

SFHE 2025 FM CFP Responses

Blayne Harcey

Autoethnographic Inquiry: Pedagogical Approaches to Advocacy at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU)

In this presentation I will discuss my use of autoethnography as a method in general education critical humanities courses at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in the 2024-25 academic year. As a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Focused Inquiry I have explored pedagogical approaches that elevate narrative and promote student advocacy in my classroom. I have found that the process of autoethnographic inquiry and writing has yielded positive, and frequently unexpected, outcomes with regard to elevating student voices in the classroom and beyond. This presentation will explore assignment design and course objectives as pedagogical tools to engage students in critical thinking, self-reflection, and identity formation in a public institution that serves a majority first-generation student body from a variety of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Autoethnography as a method and craft provides students with an opportunity to advocate for themselves in the classroom and seek out opportunities to grow at VCU and beyond. My hope is that this presentation will prompt a conversation amongst SFHE conference attendees regarding methods of inquiry and pedagogical strategies for better supporting students in the classroom.

Christina Romero

“Multilanguaging through Doll Play: Friends Forever Club & STEM Practices & Play in the Classroom”

Using Artifactual Literacies (Cooper, 2023; Pahl & Rowsell, 2010) and artifacts as connections for remembering and meaning making (Ivanova, 2014), we contextualize the notion of using popular culture artifacts (dolls) to extend learner engagement in K-12 classrooms. We look intently at the Friends Forever Club and especially turn our attention to four Friends Forever Club dolls and their connected STEM disciplines: Iha (marine biology), Viera (mineralogy & geology), Alanis (computer engineering), and Carina (astronomy). In this presentation, we focus on literacies in the contexts of storyteller roles, career roles, writer roles, and other roles that emerge in the classroom activities we have created and discuss, with language practices of talking, speaking, listening, and writing in the classroom. We focus on doll play and how dolls, as artifacts, mediate learning spaces in the classroom.

Debrielle Jacques

Title: What's Love Got to Do With It?: Strategies Towards Reimagining Student Success and Advocating for Student Well-Being **Abstract:** This interactive panel discussion welcomes those interested in designing and implementing research and educational programs that advocate for students by promoting student success, a culture of care, engagement, and accountability. We hope that together, we can utilize our interdisciplinary expertise to facilitate dynamic, equitable curricular and cocurricular experiences for all our students. **250 Word Max Proposal:** As we navigate contemporary challenges in higher education (student mental health, pandemic-related learning loss, gaps in student support, digital transformation, etc.), many questions emerge: What does student success and support look like now? How do we provide authentic, meaningful, and engaging learning experiences? How do we reimagine learning environments and supportive infrastructure (e.g., inclusive advising) to provide students and research team members with psychologically safe, accessible, and inclusive opportunities to investigate and solve complex problems while advocating for student wellbeing and success? How can we intentionally utilize dynamic academic roles (e.g., instructor, advisor, mentor, supervisor) to more holistically support and advocate for student success and well-being as their needs and surrounding environments evolve? An interdisciplinary STEM and social science panel will share integrative pedagogies, strategies, and experiences implementing inclusive, student-oriented mentoring, advising, teaching, and program development. Attendees will engage with panelists and each other in Q&A and smallgroup discussion about paradigm shifts and emerging trends in academia's focus on student well-being, and discuss the salience of diverse advocacy strategies in bolstering students' learning experiences, professional development, and academic success. Attendees will:

- Compare the fluid roles of instructor, advisor, mentor—overlaps, parallels, distinctions.
- Reflect on emerging themes and shifts in instruction, advising, and mentoring roles—like changing priorities, evolving expectations, and the balance of roles.
- Examine how conceptions of student well-being and success have evolved and how individual, department, and institutional advocacy can further shape these conceptions and the future of higher education.

Celeste Campos-Costillo

Conducting Systematic and Scoping Reviews with Undergraduate Students: Student Reflections and Best Practices Conducting systematic and scoping reviews has several benefits for undergraduate students, including enhancing their information literacy, engaging in experiential learning, and providing them with research experience. Debates abound, however, about how effective reviews can be when conducted by undergraduate students and whether student learning experiences are tied to the effectiveness of the review. Missing from the literature are guidelines for conducting such reviews. To address this gap, the presentation describes how a scoping review was conducted with 11 undergraduate students enrolled in an honors research seminar about researching autistic adolescents. Students were in their first-

and second-year and majored in psychology, engineering, statistics, and biomedical sciences. As a step toward conducting the scoping review, the students developed a protocol for the review that they also submitted to a peer-reviewed interdisciplinary journal. Throughout the review process, students completed reflections, which were analyzed thematically to identify their concerns and perceived benefits from participating in the review, as well as obtain feedback on the procedures. The presentation describes best practices for conducting systematic and scoping reviews to enhance students' learning environment, which include consideration of the needs of neurodiverse students, the use of generative artificial intelligence to perform tasks, and mentorship by graduate students. I also discuss instances in which doing so may be ideal, such as in community-engaged learning courses, honors seminars, online courses, and when researchers are concerned about funding data collection (which is becoming more common in the current landscape).

Stephanie L. Downie

Associate Teaching Professor Arizona State University 455 N 3rd Street, Suite 383 Phoenix, 85004 shummer@asu.edu 602.319.7381 Their Voice and Choice: Empowering Students through the ProMod Structure For many first-year writing courses, opportunities for small group work are often limited to peer workshops or breakout groups for short discussions. While these brief gatherings encourage interaction in the classroom, the level of engagement during these activities relies greatly upon a student's interest in the topic at hand. Instructors of first-year writing are tasked with a great deal of responsibility; we need to prepare students to think critically, research and document responsibly, and communicate clearly and persuasively. Additionally, college administrators rely on us to aid in student retention. It's a big ask. My solution to the engagement hurdle was to design a course allowing students to achieve the required outcomes, foster the Eight Habits of Mind—particularly persistence and adaptability—and strengthen small group communication and project management skills, all while focusing on personally meaningful community or global issues. These projects allow students to advocate for their concerns through the creative public products targeting specific audiences. For this presentation, I will provide a brief history of ASU's ProMod pilot program and how I leveraged my training and experience to design an innovative, highly effective course emphasizing student voice and choice. I will also provide an outline of the ENG 102 ProMod process and examples of group public products that reflect students' engagement and pride in their work.

Trina Runner

Believe Them: Opportunities for Neurodiverse Students to Feel Seen and Safe

Abstract: A plan to offer opportunities for neurodiverse students to share their experiences, concerns, and challenges in safe settings with students and teachers in order to improve academics and social skills as well as address loneliness associated with Generation Z neurodiverse students.

Author Information: Trina Runner is neurodivergent, creative, and curious. She has spent most of her career as a teacher, recognizing that mental health is even more important than content when dealing with teens and young adults. She has created suicide prevention programs for local youth to receive free weekly group sessions with counselors, have meetings and activities weekly with others who are facing challenges, and has developed concrete ways to help neurodivergent students with their struggles. Now a Project Director for a grant addressing sexual assault and domestic violence, she continues to research the best ways to help students feel seen and heard. Trina is a writer, an activist, and passionate about elevating neurodiverse students to a place where they thrive.

Overview:

While most disabilities are addressed via IEPs or 504s, many neurodiverse individuals fall through the cracks and are limited to accommodations that simply offer more time or a reader for materials. Neurodiversity is complex and educational institutions rarely take the time to truly listen to these students, recognize how they process information differently, or give them opportunities to use their perceived “quirks” to achieve beyond the basic level. As a member of the neurodiverse population, I can attest to shrinking in order not to be shamed, ridiculed, or being made to feel guilty because schools are not set up for us. I have spent many years interviewing students, researching data, noting my own experiences, and finding hacks that would help me thrive. I would like to share those with the higher education community at this conference so that students don’t feel that they need to be isolated in order to be tolerated. The recent spike in loneliness among Generation Z is very concerning and the neurodiverse students rank highly among those who spend much of their time alone. This workshop will include resources for higher education personnel to explore to help these students navigate the often confusing, overwhelming, and challenging world around them so that they can improve social and academic skills and be marketable for after college.

Mary Shuttlesworth

Career readiness initiatives, such as coursework and capstone experiences, help prepare undergraduates for post-graduate success (Ciarocco, 2018; Moore & Thaller, 2023). Campus career services support professional development, though engagement and effectiveness vary (Davis et al., 2022). Experiential learning, including internships, strengthens career preparation by linking classroom content to real-world contexts (Spanjaard et al., 2018). However, little research examines students' perceptions of faculty involvement in career development. While career readiness programs are well studied, faculty's role in shaping career trajectories remains unclear. Understanding this influence can help develop strategies to enhance career support. This mixed methods study aimed to: (1) determine whether students' career development and confidence in decision-making predict their likelihood of seeking faculty or advisor input; and (2) explore how students describe faculty's role in career development.

Undergraduate students ($N = 57$) completed two validated surveys on their career development. Preliminary results suggest that students' level of career development and career decision-making self-efficacy significantly predict their likelihood of consulting a professor in their major about career plans [$F(4, 52) = 3.04, p = .02$; $F(5, 51) = 3.84, p = .005$] but do not significantly predict likelihood of consulting an academic advisor [$F(4, 52) = 1.85, p = .13$; $F(5, 51) = 1.67, p = .16$]. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of survey participants ($n = 11$) and analyzed for themes to contextualize survey results. Initial analysis of interview data suggests that students are selective about which faculty members they seek for career advice and express a desire for more opportunities to engage with faculty in career planning discussions.