technology can analyze the data of a student's performance and produce support specific to the student in order to improve their grades. The technology can also produce instant feedback to students on their submitted work and allow them to identify and rectify mistakes quickly (Shonubi, 2023). These technologies also promote equitable access to information and education. AI has the ability to remove language barriers through real time translation services, thus supporting multilingual students. Additionally, AI-backed tools and platforms exhibit a flexibility for different learning styles and provide alternate forms of information delivery, interactive learning opportunities, and adaptive feedback. AI thus allows for high quality, tailored, more inclusive educational opportunities that supports all students, regardless of their needs, background, or abilities.

This all leads to a positive impact on the learning experience of both faculty and students. For the faculty side of the classroom, AI can automate repetitive tasks like grading quizzes and assignments that will in turn give professors and instructors more time for individualized attention with students, lesson planning, and scholarship.

For students, research reveals that AI-based personalized learning increases student motivation, engagement, and success (Daugherty, et al., 2022). Studies continuously show that adaptive technology provides insight into learners’ needs and preferences, which allows instructors to track student progress more efficiently (Daugherty, et al., 2022). The ability

to track student progress provides efficiencies in time and cost in both teaching and learning (Daugherty, et. al, 2022).

ChatGPT: Empowerment and Plagiarism

The concern at the forefront of the education sector is how seemingly real the responses from platforms like ChatGPT can be and how it can bypass tools like Turnitin. This is by design as tools like ChatGPT are created to mimic human conversations and tasks. First, we need to understand exactly what ChatGPT is.

“These technologies also promote equitable access to information and education. AI has the ability to remove language barriers through real time translation services, thus supporting multilingual students.”

ChatGPT is built on natural language processing (NLP), which is the part of artificial intelligence that focuses on training computers to understand the way that humans write and speak (Diaz, 2022). Generative Pre-Trained Transformer (GPT) is trained on large datasets of text, which allows the system to generate natural language text. The system is built with datasets of real communication between users, and it continues to learn based on daily user feedback. Real-world applications of this type of AI include voice controlled assistance such as Siri and Alexa, customer service chatbots, and the autocomplete feature on smartphones that is trained to predict the next words based on

what the individual user has already typed (Diaz, 2022).

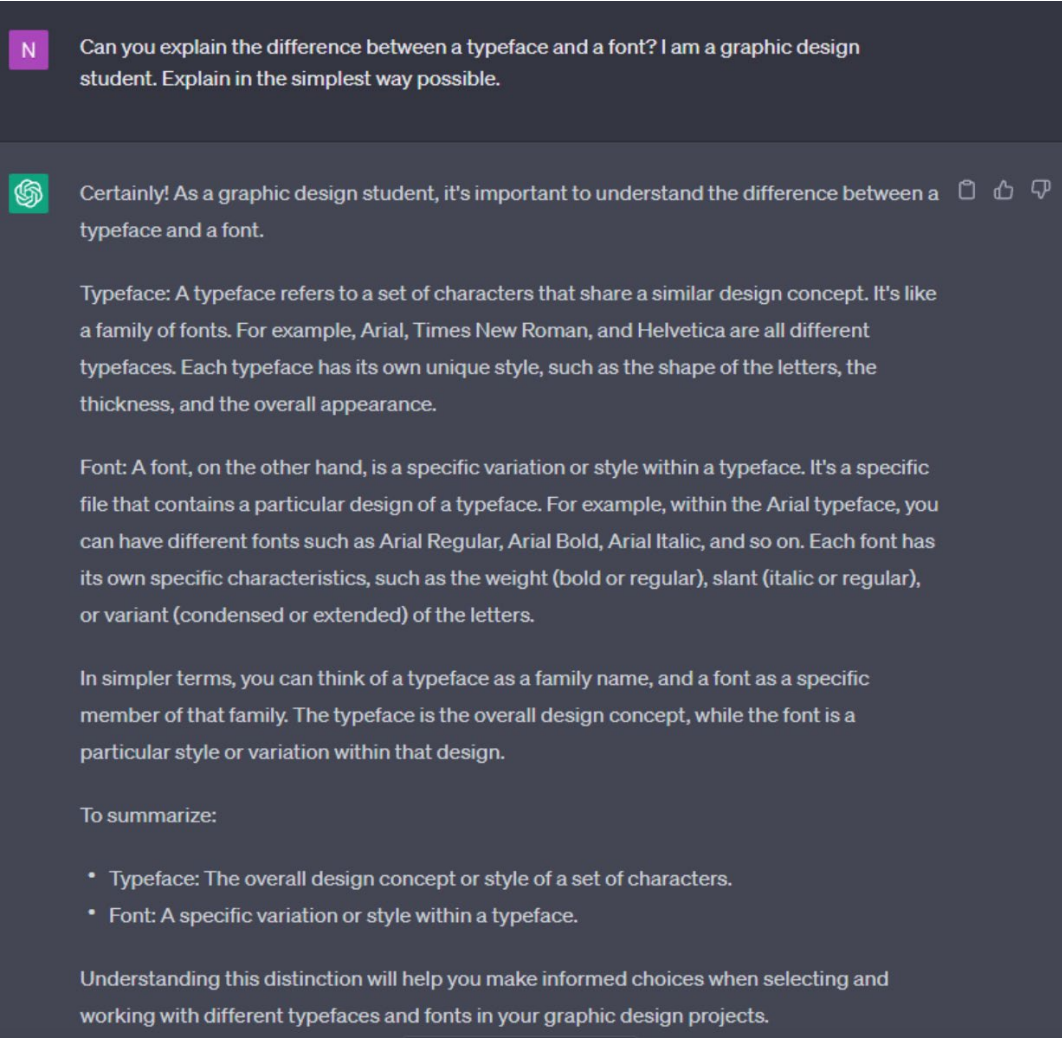
Plagiarism Detection, Turnitin and ChatGPT

Tools like Turnitin have worked to improve their detection of AI generated text. Turnitin boasts that it strives to keep their false positive rate under 1%, for documents with over 20% of AI writing. This would mean that falsely detecting AI-written work would happen for one out of every 100 completely human written documents (Turnitin.com). This can be found by selecting the AI writing indicator in the AI writing report. Currently, only instructors and (depending on license) account administrators are able to see the AI writing through Turnitin, and it is not visible to students (Turnitin, n.d.). This technology is using AI technology from Turnitin's AI Innovation Lab to find AI generated text, essentially fighting fire with fire. It is important to note that the AI landscape is ever evolving. In very recent news, OpenAI, the company responsible for ChatGPT, has implemented a new language (GPT-4) to power ChatGPT (Pocock, 2023). AI detectors like Turnitin's similarity report will need to keep pace with these constant updates and advancements of the technology in order to ensure the integrity of the learning experience for both instructors and students.

Ethical Use Case for ChatGPT: Students

But, it’s not all bad. ChatGPT, in my anecdotal experience, can support both students and faculty while not bringing the walls of academic integrity crumbling down. ChatGPT's ability to give different responses to a question every time the question is posed made me think of using it as a sort of over-personalized search engine. In this scenario, a student is

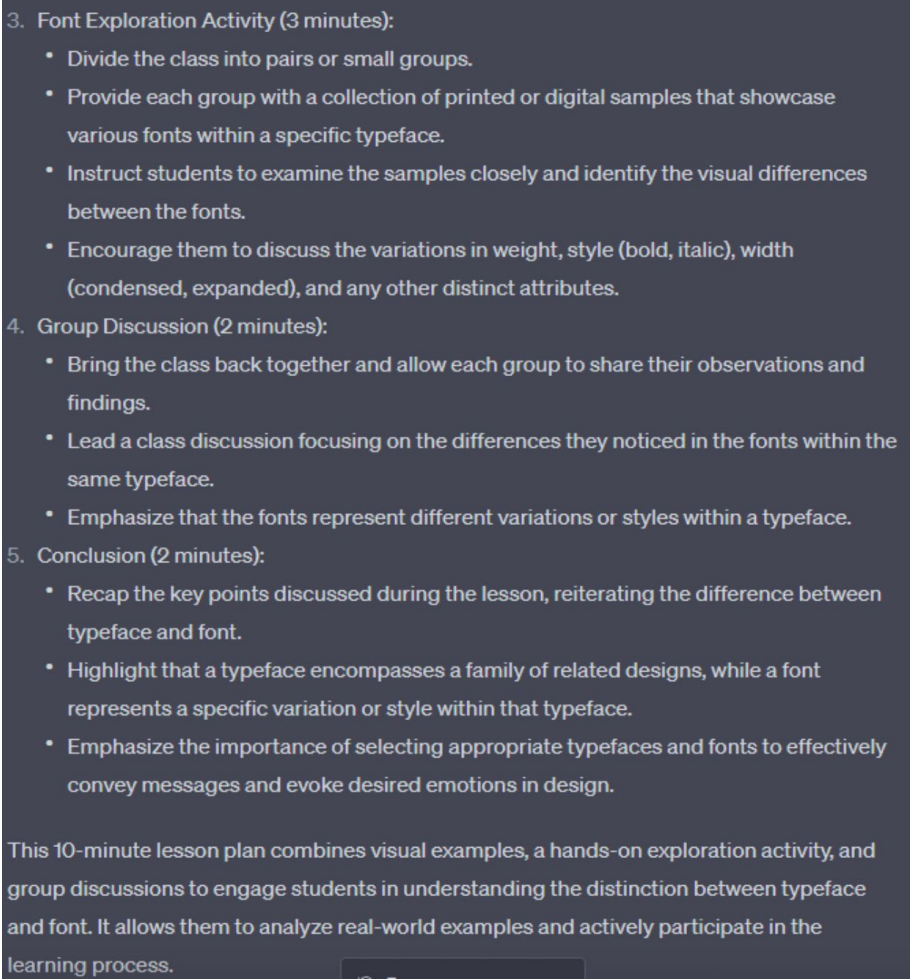
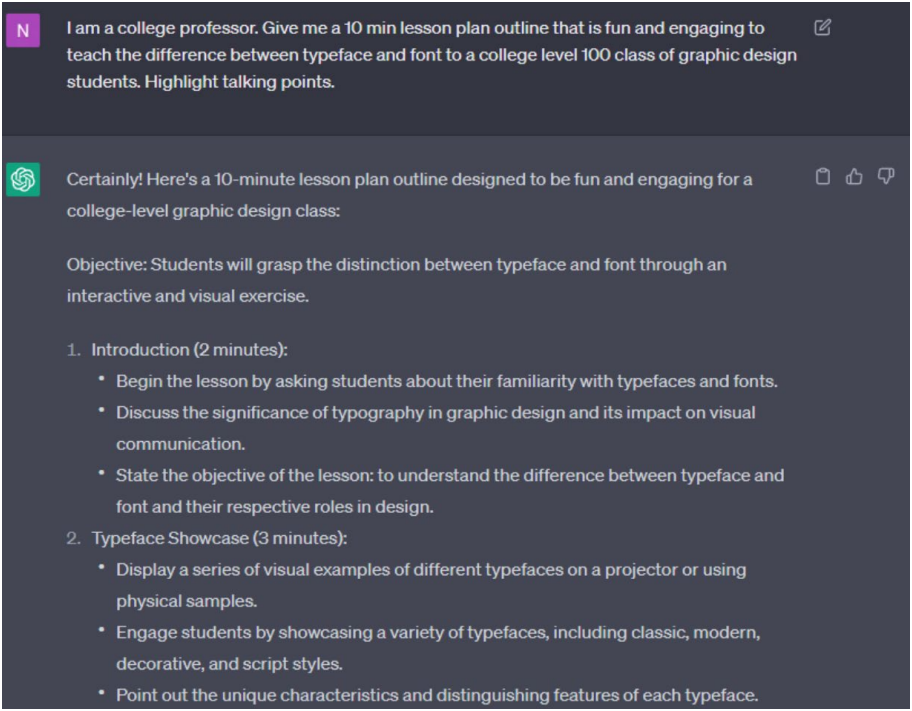
struggling to understand the difference between a typeface and a font, and the importance of it as a graphic design student. Here enters ChatGPT:



In this case, ChatGPT explained the concept in very plain terms, and the results were tailored to the specific student's level of understanding. The student could go further and request examples of each or ask other related questions at their level to deepen their understanding of the concept.

Ethical Use Case for ChatGPT: Instructors

Instructors may not always have the time to design new ways to teach concepts in the classroom, and here is where ChatGPT can help. Keeping with the same topic of typeface and font, the instructor has struggled in the past to make this topic engaging and reaches out to ChatGPT for some ideas:



This can be taken further by instructors asking for 5 different outlines on the topic, including something from current events or even specific time accommodations for students with different needs and disabilities. This not only saves time but provides ideas for improved teaching techniques and for improved equity and inclusion in the classroom for instructors and students. As instructors at Aims strive to put student success first, providing an engaging and inclusive classroom environment is a part of that success that ChatGPT can be used to assist with.

Additionally, some more applications of ChatGPT specifically can be used to summarize articles by copying and pasting the text and asking to compare the relevance to a specific topic. For instance, if we continue with the initial example, say that in addition to the lesson plan and in-class activities, the instructor wants to include an article or a specific excerpt from a book but has 10 to choose from. Instead of taking the time to read through all of them, one can prompt ChatGPT in the same chatbox with something like, "I would like to know how relevant this article is to the topic of typeface vs. font. Give me a rating on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being most relevant. I will submit each article next." This will instruct the platform to not only analyze the document but cross reference its relevance to the topic already being discussed.

Live at Aims: D2L

Aims already has some implementation of the technology in the D2L learning platform and Yuja. According to D2L, instructors are able to see if a student is falling off track with their learning and


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AI detectors like Turnitin's similarity report will need to keep pace with these constant updates and advancements of the technology in order to ensure the integrity of the learning experience for both instructors and students."

engagement with their AI-powered predictive analytics and visual dashboards. Instructors are also able to see week by week trends that help to provide targeted support to students who need it most (D2L, 2022). This technology allows instructors to have a sort of early warning system for students, which in turn helps to keep students on track and helps to improve grades, student retention, student success and graduation rates.

Live at Aims: Yuja

In Yuja, Aims’ dedicated video platform, AI is able to provide transcripts and captioning as well as transcription in multiple languages (Mehler, 2023). These features are becoming more critical to the learning experience of students as not only do they help those who are deaf or hard of hearing, but previous studies have shown that numerous students use these tools as learning aids to help improve comprehension (Mehler, 2023). Anecdotally, in my formative years as a student, I often utilized a digital textbook’s ability to read the text out loud, as I found that hearing it was more cognitively beneficial for my learning experience. This not only saved time for me to scour multiple pages of information, but I understood the information much more clearly. This feature in Yuja not only bridges the gap of equity among the college’s plethora of diverse learners, but it makes it effortless to provide this equity to our students. Mehler reports a 90-95% accuracy rate on live events and on-demand recorded content for translations from speech to text in real time, while Yuja’s Pro Captioning feature provides professional human captioning at 99%+ accuracy. In a time sensitive environment like the classroom, AI technology in this use case cannot be competed with.

Conclusion: Harness the Power of AI ChatGPT and Artificial Intelligence aren't going away anytime soon. Their integration into our daily personal and professional lives has already happened. But, AI is not the enemy. As discussed, even though the technology, like any technological advancement, has the potential to be misused and abused, so does it have the ability to improve and change the way we work. I encourage anyone to venture into the space and see firsthand what AI might offer. It’s as simple as signing up at <https://chat.openai.com/>. Artificial Technology and ChatGPT is our friend and a tool—not our foe. 

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IMPROVING STUDENT RESEARCH THROUGH INFORMATION LITERACY INTERVENTIONS

Dr. DeAnna Laurel

“In the age of the internet, with information readily available at the click of a mouse, it is increasingly difficult to separate credible information from cleverly disguised misinformation. For our students tasked with completing scholarly research, this can be a confusing landscape to navigate.”

Introduction

Here at Aims, I have found that students have widely varying degrees of preparation for college level research. In the Historical Geology course I teach, I have a term-long research assignment in which students create a timeline of the geologic record, highlighting important geologic and evolutionary events along the way. After a couple of semesters assigning this project, I identified student research as a weakness in the quality of projects that were handed in. I designed my action inquiry project to address this issue, with the question “Will information literacy interventions improve the quality of student research for their Historical Geology projects?”

In the age of the internet, with information readily available at the click of a mouse, it is increasingly difficult to separate credible information from cleverly disguised misinformation. For our students tasked with completing scholarly research, this can be a confusing landscape to navigate. Research no longer looks like trips to the library where books and periodicals are deemed credible by nature of being selected for inclusion in the library. With the vast knowledge of the internet available, research increasingly looks like Google searches and wading through myriads of websites that can vary widely in their credibility. Many of our students have not had a class or training in how to find scholarly sources or how to evaluate if sources they have found are credible and reliable. For other students, these skills have gone unused for quite some time.

According to the Association of College and Research Libraries, information literacy is a combined skill set that involves “the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge” (American Library Association, 2015). These are skills that many community college students have never had instruction in or are in need of a refresher. At one community college, researchers found that 60% of English 101 students had never taken a class that would introduce information literacy skills but are being asked to use these skills for research paper assignments (Kim and Dolan, 2015). First-year college students lack information literacy and have difficulty with every step of the research process, including initial research (Kim and Dolan, 2015). A lack of prior knowledge combined with the increasing complexity of research at the college level can “negatively affect the degree to which these students locate, evaluate and incorporate credible sources into their research projects” (Mohess, 2020). The skills gap may be even wider for first generation college students (LeMire et al., 2021) like

those that make up a significant portion of Aims' student population. Addressing information literacy skills in class can help level the playing field and improve research skills for first generation students as well as other historically marginalized and underrepresented groups in higher education. Additional scaffolding and support of hidden or assumed skills like information literacy enables students who may have come to college without these skills to receive an equal opportunity to be successful – all a part of ensuring equitable inclusion in our diverse classrooms at Aims.

Methods/Process

To address the weakness in research quality of the Historical Geology projects, I developed two intervention strategies that centered on different aspects of information literacy. The first intervention was designed to address confidence and skills in finding scholarly sources for the projects. I coordinated with the librarians at Aims to have one of them visit a class and provide an overview of the library services and tools that Kiefer Library offers students. The second intervention focused on evaluating the credibility of sources students found during their research. Even when using library databases for searches, not every source qualifies as a credible and reliable source of information. There is even more potential misinformation to wade through on the wider internet.

To address the reliability of sources, I developed an in-class assignment that had students practice the CRAP Test for source evaluation. This analysis outlines four categories by which to evaluate if a source or website

is credible: currency, reliability, authority, and purpose/point of view (CCConline). Aims English classes also utilize the CRAP (or CRAAP) Test for research analysis, and while some students had heard of it, it didn't seem like something they had applied to scientific research before. The assignment walks students through applying the CRAP Test to five sources of varying credibility found via the internet on the topic of climate change. The assignment provides practice, with real world examples, of evaluating the credibility of sources and determining whether they are appropriate for inclusion in a scholarly research project.

I implemented both of these interventions this semester and compared the quality of student research after the interventions with the quality of research from previous semesters when I did not explicitly address information literacy skills in class. To gauge research quality, I looked at the quantity and proportion of sources found across the class that fell into three categories: peer-reviewed journal articles, other credible sources that may not have been peer-reviewed such as respected museum webpages like the Smithsonian Institute, and sources that are not credible such as blogs and web pages where the information source is dubious or unknown. In addition to comparing the research quality, I gave students a retrospective pre-post survey to gauge their perception of the impact the interventions had on their ability and confidence in conducting college research. I had students evaluate their research comfort level pre- and post- intervention on a scale of not very comfortable/confident, some comfort/confidence, fairly

comfortable/confident, expert/very comfortable/confident. In addition, I collected anonymous student comments on the effectiveness of the two interventions.

Results

The information literacy interventions I implemented in class had a positive impact on the quality of student research. I considered an improvement of quality to be reflected in the number of credible sources (peer-reviewed scholarly sources being of the highest quality) students utilized compared to the number of questionable sources students found. In particular, the proportion of peer-reviewed journal articles used by students increased by 17% and the proportion of credible, if not scholarly, sources increased by 5%, indicating that the major improvement in research quality minimized dubious sources and increased the highest quality sources (Figure 1, blue and orange wedges). The average number of sources found per student remained roughly the same between the current semester and previous semesters (~30 sources this semester, ~28 for previous semesters), but the quality of those sources improved by a fairly large margin.

From the survey of students' own perceptions of their comfort in completing college research, there was also a strong improvement in self-reported research confidence. Pre-intervention, several students reported very low comfort with research, and no students considered themselves research experts. After the intervention, no student had very low comfort and some students considered themselves experts (Figure 2).

Overall, the interventions did increase student confidence in their ability and confidence in doing research along with the improvement in research quality. Some select quotes from students on the interventions supports these conclusions:

- “[The librarian visit] helped me find more and better sources”
- “Fairly comfortable with the librarian visit. [The activity] ... did help me improve on the prior knowledge on evaluating sources.”
- “The librarian and the evaluation activity helped my confidence in doing research, making me seek stuff in the sources to make sure that they are reliable, as well as knowing where to find them”
- “The librarian was very helpful in showing us additional ways to find legitimate sources. I was confident in finding new sources before, but after the librarian came in it helped solidify that confidence and also show us additional methods!”
- “I think you should definitely include these types of overview/visits because not all students know how to do this, and often times do not even know what to ask...For people who know it already, always a good refresher.”
- “I think as students this was very much needed, knowing about the kiefer library and the amount of resources available to us here at aims is key to helping lots of students get research done for all classes offered here. The Crap test was a good time for a reminder of skills we built upon our whole lives”

From the student quotes and survey, it appears nearly all students had some prior knowledge of research, but the activities served as a refresher and built on that prior knowledge to improve

their confidence in their research skills. Nearly every student found both the librarian visit and the source evaluation activity beneficial and worthwhile.

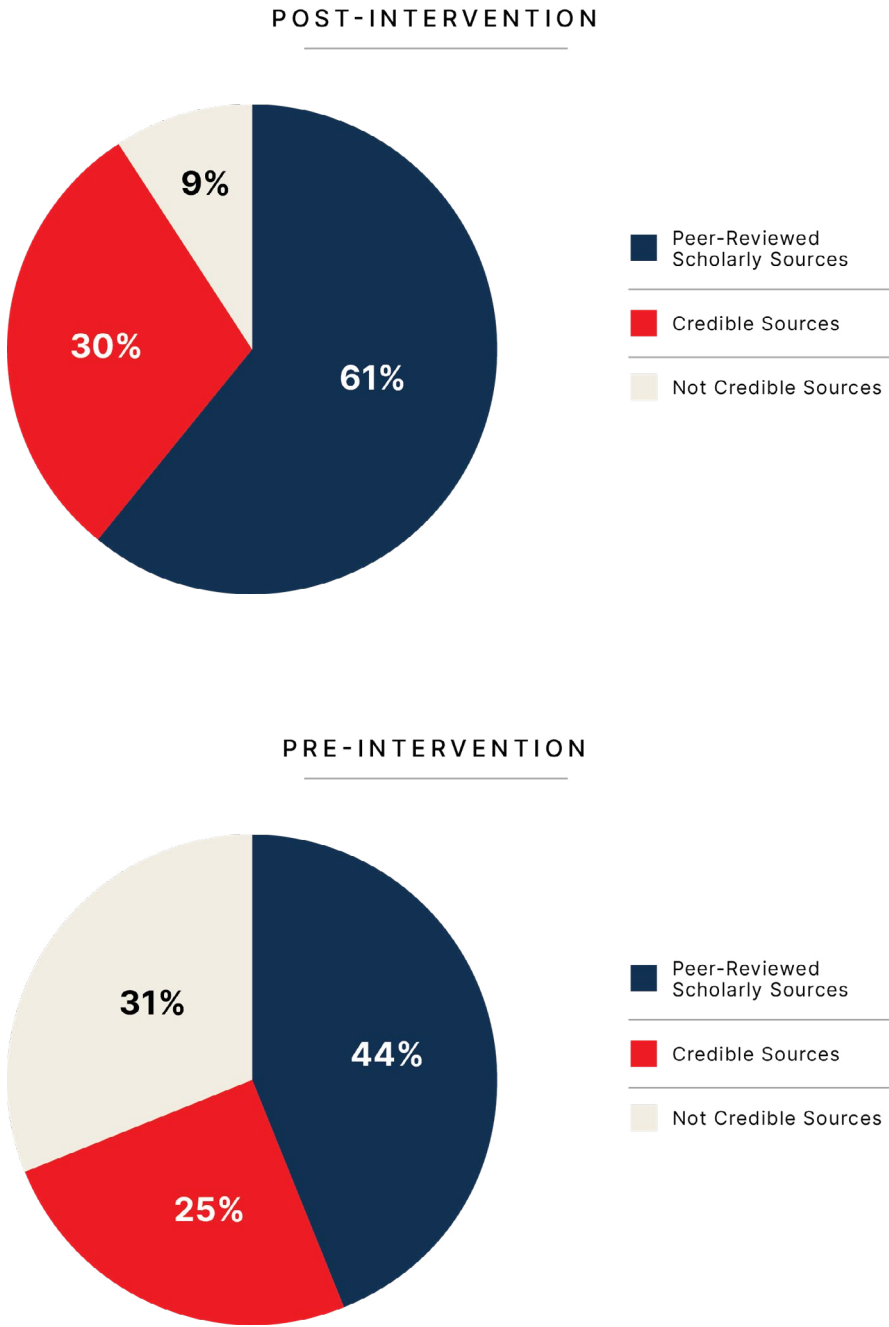


Figure 1. The proportion of research source types that are 1. peer-reviewed scholarly sources (blue), 2. credible, but not peer-reviewed sources (red), and 3. not credible sources (sand) for students post-intervention for information literacy from this semester (top chart), and students pre-intervention from previous semesters (bottom chart).

Think about your comfort/confidence with finding and evaluating research sources.

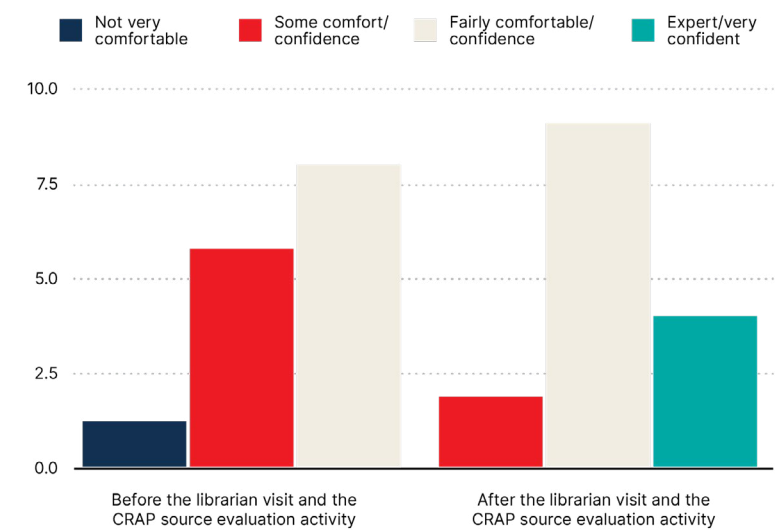


Figure 2. Survey results of students self-reported comfort/confidence with college research pre- and post- information literacy intervention.

Reflection/Recommendations

For classes at Aims that require research for papers or projects, I found that taking class time to introduce or reinforce information literacy skills resulted in improved quality of research by students and improved student confidence in their research skills. With the success of these assignments, I intend to make these a regular part of the Historical Geology term project assignment in the future. In addition, the student survey comments highlighted an additional information literacy concept that would be beneficial to address in future semesters: keywords for searching databases. One student wrote:

“Since the librarian visited and the source evaluation activity happened, I've felt much more comfortable finding sources for my research. I thought I knew how to do research prior to this, but I wasn't as good at finding the correct ones that would work for me. However, I gave the second portion a three because I'm still learning as I go along. I think the part that I struggle with the most is finding the key word to use in order to look up the information that I need.”

This student's experience echoes a common theme in survey results of community college students from Florida and New York addressing their perceptions of their information literacy needs. Latham et al. (2022) found students “recognize the importance of keywords, ... [but] reported having trouble developing effective keywords for searches.” Incorporating strategies for identifying keywords would be a great additional step in supporting my students’ information literacy. With limited class time, it can be difficult to find the time for assignments and activities that do not directly address the learning outcomes, but making time for scaffolded activities that support student success such as addressing information literacy skills has benefits both in class and hopefully for the students in further academic pursuits and outside the classroom as well. \$

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PICTURE BOOK BIOGRAPHY CHOSEN
AS AIMS READ FOR 2023-24

*Child of the Flower-Song People:
Luz Jiménez, Daughter of the Nahua*
by Gloria Amescua

Dr. Eden Welker

***She was Luz Jiménez,
child of the flower-song people,
the powerful Aztec,
who called themselves Nahua —
who lost their land but who did not disappear.***

The Aims Read has been in place since 2018 as a program under the Council for Equity & Inclusion. We choose books offering diverse perspectives to unite and build a more understanding community. Book themes highlight experiences relating to Belonging, Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion issues. This year, the theme centered on Hispanic and Indigenous perspectives relevant to Colorado’s own rich multicultural history. As a Hispanic-Serving Institution, Aims has many students and individuals in our larger community who have family ties to Mexico and its traditions. Our book-selection task force read seven books, two of which were children’s books. Considering a picture story book for the Aims Read was, shall we say, uncharted territory. A picture book’s potential to be shared widely with families within our campus community was a strong draw as was the idea of choosing a shorter, highly accessible story.

Happily, *Child of the Flower-Song People: Luz Jiménez, Daughter of the Nahua* written by Gloria Amescua beautifully fits the theme. The author tells the story of a young Nahua girl learning her native Mexica language (Nahuatl) through storytelling. Luz prepares and

eats traditional foods, learns about local plant uses, and practices skills like spinning and weaving. She is forced to flee her homeland with her mother and siblings as the Mexican Revolution comes to her village's doorstep and takes her father's life. In Mexico City, she encounters many new people, adapts to city life, and finds new ways to make ends meet for her family. She gains the attention of artists working in the city with her "strong features" and is asked to model for them. They see Luz as representing the native "Spirit of Mexico." Anthropologists begin to seek out Luz for her knowledge of Nahuatl language and culture. She becomes both a leader, teacher, and scholar, eventually opening her own school. The book includes a detailed author's note giving more historical context along with a history timeline, glossary, and bibliography.

The book is beautifully illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh in a style inspired by Mixtec codices – pre-Hispanic 13th-15th century pictograph books portraying indigenous history, mythology, and cosmology. His digital collage style echoes the intersectionality Luz herself faces – a mix of colonial influences, tradition, and new technologies. This links to Colorado's own strong history of native and colonial art traditions such as painting, pottery, needlework, weaving, and 20th century public arts, like Chicano Murals <https://www.chicanomuralsofcolorado.com/>.

Luz's identity and social background are both an asset and a liability at different times in her life. At first, Luz is not allowed to attend the local school merely because she is Nahuatl. Later, the Mexican government requires native children to go to school but also to assimilate by wearing different clothing and speaking only Spanish. This is just one of the parallels between early 20th-century Mexican and American history that touches on the treatment of native peoples, mandatory government boarding schools, mixed cultural identities, and the survivance of traditional languages and lifeways. Ute, Arapaho, Cheyenne, Comanche, Apache, Shoshone, Ojibwe (Dakota and Lakota), Pueblo, and Diné native peoples lived and moved across our state's regional landscape. Seven land grants were claimed by Spain in what is now southern Colorado, comprising 8 million acres — including three lying in the San Luis Valley — and were later awarded to the Mexican government (Simmonds, 2020).

This book is easy to read—and reread!—and connects in many ways with the Aims community and regional history. As a Hispanic-Serving Institution, there are many touchstones to resonate with readers (arts, language, traditional foods/nutrition, rural living, family roles, education, and more). Pick up a copy at any campus Learning Commons and consider how you might use the book to spark discussions, creative projects, and community-building across the Aims' campuses during the 2023-24 academic year. If you want to learn more or get involved with the Aims Read, check out our website at <https://www.aims.edu/programs/aims-read>.



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HIDDEN PASSIVITY: AN UNWELCOME GUEST IN TEACHING LABORATORIES

Morgan Bland

Background

As teachers, we are well aware of the benefits of active learning on student engagement, understanding, and inclusivity. We challenge ourselves to better our practice with new active teaching tactics like Think/Pair/Share, Concept Mapping, and One Minute Papers (Cornell University, 2023). Applying these strategies in higher education has produced positive results such as increased written communication skills and creativity, adaptability to new scenarios, and better overall problem-solving skills (Ito & Kawazoe, 2015). A meta-analysis of 225 studies shows that students are 1.5 times more likely to fail an exam if taught with traditional passive teaching methods rather than active ones. Learning analysis, in general, points to a statistically significant increase in student performance when using active (student-centered) learning processes (Freeman et al., 2014, Michael, 2006). Students also enjoy active learning projects since they create comfortable group scenarios and establish rapport with the teacher (Hodges, 2020). These skills can clearly impact student confidence and allow them to feel connected to the material and the teachers. This also greatly benefits first gen, ESL, and returning adult students who make up the majority of community college populations. These strategies produce amazing results while engaging students during lectures, but have you considered the hidden passivity lurking in labs?

STEM courses often pair a lecture with a lab section so that students get hands-on experience in the field. You'd assume, by definition, these labs must be ripe with active learning strategies. However, without a careful lesson plan, students can breeze through a lab merely by reading and regurgitating information. Through my Adult Teaching and Learning (EDU 2601) course, I gathered new strategies to help reduce such passivity. A passive approach limits a student's understanding only to the procedure while not challenging them to understand *why* it works and *how* to apply the information to new, real-world circumstances. This practice

“A passive approach limits a student's understanding only to the procedure while not challenging them to understand *why* it works and *how* to apply the information to new, real-world circumstances.”



is extremely restrictive and often fails to engage and support first gen and ESL students, thus reducing diversity, equity, and inclusivity in the lab environment. I teach a general Microbiology course suffering from this exact problem. As part of my EDU 2601 course, I challenged myself to tackle this issue as an action inquiry project. I noticed my students follow the procedure, ace the lab homework, but struggle to apply their knowledge to a new situation, which destroys their self-confidence. Thus, I began my project with a question: What do students need in order to expand their focus beyond the experiment and to understand the real-world applications?

Addressing the unwelcome passivity meant creating a challenging, student-centered laboratory procedure. The current laboratory exercises follow a laboratory manual: *Microbiology Fundamentals: A Clinical Approach, Third Edition*. The homework does require *some* critical thinking on the results and analysis of the experiment but places no emphasis on forethought. The current lesson misses the opportunity to engage the student, to pique the student’s interest, and to invite inquiry by asking *what* are we doing? *why* are we using the organisms listed? and what results would you *expect* to see? My lab redesign of the lab manual Exercise (Ex. 19) created a story from a simple, real-world scenario that allows the student to place themselves in the role of a researcher and a teacher. The lab starts with the learner eating dinner in a seafood restaurant with Arty, a fictitious laboratory partner. I wanted to use a situation that everyone can connect with despite their different backgrounds. This creates a common ground and set of safe terminology all students can feel comfortable expressing. Arty wonders how seafood can be covered in microorganisms when the ocean is so salty. The learner and Arty head to the lab to start investigating the principles of osmolarity¹ and halophiles². The emphasis is on the students developing a hypothesis, defining limits, and then analyzing their results. These steps mimic the scientific process, so the students can grasp how to apply this to the real world, which greatly benefits returning adult students who are relevancy-based learners. Then the pre- and post-questions associated with the lab include Arty, who voices common misconceptions. This way students can correct

¹Concentration of particles (solute) dissolved in a solution (solvent)
²An organism that can tolerate high salt concentrations

Arty and possibly their own misunderstandings without feeling embarrassed. While performing the research, the students must also *teach* Arty and *explain*, in detail, why his reasoning is flawed. The learning outcomes for this project include generating a more well-rounded understanding of how to perform microbiology research, scaffolding the new information onto the existing simple, real-world scenario, and independently completing and understanding the material with little support needed from the teacher.

Tips for Success

• Make sure to label the different broths as you pick them up.

Organisms (Broth Cultures)

• *Escherichia coli*

• *Staphylococcus aureus*

Materials (per Team of Four)

• 2 1% NaCl broths

• 2 3% NaCl broths

• 2 7% NaCl broths

• 2 11% NaCl broths

• Bunsen burner and striker

• Loop

If your growth was heavy enough, and you used the 0 to +4 reading system, see which salt percentages gave high growth (+3 and +4), moderate or light growth (+2 and +1), or no growth (0). Look at the pattern of growth across the range of salt concentrations. Did the bacteria grow at all salt concentrations or just some? Did the bacteria grow better at some salt concentrations than others?

Original Ex. 19

Ex. 19 Pre-Lab Questions

You and your lab partner Arty are out to dinner at a nice seafood restaurant when Arty strikes up a conversation!

"You know why I love seafood? It's the safest type of meat since they live in such a salty environment. All microbes thrive up and die so my food is always safe!"

Being well-versed in microbiology you know there are plenty of halophilic microbes. How would you explain to Arty that they must be careful with their reasoning on seafood safety?

DELICIOUS

Premium

SEAFOOD

Quality

ALWAYS FRESH

Revised Ex. 19

After completing the lab, the students were allowed to choose between two homework options. Homework Option One was geared towards students who prefer straightforward instruction. Homework Option Two was free-formed, with room for explanations and images for students who prefer to work through the whole situation and pair ideas together. Once the labs were completed, students had to answer quiz questions related to the material, and fill out a survey comparing the lab methods. This allowed me to gather both qualitative and quantitative data on how the lab functioned.

Ex. 19 Homework Option 1 (10 Points)

1. Did the results match your prediction from the pre-lab drawing? Why or why not? (2 pts)

2. Arty says, based on the data, *E. coli* is the halophile. Is Arty correct? Explain why or why not. (2 pts)

3. On average, the ocean has 35 pounds of salt per 1000 pounds of water which makes the ocean’s salinity concentration 3.5%. Arty argues that the ocean is too salty for even halophiles. Explain why he is correct or incorrect using your data. (2 pts)

Homework Option 1

Ex. 19 Homework Option 2 (10 Points)

1. Diagram below what happens to the *E. coli* cell when placed in 11% NaCl broth. Label the NaCl, movement of water, and how the cell looks in the hypertonic solution. (3 pts)

Homework Option 2

Results

I created an online, anonymous survey to 1) determine how my students enjoyed my lab compared to their lab book, 2) determine how well they felt they understood the new lab exercise, and 3) to air any questions or critiques they had about the exercise. Overall, the results show that a majority of students preferred the new lab exercise over the lab book. I received multiple comments stating they enjoyed both the hypothesis creation and the story as it helped them understand the purpose of the lab exercise. Multiple entries also provided favorable comments on the homework options. Below are a few statements from students:

“The pre-lab questions helped me think about the content, and the post lab questions allowed me to apply what I learned from the lab itself.”

“I really liked making a hypothesis before doing the experiment. I also really liked being able to pick which homework questions to do.”

Offering students homework options gave them a chance to prove their comprehension in a way that felt

more comfortable to them. As for critique, the majority of students (n=18) had no critiques or comments suggesting the lab was ineffective or unhelpful. Based on survey data, 86% of students claimed they were very likely to perform this form of lab again and 80% of students found the exercise mostly engaging and/or interesting. As for the students’ confidence in understanding the material, 96% of all respondents stated they mostly understood the material with the majority of the cohort stating they completely understood the material (Graph 1 and 2). Based on the data, students had an overall positive review of the new exercise versus the work they had completed using the lab manual.

In comparison to the lab book exercises, how engaged or interested were you completing this type of lab?
25 responses

Engagement Level	Count	Percentage
1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	5	20%
4	8	32%
5	12	48%

On a scale of 1-5, how well did you understand the lab?
25 responses

Understanding Level	Count	Percentage
1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	1	4%
4	5	20%
5	19	76%

Graph 1 and 2 of survey results with listed questions

In terms of student feedback, the revised lab procedure inspired students, engaged their interest, and built confidence in their work. But, you may be asking, how did the revised procedure impact the students’ graded work? Overall, the students showed an increased understanding of both the homework assignment and

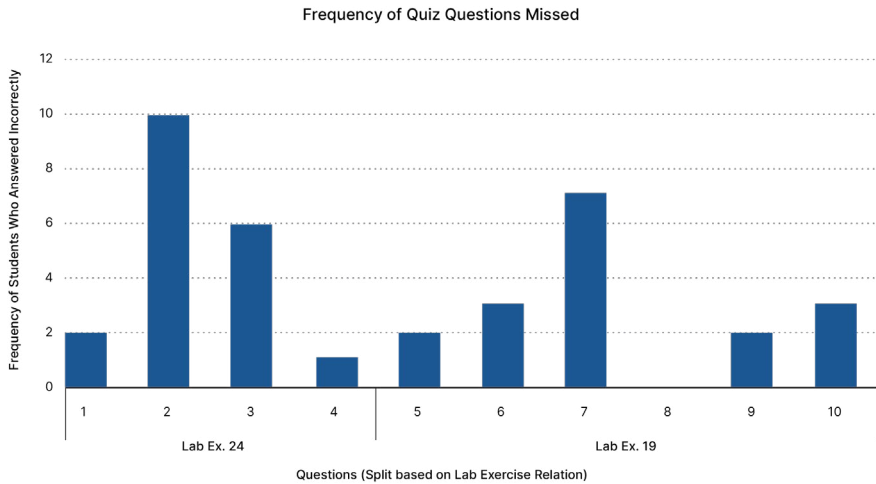
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SIGNATURE 2023

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23

the related quiz on the material. The total average (n= 25) for the 10-point homework assignment—either homework option 1 or option 2—was 8.73 with a standard deviation of 1.01. This means the average grade and the overall range of grades showed proficient levels of completion and understanding as the grades ranged from a 70% to 100% score. The related quiz on the Ex. 19 material included questions on Ex. 24, which was taught following the lab manual and the consistent practice we had done all semester. Since the lab exercises were discussing comparable information, I compared the results using Ex. 24 as a control. Based on the results of the quiz, more students frequently missed questions based on the Ex. 24 lab. The higher the frequency the more likely there was a major misunderstanding of major concepts. Overall, there were more missed questions in the Ex. 24 section versus the Ex. 19 section, with only one major misunderstanding related to Ex. 19. It is of note, based on Bloom’s Taxonomy, that the Ex. 24 questions were lower order, “understand and remember” questions while the Ex. 19 included application and analysis-based questions. Thus, the results indicate that students could answer higher level critical thinking questions more accurately after using the revised Ex. 19 packet.



Bar Graph 1 plotting the frequency of students who answered quiz questions incorrectly versus the question number (1 through 10)

Discussion and Findings

Active learning exercises have proven benefits for student engagement, understanding, and critical thinking abilities. Educators and researchers have studied, in detail, the methods that apply to lectures, but educators must also be aware of how passivity can slip into teaching laboratories. Lab manuals often guide students through the procedure but offer little opportunity for critical thinking. This is the struggle I am facing in my Microbiology lab, and I chose to address this for my EDU 2601 action inquiry project. I created a supplemental story to guide students through the scientific process, including areas for observations and hypothesis formation. This allowed students to take an active role in the experiment as the researcher and as a teacher, helping along the fictitious laboratory student, Arty. The revised exercise also included relevant, real-world applications wrapped in a simple procedure to make every student feel included and comfortable forming a

dialogue. Based on the results, the students not only enjoyed the new layout but felt more confident in their understanding of the material. This understanding was quantifiably captured in their homework and quiz results showing, on average, proficient grades. I plan to continue utilizing this exercise as a tool to help increase interest and understanding in the laboratory, increase equity and inclusivity in the lab environment, and decrease the passivity that plagues higher education laboratories.



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ADJUNCTS TO ADJUNCTS:
Advice for Teaching
Part-Time at Aims

Allison Easley

IN THE SPRING OF 2023, as I conducted research for my sabbatical project about supporting adjunct faculty in my department, I discovered an excellent article from a professional organization in my discipline, the Two-Year College English Association (TYCA). This piece compiles answers from regional TYCA representatives to the questions, “What advice would you give to a newly joined adjunct instructor at your college?” and “If you are currently an adjunct instructor, what was the most helpful advice you received . . . when you were first hired?” (Priebe, 2018, p. 90). For my sabbatical, these answers contributed to my evolving thoughts about how to best foster inclusion and belonging for part-time faculty in my department and beyond. More importantly, they inspired me to ask my part-time colleagues the same question. Their answers, generally applicable and organized thematically below, come from an anonymous survey, and while I cannot properly credit these dozen individuals, I am indebted to their insights. To the new—and not-so-new—adjuncts who comprise over two-thirds of our teaching force at Aims, here is advice from your English department friends.

LL

... at Aims, most of your full- and part-time colleagues are eager to welcome you and answer any questions."

Join and Learn

The Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC) is well-known by seasoned faculty at Aims, so it comes as little surprise that several English adjuncts mentioned it as their primary piece of advice:

- Get involved and sign up for everything FTLC has to offer. It opened up so many doors as well as my mind!
- Get involved with FTLC events immediately; [and] utilize your PD funds.
- Take advantage of all of the trainings offered.
- I recommend they join the mentorship program.
- Join a Professional Learning Community (PLC) group as this is an excellent opportunity to both learn from and get to know other...faculty members.
- Attend FTLC sessions as soon as you are able to help feel more connected to others at the college. At minimum, the FTLC Fridays are a great way to get and stay connected and make a little extra money.

The FTLC provides an orientation for new instructors each semester, but it also offers ongoing support in the form of professional development, coaching, mentoring, funding for travel, and recognitions, such as the part-time Engagement Stipend, which was developed by the Adjunct Faculty Committee. In this way, Aims stands out from many other institutions that do not offer such programs or remuneration (Thirolf & Woods, 2017), and our college demonstrates an “inclusive” rather than “traditional” adjunct model (Guthrie et al., 2019, p. 22).

Belong

Along with the professional development opportunities at Aims, several adjunct faculty recommended making connections and turning campus acquaintances into colleagues:

- Don’t be afraid to get to know other instructors.
- Ask questions and share teaching ideas with other [faculty], both full time and part-time. Find time and opportunity for these kinds of conversations.

- Learn who is in what role early, connect with them, and try to be on campus as much as possible outside of teaching hours to meet others in [your] department.
- Get to know the [faculty] of the department. They are amazing and always helpful!

I would also suggest reaching out to the ambassador, if nothing else to feel connected and part of what is going on. Try to connect with other full-timers as well. Don’t be intimidated by them.

As a reminder, academic departments at Aims are led by chairs or directors who, in turn, can put you in touch with other faculty in your discipline and beyond. Some departments also have an FTLC Ambassador who may reach out to you with professional development opportunities and helpful reminders throughout the semester. While feeling isolated can be a challenge as an adjunct (Thirolf & Woods, 2017), know that at Aims, most of your full- and part-time colleagues are eager to welcome you and answer any questions.

Serve

Already oriented with the FTLC? Paired with an official or unofficial mentor? Chatting about pedagogy in the hallway? The next thread of advice focuses on opportunities for service and involvement at the College:

- Decide how involved you would like to be, and take initiative.
- Look for lucrative professional opportunities that fit within your time budget.
- Set reasonable boundaries for work-life balance; do service that both pays and energizes you.

Aims prides itself in compensating adjunct faculty for their work beyond teaching; the College pays adjuncts for attending meetings, engaging in campus professional development, and serving on committees. Further, while there is a dedicated Adjunct Faculty Committee at Aims, most other committees seek out part-time employee participation as well since conversations and initiatives across the institution benefit from the inclusion of the part-time perspective. And last, though not least, part-time faculty may easily report their hours using an electronic Smartsheet Pay Roster.

Teach!

Finally, and of most importance, is advice related to teaching. In fact, one adjunct offered a single, joyful recommendation to peers: “Teach!” To put this directive in action, another adjunct gave thoughtful advice for approaching the beginning of the term, whether teaching for the first time or just the first time at Aims:

Before the...semester starts, find help and do a rehearsal run (or several) through the first four weeks of class: D2L, grading load, sequencing, etc. Look at your schedule and pretend you’re working with actual students. Have an experienced person...do a debrief on all of the ‘but-what-about’s’ (BWAs) that you discover in doing such a rehearsal. Be sure that you learn how to make grades visible to students and how to organize your assignments with some coherent labeling system that you can clearly communicate to students. Work out strategies for smaller chunks of assessment with bigger assignments/projects, and work out strategies for how to assess those quickly and give feedback. Plan ways to keep from burning yourself out and/or making yourself nuts when students aren’t getting it and/or aren’t doing the work.

Now *there* is advice that all of us in the Aims teaching community can use! Whether our discipline is writing or biology or criminal justice or accounting, deep-seated commitments to teaching, learning, and students bring us to Aims. For those faculty seeking community and connection beyond their classroom, the advice mentioned above is your doorway. As adjunct advocate Herb Childless reminds, “we are...not merely student and teacher, not merely roles in a classroom, not merely vaults of knowledge...We are all people, trying to become something greater than we are, and looking for others who can help” (2019, p. 148). By learning, serving, joining, and conversing while here, you will build relationships with colleagues who contribute to an inclusive and supportive environment among Aims faculty of all ranks and experience levels.

Lastly, thank you to my adjunct colleagues for your ideas and your words, which I have shared throughout this piece. 📍

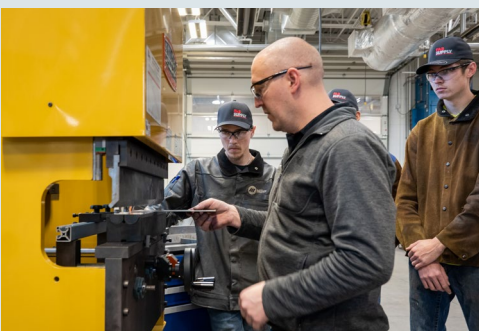
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Get to Know the CDI!

Ashley Becker



The Center for Diversity & Inclusion (CDI), located in Student Commons 120 on the Greeley Campus, acknowledges that students have multiple identities that influence and shape their college experience. We strive to create an intentional community of students, serving as a hub to support students while they navigate the unique experiences historically marginalized or underrepresented communities encounter. The mission of the CDI is to cultivate a welcoming and inclusive environment for students to build community, access resources, and critically engage in social justice topics.

The CDI offers various programming and events to meet student needs and support their development through the shared values of recognition, community, awareness, equity, learning, agency and voice, social justice, and transparency. Some of the programming the CDI hosted within the past year include a collection of identity-specific, leadership, awareness, remembrance, and celebrations such as:



STAY IN TOUCH

Room 120
Student Commons
Greeley Campus
aims.edu/departments/center-diversity-and-inclusion
CDI Instagram: @Aims_cdi
cdi@aims.edu
(970) 378-3646

- National Coming Out Day
- Colorado Free Application Week
- Military Appreciation Week
- Taste of Latinx
- Aims Military Welcome Briefing
- Linguistically Inclusive Game Night
- Black History Month
- Beyond the Birds and the Bees
- Menstrual Equity

- Distress: Because You Are Worth It Mental Health Awareness
- Critical Conversations
- Aims for the Bards Open Mic Night
- CDI Open Houses featuring various resources
- Recognizing Graduates Through Culture and Community Celebration
- Juneteenth Celebration

In addition to the events and programs listed above, the Seeds Leadership Program focuses on professional development and mentorship guidance. The Seeds Leadership Program creates an opportunity for students to develop a deeper understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion as foundational principles for leadership that broaden students' perspectives and inform how they build community, meet life's challenges, and achieve their goals. Throughout the program, students create a career portfolio for future opportunities; receive 1-1 mentorship with an Aims staff or faculty member; attend diversity, equity, and inclusion training; and acquire leadership skills and strategies.

CDI events and programs will change from year to year in order to uphold equitably diverse opportunities, foster holistic student engagement, and promote an array of student identities and experiences. Event goals include, but are not limited to, expanding student engagement, supporting the growth and development of students, critically engaging with others, and reflecting on their unique experiences.

To stay up to date on all the upcoming events throughout the year, stop by Student Commons Room 120 on the Greeley campus, visit the Aims Events Calendar, the CDI Instagram Page, or review Aims Communications (i.e., Weekly, Daily, and email) on a regular basis. Current upcoming events will also be displayed on the CDI website at: <https://www.aims.edu/departments/center-diversity-and-inclusion>.

Listed below are some additional services students can expect when engaging with the CDI.



AFFINITY GROUPS

The CDI provides a space for groups of students linked by shared interests, purpose, or identity to offer support to each other. Affinity groups can represent broad or narrow definitions such as: women, queer, transgender, people of color, military, veterans of color, students with disabilities, and more. The CDI currently provides space for the LGBTQ+ Affinity group for anyone who might identify as being Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans*, and/or Queer. The CDI can help connect students to the proper resources if students are interested in establishing an affinity group.

INTERFAITH PRAYER AND MEDITATION ROOM

The CDI strives to support students' religious beliefs, spirituality, and emotional well-being by sustaining a calming space where students can recenter themselves through prayer, reflection, or meditative practices. This room includes a comfy chair, prayer rugs, a shoe basket, compass, meditative pillows, and a gentle timer.

LACTATION ROOM

The CDI recognizes the significance of breastfeeding/chest feeding and strives to create an environment conducive to the needs of students and faculty. The lactation room is equipped with a comfortable chair, refrigerator, coat/clothing rack, extension cord, and cleaning items.

CONFERENCE AND STUDENT ROOM

Students have access to a 4-seat study room that can also be used as a conference room.

ALL GENDER RESTROOM

This provides a gender neutral space to use within the CDI suite and includes personal hygiene and menstrual products for emergent situations.

COMMUNITY LOUNGE

This provides a space for students to relax between classes, visit, and connect with others. The lounge includes comfortable couches, tables, a 50-inch TV, fireplace, power stations to charge laptops/personal devices, and board games.



FACULTY
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH
AND DEVELOPMENT
CERTIFICATE RECIPIENTS

Ongoing growth and development maintains enthusiasm, improves our teaching practice, and allows us to exchange ideas with and learn from a community of fellow lifelong learners. The Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC) honors faculty commitment to continuous improvement by formally recognizing faculty dedication to teaching, student success, and their field through our Professional Growth and Development Certificate Program.

Congratulations to this year's recipients!

**Focused Professional Growth and Development Certificate:
Dedication to Inclusion and Equity**

This certificate recognizes a faculty member's dedication to inclusion and equity at Aims. This dedication has been demonstrated by recipients completing professional activities by which they have increased their understanding of issues related to inclusion and equity in our community and in our classrooms.

Kristina Ayers
Carlee Carpenter
Allison Easley
Katey Ellis
Heather Fitzpatrick
Kendra Griffin
Carolyn Ikenouye
Nena Matthew
Emma Murray
Sandy Myers
Denise Pearson
Cerisa Reynolds
Moumita Roy
Karen Scarpella
Johanna Scheurman
Tammy Schneider
Elicia Trujillo
Eden Welker

**Focused Professional Growth and Development Certificate:
Teaching Practice and Student Success**

This certificate recognizes a faculty member's dedication to growing their teaching practice to improve student success. This dedication has been demonstrated by recipients completing professional activities by which they have explored pedagogical/andragogical methods, technologies, or approaches; classroom management skills; communication and feedback techniques; instilling a growth mindset; and providing support for their students to increase student success.

Kristina Ayers	Connie Lance	Karen Scarpella
Carol Capuano	DeAnna Laurel	Johanna Scheurman
Carlee Carpenter	Nena Matthew	Tammy Schneider
Taimi Clark	Fana Mulu-Moore	Lea Haverbeck Simon
Casey Clay	Jeffery Moser	Johnny Sowder
Meha Darooka	Emma Murray	Eric Taylor
Lynn Dean	Sandy Myers	Elicia Trujillo
Katey Ellis	Marcus Painter	Eden Welker
Heather Fitzpatrick	Denise Pearson	Christine Wiedeman
Tracy Gary	Cerisa Reynolds	John Withrow
Kendra Griffin	John Reynolds	Charity Woedl
Darlene Haff	Francie Rottini	
Carolyn Ikenouye	Moumita Roy	
Laura Killen-Wing	Rebecca Sailor	

**Focused Professional Growth and Development Certificate:
General Growth and Development**

This certificate recognizes a faculty member's dedication to growth and development as teachers and professionals within their field by completing at least three professional activities from the following categories: Dedication to Inclusion and Equity, Teaching Practice and Student Success, and/or Dedication to Growth Within One's Discipline.

Erin Bley	Leslie Morrison	Shelly Powell
Judith Eaton	Kerry Noble	Ellen Swieter
Lynette Grundvig	Thora Pabst	Katie Teague
Kenneth Howell		Dan Van der Vieren

Focused Professional Growth and Development Certificate: Dedication to Growth Within One's Discipline

This certificate recognizes a faculty member's dedication to their discipline. This dedication will be shown by completing at least three professional activities by which they have explored best teaching practices specific to their field; acquired new knowledge, discoveries, and practices within their discipline; or contributed to their discipline through the creation of presentations, publications, and other works.

Kendra Griffin
Carolyn Ikenouye
Nena Matthew
Jeffery Moser
Fana Mulu-Moore
Sandy Myers
Tammy Schneider
Eric Taylor

**Focused Professional Growth and Development Certificate:
Dedication to Digital Accessibility and Inclusion**

Leslie Morrison



ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

Leslie Morrison

2023 Dean-Selected Full-time Faculty of the Year

Tabatha Lang

2023 Dean-Selected Part-time Faculty of the Year

Lou Cartier

2023 Dean-Selected Part-time Faculty of the Year

Jacob Marshall

2023 Dean-Selected Staff of the Year

Leslie Morrison

2023 Student-Selected Full-time Faculty of the Year

Leah Schaer

2023 Student-Selected Part-time Faculty of the Year

Adam Sanfeliz

2023 Faculty-Selected Full-time Faculty of the Year

Charis Fleshner

2023 Faculty-Selected Part-time Faculty of the Year

Heather Logan

2023 Faculty-Selected Staff of the Year

HSI Team: Rosa Galindo and Fabián García

2023 B. a J.E.D.I. Team

Selena Palomino

2023 B. a J.E.D.I. Staff Member

Kristie Skala

2023 B. a J.E.D.I. Faculty Member

RETIREMENTS

Susen Bell | 23 Years

Accounting Technician II
Accounts Receivable & Cashier's Office

Margaret Carleton | 25 Years

Staff Associate
Automotive & Technology

Kim Joiner | 27 Years

Enrollment Coach
Recruitment

Jennifer Sears | 12 Years

Professor
Nursing

Randy Souther | 37 Years

Director III
EMS, Fire Science & Criminal Justice

DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUE OF THE YEAR

Ernesto Montelongo

Food Services Lead

AARDVARK AWARD

Fred Brown

Director III
Automotive Programs



2023-2024
Part-Time Faculty Engagement
Stipend Recipients

Designed by the Adjunct Faculty Committee, the Part-Time Faculty Engagement Stipend is a compensation system recognizing dedicated service to the college by part-time faculty. This annual stipend is awarded to part-time faculty for attending a minimum of ten hours of professional development and engaging in a minimum of ten hours of service during the previous academic year. Congratulations to this year's recipients — we truly appreciate your dedication to our students and to our community!

Alexis Bowen

Andrew Moline

Carole Merriman

Charis Fleshner

Christina Seely

Connie Lance

David Swieter

Eden Welker

Elizabeth Osborn

Emmy Royse

Erik Warner

Erin Bley

Ezekiel Crago

Gloria Koss

Heather Fitzpatrick

Jacqueline McGuire

Jami Ryba

Jasmine Throckmorton

Jeffery Moser

Joanne San Nicolas

Johanna Scheurman

Karen McCurley-Hardesty

Karen Scarpella

Kellie Sapp

Kendra Griffin

Laura Brashear

Linda Carlson

Lou Cartier

Lucile Lunde

Lynn Dean

Marge Lambeth

Marna Juarez

Robert "Bo" Baird

Ruth Macfarlane

Sandy Myers

Stephanie Work

Sylvia Abbott

Teresa (Terri) Devlin

Thora Pabst

Ty Cronkhite



SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The Fall 2023 theme is Presence.

Deadline for submissions: May 15, 2024. Please submit articles, highlights, teaching tips, or book reviews for the Fall 2024 edition by emailing us at ftlc@aims.edu.

Submission categories are flexible and will include:

- **Articles:** Roughly 1,000-2,000 word pieces that approach a teaching practice, method, innovation, or theory in an in-depth way. These should include peer-reviewed/ scholarly support in APA format.
- **Highlights/News:** Roughly 300-500 words describing unique program, department, campus, or student specific accomplishments, news, awards, etc. Please include high quality pictures if you have them.
- **Teaching Tips:** Roughly 500-1000 words describing a specific teaching practice, method, innovation, or idea. These short features will come with shareable instructions that a teacher in any discipline could follow.
- **Book Reviews:** Roughly 300-500 words reviewing books related to instruction. Many books are available for review from the FLTC library. Reviews should speak to the quality of the selection, relevance to teaching at Aims, and application to specific disciplines. Contact ftlc@aims.edu to reserve a book.

THANK YOU TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Morgan Bland | Ashley Becker |
| Allison Easley | Dr. Cerisa Reynolds |
| Dr. DeAnna Laurel | Nena Matthew |
| Dr. Eden Welker | |



 **Aims**
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

/ *All in.*

GREELEY | LOVELAND | FORT LUPTON | WINDSOR | ONLINE

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