

Society for the Future of Higher Education

April 2025

Hello Friends,

Can you believe it is already April? Where does the time go?

The Board of Directors met at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green over Presidents Day weekend – in fact, the first day of our gathering was Valentine's Day! It was wonderful to reconnect and spend time strategically planning for the 2025 conference and the future of SFHE. Exciting developments are on the way.

We are updating the strategic plan and its associated priorities for the next years. Two of our main objectives are to grow membership and curate membership experiences. Please keep an eye on your email for online meetups and updates about the newly revamped Mary Jo Small Fellowship Program. This mentoring program will pair SFHE faculty mentors with early career mentees to explore higher education, professional life, and tenure and promotion. The experience will culminate with in-person mentoring at the 2025 conference.

This year, our annual conference returns to Pittsburgh, PA on the campus of La Roche University during July 10-13, 2025. The theme of the conference is "Advocate: The Classroom & Beyond." Conference information is available online. I urge you to register to attend.

As you know, conferences are a time of reconnection, networking, and professional engagement. You don't want to miss out! Our keynote speaker is the highly regarded Dr. Timothy San Pedro, an Associate Professor of Critical Studies in Education: Race, Justice, and Equity at The Ohio State University. A storyteller at heart, Dr. San Pedro's scholarship focuses on the intricate link between motivation, engagement, and identity construction to curricula and pedagogical practices that re-center content and conversations upon Indigenous histories, knowledge, and literacies. San Pedro's latest publication, *Protecting the Promise*, features a collection of short stories told in collaboration with five Native families that speaks to the everyday aspects of Indigenous educational resurgence rooted in the intergenerational learning that occurs between mothers and their children.

As we head into a busy season for so many of you, please be gentle with yourself and those you love. I wish you a productive spring, no matter what stage of life you are experiencing – early career, tenured, retired, or somewhere in between.



Advocate: The Classroom and Beyond

Join us for our

2025 Summer Conference

July 10-13, 2025

La Roche University, Pittsburgh, PA

Registration open at www.sfhe.org!

2025 Conference



Featured Speaker
Friday, July 17, 7:00 - 8:30 PM
Dr. Timothy San Pedro
The Ohio State University

“Embodying Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy in a Higher Education Classroom: Reconnecting Mind and Body”

Timothy San Pedro is an associate professor of Multicultural and Equity Studies in the Department of Teaching and Learning at The University of Ohio. San Pedro’s scholarship focuses on the intricate link between motivation, engagement, and identity construction to curricula and pedagogical practices that re-focus content and conversations upon and conversations upon Indigenous histories, perspectives, and literacies.

His co-authored chapter with Valerie Kinloch in Humanizing Research titled “The Space between Listening and Story-ing: Foundations for Projects in Humanization” examines how trust, vulnerabilities, and the development of relationships (or story-ing) provide spaces to engage in transformative resistances and praxis in academic, community, and research settings with participants. Indigenous histories, perspectives, and literacies.

Morning Groups

AI in Ed.: Exploring AI in the Classroom and Beyond
Christina Romero - civanova@iu.edu, Blayne Harcey - harceybk@vcu.edu

How we engage advancements in machine learning will shape the future of education and, invariably, society as whole, making this one of the prevailing issues of our time. In this working group we will foster conversations about the merits and limitations of generative AI in the classroom and beyond. How is AI currently impacting higher education and where might we be headed? How are students engaging with AI and how do educators confront the challenges of AI-generated content? This working group will approach these and many other questions engaging multiple perspectives from across the spectrum of AI integration.

This co-led working group will explore the history, usefulness, and ethical stakes of Large Language Model (LLM) text-to-text generative AI platforms such as ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot, as well as Diffusion Model (DM) text-to-image generators such as Adobe Firefly. Come prepared to discuss and participate in interactive AI prompting exercises.

Friday
AI, What?: Understanding Generative AI
Saturday
Let’s Get Ethical: Thinking Through the Stakes of AI
Sunday
Stories from the Field: Interactive Case Studies

2025 Conference

Historical and Novel Fiction
Nancy Cunningham - nancycunningh@gmail.com

This summer, the group will discuss three books that offer family sagas of rapidly changing patterns of familial, social and communal engagement and dislocation. The first is Elizabeth Jane Howard’s **The Light Years**, the first volume in her Cazalet Chronicle quintet, set in 1937 in Sussex, England, a series much touted by Hilary Mantel. It captures the daily life of the upper class and those who serve them; more globally, as one reader put it, it depicts a society sleepwalking its way into disaster. The second reading is Claire Messud’s **This Strange Eventful History**, spanning seven decades from 1940-2010 and focusing on “a family born on the wrong side of history.” Yiyun Li calls it “the **War and Peace** of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries [and] **The Long View** of a family migrating through many borders, worlds, and eras.” The third book is Colm Toibin’s **Long Island**, a novel that like the others mentioned above focuses on family bonds and betrayals, dislocation and what constitutes home. Various members of the group will lead informal discussions, providing background on the authors and the book’s critical reception; our discussions are wide-ranging and highlight the relevance of the novels’ themes and social analysis to our understanding of advocacy for values that foster self-individuation and community well-being.

Writing Retreat
Dorothy Hurlburt - dhurlburt1@gmail.com

Do you wish for a good block of time to develop or even complete a writing project? This seminar is for those who want to write and to create in an encouraging environment. Come with a specific project in mind, or in progress, whether it is a scholarly article, a set of poems, a memoir, novel, mixed-media artifact, or something else. During these sessions we will begin by sharing and exchanging ideas about our projects, then we will get down to writing. We will tailor the meeting according to the needs of participants with spontaneous opportunities for discussion, collaboration, or feedback. At the end of the morning the group will reconvene to talk about how it’s going. We would be happy to hear from people ahead of time about projects you are working on or how you would like to use the time.

We’d love to hear your ideas for a Morning Group!
There’s always room for something new!

Registration is open! Register Now at www.sfhe.org

Mary Jo Small Fellows

At the 2025 SFHE conference, we will pioneer a revised version of our long-running Mary Jo Small Fellowship program. Mary Jo Small, a long time SFHE member, endowed a fund for new scholars with a focus on mentorship programming. This fellowship provides this support while also encouraging new scholars to learn more about the SFHE. The MJS fellowship is part of SFHE's broader mission of being an incubator and advocate for ideas, strategies, and pedagogies to lead higher education to a more inclusive, just, and equitable future.

In addition to providing selected MJS Fellows with the usual benefits of the Fellowship (e.g. all-expense-paid participation in the annual conference), we would also like to offer a more robust opportunity for MJS Fellows to receive personalized mentorship from existing SFHE members in the months leading up to the conference. These mentorship relationships would provide MJS Fellows with an opportunity to make an early connection to someone within the organization and to learn from the vast wisdom that our members have accrued from decades of experience within higher education and/or as an advocate of postsecondary educa-



Eric Breault graduated with a Ph.D. in Religious Studies from Arizona State University in 2022. His research examines the modern intersections of lived Catholicism and Occultism in the use of material objects appropriated within the category of "folk magic." He teaches HUM 101: Introduction to Global Humanities, REL 150: Religions of the World, REL 151: What is Religion?, and FYS 121 They Call it Witchcraft at Northern Arizona University

Akua Cosby is a doctoral candidate in the EdD Learning and Organizational Change program at Baylor University in Waco, TX. Her research explores the lived experiences of high-achieving Black women executives and how they situate their intersectionality and well-being against the domains of power in corporate leadership. Committed to advancing equity and fostering inclusive organizational cultures, Akua's work underscores the critical importance of psychological safety and belonging, particularly for individuals from historically marginalized communities.



Kristin Harmon, is a dedicated college professor at Ivy Tech Community College within the School of Health Sciences. She holds a Master's degree in Public Health and a Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Administration. She is currently a doctoral candidate pursuing a Doctorate of Health Sciences (DHSc), further deepening her expertise and commitment to the field.

With a strong passion for health education, she is committed to raising awareness and empowering communities through knowledge about critical public health concerns. Her work centers around advocacy and health equity, with a particular focus on improving outcomes for women of color. She is especially passionate about addressing maternal mortality and is devoted to creating pathways for better access, care, and education to reduce disparities in maternal health.

Through both academic instruction and community engagement, Kristin strives to be a catalyst for change in public health and healthcare systems.



Kelsey Norton is an Assistant Professor in the Dental Hygiene Department at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. She teaches didactically and clinically, serves as the Community Service Director, and is a Preceptor at the UAMS 12th Street Health and Wellness Center for the dental hygiene program. Outside of work, Kelsey is working towards her Doctorate in Learning, Leadership, and Organization Change at Baylor University. Kelsey loves spending time with her husband and bulldog-cooking, watching sports, and traveling!

Yonca Cuzbuk Uzundag is a Religious Studies PhD candidate at Arizona State University. While I'm originally from Istanbul, Turkey, I'm currently based in Brooklyn, NY, where I live with my husband and two cats.

I received my undergraduate degree from St. Francis College, where I majored in History, and received my Master's in American History from the University of North Dakota in 2018.

My research deals with religiosity in Muslim immigrant communities and examines the intersection of modernity, secularity, everyday religion, and identity. As a first-generation college graduate and an English-as-a-second-language speaker, I'm especially interested in inclusivity and diversity in my teaching outlook and am constantly looking for ways to make knowledge and knowledge production accessible to underprivileged and excluded groups while maintaining high standards.



Dr. Tyesia Williams is a Licensed Professional Counselor currently serving as a Program Consultant/Project Director for the Louisiana Department of Safety and Corrections. Dr. Williams has had the opportunity to work on multiple innovative and groundbreaking initiatives geared toward educating and providing resources to our prison population. She hopes to continue to expand her professional development through collaborative experiences and research with aspirations to inspire, influence, and necessitate hope and change in her field.

Fellows Updates

Carol Ochs' book *Charged to Create: A Spiritual Artists Manual* is available in Kindle or paperback from Amazon. You can purchase it [here](#).

Valerie Field has recently presented on Native American Law and Tribal Court Practice in Minnesota,

Lynore Banchoff has two recent books of poetry, some of which was shared at Society Poetry Circle gatherings. *Past Tense and Parts of Speech on Beech Street* can be found [here](#), on Amazon. *More than a Backward Glance* is available through lynorebanchoffpoetry@gmail.com. Society member, Nancy Corson Carter, wrote a blurb for it.

You can read **Reynold Feldman's** blog, *Reynold's Rap*, at www.reynoldruslan.com. You can also read about his books there.

An extended edition of **Elizabeth Minnich's** book *The Evil of Banality: On the Life and Death Importance of Thinking*, has been published recently. Her acclaimed book can be purchased at most booksellers.

William Richter and his wife Linda celebrated their 60th Anniversary in August. He's still enjoying walking, tennis, writing, and reading.

Alvin Burstein

March 31, 1931 - June 27, 2023

Dr. Alvin George Burstein died unexpectedly June 27, 2023 while returning home from his morning walk in Lowes Ferry, near Knoxville, TN. A much-loved man of great intellect and achievement, he was a Professor Emeritus of the University of Tennessee where he headed the clinical psychology training program from 1982-2000.

During his career he served in leadership positions on the faculties of several universities throughout the country: the University of Michigan, the University of Illinois, the University of Chicago, the University of Texas Health Science Center, and finally as Professor and Head, Dept. of Psychology, Southeastern Louisiana University. Colleagues have described him as "a kind soul who threw himself into his work with joy and dedication." Others have said that he was passionate about academia and fiercely advocated for students, as a mentor to colleagues and students alike.

Alvin was elected to Society membership in 1994.

His full obituary can be found [here](#).

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