July 2024

FACULTY FINDS

Resources for Early Childhood Education Faculty from the EarlyEdU Technical Assistance (TA) Series

This five-event series from the EarlyEdU Alliance and Camille Catlett continues, providing content, practices, activities, and assignments from wide-ranging national sources to enhance *your* courses. Each session offers 60 minutes of presentation (ideas, options, and examples), followed by 30 minutes for discussion and the exchange of practices and resources. Archived resources on the initial topics are available at the links below:

- **Family and Community Engagement resources**
- **Young Children with Exceptionalities resources**
- **Language and Literacy resources**
- **Child Guidance/Social and Emotional Development resources**
- **STEM resources**

The EarlyEdU team is pleased to share that the faculty TA series will continue in the fall. We are seeking your help in planning that series. Are there topics you want addressed or instructional strategies you want to learn more about? Do you like the combination presentation/discussion format? What day of the week and time of day is most convenient? **Please help us answer these questions by completing a brief survey at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdUg8PzfQRQjm7rT-EGp99g6cCjl6TG0JHBZEkh_MdWJCGhIA/viewform?usp=sharing Survey closes August 12th.**

Use a BAD Example, Then Follow with GREAT Examples of STEM Learning for Infants and Toddlers

Thanks to Beth Peloquin, I have a wonderful new gumdrop to share with you. Please watch this hilarious example of how NOT to teach a group of very young learners about magnets. **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lGvV-ha6x7Y** After watching this clip, please make your way to the STEMIE website. Consider **signing up for the free monthly newsletter** with STEM ideas to support families, professionals, and leaders. Or dive into the deep end and explore some fabulous STEMIE resources:

- **STEM Exploration Cards for Early Intervention**
- **Discovery Play Activities**
- **STEM Storybook Reading for Infants, Toddlers, and Young Children**

Creating Caring, Equitable Communities of Learners

At the June 2024 NAEYC Professional Learning Institute, one session focused on evidence, tools, and strategies for preparing early childhood educators who can create caring, equitable learning communities (**DAP Guideline 1**). The content focused on three topics:

- Ways in which instructors can build caring, equitable communities with their adult learners;
- Ways in which students may be prepared to create caring, equitable communities with families; and
- Ways in which students may be prepared to create caring, equitable environments for young children.

The PowerPoints and a substantial assortment of handouts from this session are available at **https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/dap/creating-community**. At that site, you'll also find three new tools that were created for early childhood instructors:

1) **Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners: A Faculty Reflection Tool** to promote instructor consideration of how they promote community in their courses
2) **Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners: Observation Tool** to familiarize students with the components of DAP Guideline 1. This tool may be used as part of video or live observations
3) **Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners: Planning Tool** to support students in applying what they have learned in practice scenarios or field experiences.

Concerned About How Artificial Intelligence (AI) Is Being Used by Your Students?

Each week brings new stories of AI-generated products being turned in by students. The debate continues about whether AI is a help or a hindrance to students in demonstrating what they've learned. If students are going to use the new technology no matter what, how might instructors support opportunities for students to use AI tools effectively. Here are a couple of examples.

Here are approaches by a faculty member in Canada that were recently featured in an issue of *Teaching.*

- Ask students to write as part of the first class to get a baseline understanding of their writing and thinking styles.
- Talk to students about how generative AI tools work, including when they make errors and show bias.
- Hold back some materials from the course syllabus or online platform so they do not become part of any AI-training set. NOTE: This suggestion is making me think about creating a new set of personas that would not be shared electronically.
- Instead of multiple-choice, brief response, and fill-in-the-blank tests, use assignments in which students' answers are expected to reflect analytical application. For example, require citations from lectures, discussions, the course text, and/or professional frameworks, like DAP.

An EC community college faculty member in California uses this sequence.

1. She shares information about AI tools and what they can and can't do.
2. She then asks students to compile a list of key words and concepts from course materials on a specific topic. Key words may be drawn from multiple sources including the course text, videos, readings, presentations, and discussions, as specified by the instructor. Students then turn in their key words and concepts for feedback.
3. Next, she asks students to use the revised key words and concepts to generate a draft paper on the specific topic using AI. That paper is turned in for documentation.
4. Then, she asks students to edit their draft paper for accuracy and authenticity. This means that they create an updated version of their paper that corrects errors and reflects alignment with and documentation of the required sources (2).

This approach allows students to experience the assets, opportunities, and shortcomings of AI.

Have you come up with a way to navigate AI usage in your courses that you'd like to share? Write to me at **camille.catlett@unc.edu** and your example may appear in a future *Faculty Finds*.

New Resources for Rethinking the Theorists

A presentation by Brandi Slider, Ingrid Everett, and Camille Catlett at the NAEYC Professional Learning Institute in June yielded new resources for instructors to use in both courses and presentations. The session offered new insights about how to connect the identities of college students and other adult learners with diverse theorists whose work also elevates identity. The handout, PowerPoints, and resources from the presentation are all available at **https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Y69ZXeeFEALBCJvJM628ynaqfydKQ9J4**

Here's an example from the session.

- Early in a course, ask students to identify the book in which they first saw themselves or their family reflected. NOTE: Do not be surprised if some students have never seen a family like theirs in a book. Tenderly, ask students who are willing to share the book they identified. Use the examples to support a conversation about the importance of identity in the materials we use to support identity in the materials they use with children and families. Extend the learning with connections to bell hooks, Paolo Freire, Gloria Ladson Billings, Rudine Sims Bishop, and others. Specific examples and resources are included in the handout at the website above.

Repurposing Research: Activities and Assignments That Build on New Evidence

New research and evidence-based practices can inspire rich opportunities for faculty members. Each of the examples below includes a new evidence-based resource, along with ideas for how faulty members might use each resource.

- Jennifer Stone's **recent doctoral dissertation** examined the 60 books provided by **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.** That study revealed that the books do not represent diversity of ability, favorably represent housing diversity, and conflate race and gender. Ms. Stone has presented her findings to leaders of the Dollywood Foundation.

  Repurposing this research:
  Familiarize students with the importance of authentic representation in children's books (e.g., *Get to Know Rudine Sims Bishop* in the **March issue of *Faculty Finds***). Then, ask students to imagine that they have the opportunity to recommend new books to the Dollywood Foundation that would authentically represent areas that were found to be lacking. As part of the assignment, consider asking students to use a **checklist** to evaluate and justify their choices.

- The front page of the New York Times on July 1, 2024 included an article entitled **Pandemic-Era Babies Are Behind in Basic Skills.** The article shared recent findings about academic and developmental lags. Delays in social-emotional development were particularly prominent.

  Repurposing this research:
  After reading this article and several of the source materials, ask students to develop an "opportunity sheet" for educators. The opportunity sheet would be a formatted chart or flyer that identifies naturally occurring opportunities across the toddler/preschool/2nd grade (NOTE: pick one) day to address one of the areas in which children delayed. Stress that the opportunities need to be easy to implement for educators and enjoyable for children. For example, what are the naturally occurring opportunities to support fine motor development or social-emotional development in the daily routines in a preschool program? Require students to identify the sources from which they drew their ideas. NOTE: Consider how students could share the opportunity sheets with community partners.

- ***A New Vision for High-Quality Preschool Curriculum*** examines preschool curriculum quality for children from ages three to five, with special attention to the needs of Black and Latine children, multilingual learners, children with disabilities, and children experiencing poverty in the United States. The report articulates a vision for high-quality preschool curricula for all children, grounded in equity and justice-oriented principles from inception to implementation and evaluation.

  Repurposing this research:
  After reviewing the report, ask students to summarize key points that they could share with preschool administrators and educators about specific actions they could take based on the research findings. This could be presented in a variety of formats, e.g., a bulleted handout or a PowerPoint with references.

  Chapter 6 offers specific insights about how to operationalize curricula to support children with disabilities. After reading the chapter, ask students to summarize the key features of curricula that support children with disabilities. Having done that, ask students to use the key features to develop a self-reflection tool for preschool educators and administrators to use to discover ways in which those features are/aren't present. An additional assignment could call upon students to identify resources from the report and other sources that might support educators in improving how they include and support children with disabilities. NOTE: The same kind of assignments could be used in conjunction with **Chapter 7: High-Quality Early Childhood Curriculum for Multilingual Learners.**

Resources from Cultivate Learning/EarlyEdU

Enroll Today! Trauma Informed Care Learning Experience for Faculty

It's not too late to enroll in the 2024 **Cultivate Learning Trauma Informed Care Learning Experience for Faculty**! Enrollment closes September 3, 2024; the session ends December 2024.

This **Trauma Informed Care (TIC) Learning Experience for Faculty** is for Alliance member faculty who:

- are new to embedding TIC into their courses
- want to teach exclusively about trauma but lack resources and support
- are experienced teaching about TIC

The TIC materials apply to diverse populations and courses. Both new and practiced faculty can use them. Many experiences and perspectives can expand and deepen small group conversations. Not an Alliance member yet? **Join today**! Questions? Contact **info@earlyedualliance.org**.

Diversity! Equity! Inclusion! DEI Course Audit Toolkit Now Available

The **DEI Audit Toolkit** helps you evaluate and improve your course to reflect the diverse population of the early learning profession. Visit our **DEI Course Audit Toolkit** webpage and request your own template of the toolkit. This free resource is available to all educators upholding the ideals of diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education. To learn more about the DEI Audit Toolkit and how you can employ it in your teaching, listen to the March **Highlight Webinar**.

Cultivate Learning's Showing Up: A Trauma Informed Podcast

Showing Up addresses trauma informed care practices for Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) programs. The latest episode, *Nature-based Experiences*, is now available via audio and transcription.

The Early Childhood Policy Network Invites You To:

- Visit **The ECPIHE website** (Early Childhood Policy in Institutions of Higher Education) to explore resources (course syllabi, modules), articles, and briefs pertaining to early childhood policy.
- Join **Policy Connect** to collaborate and share ideas with early childhood policymakers, faculty, researchers, advocates, and other experts in the field.
- Follow ECPIHE on **LinkedIn** and **X** (formerly known as Twitter) to stay current on resources, events, and career opportunities in early childhood policy.

A Few Words About Faculty Finds

Faculty Finds is distributed six times per year. Each issue focuses on early childhood content resources, instructional resources, and information about the effective preparation of early childhood and early childhood special education professionals. All resources are free. Sign up to receive Faculty Finds every other month at **http://eepurl.com/ggHi3j**

Faculty Finds is compiled by Camille Catlett with support from the EarlyEdU Alliance. All or part of Faculty Finds may be freely shared or copied. Past issues of **Faculty Finds** are archived at **https://earlyedualliance.org/discover-resources**
To suggest resources/topics or provide feedback, please contact Camille (**camille.catlett@unc.edu**).