The Love of Teaching Conference

Every Voice Matters: Storytelling for All Disciplines

Co-sponsored by
The Office of E-Learning, Innovation, and Teaching
Excellence (ELITE) & The Institute for Part-Time Faculty
Engagement & Support (IPTFES)

Saturday, April 26, 2025
9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
via Zoom

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The Office of E-Learning, Innovation, and Teaching Excellence

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Office of E-Learning, Innovation, and Teaching Excellence (ELITE), I welcome you to the 2025 Love of Teaching Conference.

This year's theme, "Every Voice Matters: Storytelling for All Disciplines," reminds us that storytelling is not just a teaching strategy—it's a powerful tool that connects, inspires, and transforms learning across every field. Whether you teach STEM, the humanities, or career-focused subjects, stories shape how we engage our students and how they, in turn, engage with the world.

At ELITE, we are deeply committed to advancing inclusive, student-centered teaching that empowers every learner. The Love of Teaching Conference celebrates that commitment. It is a space to reflect on your teaching practice, connect with colleagues, and explore creative approaches that help every student thrive.

As we explore the role of storytelling in the classroom, I encourage you to consider how your stories—and your students'—can deepen understanding, foster community, and create a sense of belonging. The sessions you'll attend today are designed to spark ideas, highlight innovative practices, and celebrate the passion and purpose that define great teaching.

Thank you for joining us. I hope this conference reignites your love of teaching and reinforces your incredible impact on your students' lives and learning journeys.

Warm regards,

Paul D. Miller, Ed.D.
ELITE Professional Development Director

A Welcome Message from The Institute for Part-Time Faculty Engagement & Support (IPTFES)

The Love of Teaching Conference
Faculty can explore instructional topics in depth, fostering meaningful exchanges of intellectual ideas among presenters and attendees. This collaborative spirit makes the conference truly unique. On behalf of the IPTFES, thank you for prioritizing your personal and professional development. We hope this experience inspires your passion for teaching even further.

About IPTFES
Now in its tenth year, the Institute provides resources, guidance, and recognition for Montgomery College's part-time faculty and counseling community, highlighting their vital contributions to student success. Key functions include:

- Orientation and professional development for part-time faculty.
- Assistance with technical and facility-related concerns impacting teaching and counseling.
- Offering resource centers for work, student meetings, and faculty collaboration.
- Supporting departments in engaging with part-time faculty to advance institutional goals.
- Providing information on rank advancement, appointments, and career opportunities.
- Ensuring physical and virtual support for part-time faculty during day and evening classes.

Please get involved by visiting our website
https://info.montgomerycollege.edu/resources/part-time-faculty

Professor Erik Swanson
IPTFES Director

About The Love of Teaching Conference

Held each spring on the last Saturday in April, the Love of Teaching Conference is a signature event that honors and celebrates the teaching profession. First envisioned by Instructional Designer Dr. Carol Moore, the inaugural conference took place in 2016—and its popularity has grown steadily ever since.

The conference highlights the passion, impact, and transformative power of teaching. It offers educators a meaningful space to connect, exchange insights, and reflect on their purpose—reigniting the spark that makes teaching so deeply fulfilling.

The conference celebrates the art, dedication, and transformative power of being an unforgettable and impactful educator. It honors the passion that drives teaching and educators' profound influence on their students' lives. This conference brings educators together to network, share insights, engage in meaningful discussions, and learn from one another. It's a space to celebrate the profession, reflect on why we chose to teach, and reignite the spark that makes teaching so rewarding.

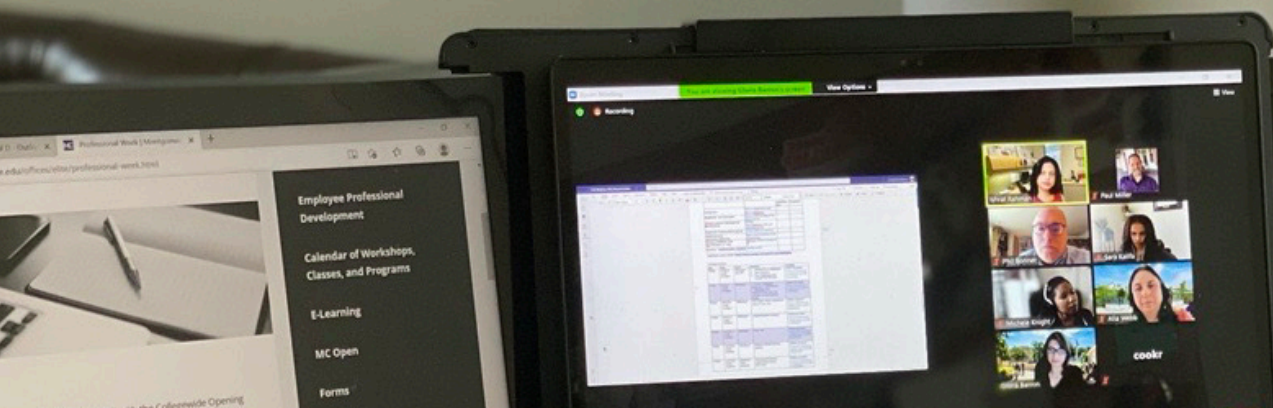"Every Voice Matters: Storytelling for All Disciplines"

Each year, the Love of Teaching Conference features a central theme. This year's theme is storytelling and how educators across all disciplines can use it as a powerful tool in the classroom.

Storytelling is more than a teaching strategy—it's a transformative tool that can spark curiosity, deepen understanding, and create inclusive, engaging learning environments across all disciplines. This dynamic half-day virtual conference will explore the power of storytelling to enhance instruction in STEM, the humanities, and career-focused fields.

Love of Teaching Planning Committee

Ms. Gloria Barron, Instructional Designer, ELITE
Dr. Angela Lanier, Instructional Designer, ELITE
Ms. Elizabeth Feldman, Part-Time Faculty, IPTFES
Mr. Nghi Nguyen, Web Specialist, ELITE

Schedule

Master of Ceremonies: Dr. Paul Miller

9:00-9:15 a.m.
Ice Breaker Activity and Sign-in

9:15-9:25 a.m.
Welcome Remarks, Dr. Paul Miller

9:25-9:30 a.m.
Dr. Michael Mills

9:30-10:30 a.m.
Keynote Speaker: Matthew Decker
Associate Professor, English & Smithsonian Faculty Fellowship Co-Coordinator

1O:30-10:45 a.m.
Break

10:45-11:15 a.m.
Breakout Session 1

11:15-11:30 a.m.
Team Reports

11:30 a.m.-Noon
Breakout Session 2

Noon-12:15 p.m.
Teams Reports

12:15-12:20 p.m.
Conference Wrap-up, Erik Swanson

12:20-12:30 p.m.
Closing Remarks

About Our Keynote Speaker: Matthew Decker, Associate Professor, English & Smithsonian Faculty Fellowship Co-Coordinator

Professor Matthew Decker is a passionate educator, faculty leader, and innovator in digital storytelling. For more than a decade, he has shaped transformative learning experiences for students and colleagues at Montgomery College's Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus, where he serves as an Associate Professor of English.

A strong advocate for professional development, Professor Decker has coauthored award-winning grants, designed collegewide programs, and facilitated high-impact workshops through his work with ELITE and the Academy for Teaching Transformation. He co-founded the Digital Storytelling Internship, which has received two Innovation Grants. Through this initiative, he has helped mentor more than 30 interns and earned international recognition as a scholar and practitioner in the field.

His leadership also includes his role in the Smithsonian Faculty Fellowship, where he supports faculty in integrating museum resources into their curriculum through museum visit pedagogy and even virtual resources, such as the Smithsonian Learning Lab. Professor Decker holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from St. Mary's College of Maryland and a Master of Arts from American University.

In his keynote for the 2025 Love of Teaching Conference, Professor Decker will examine the transformative potential of storytelling as a tool for connection, creativity, and inclusive pedagogy. With storytelling as the unifying thread of his work, he continues to inspire educators to foster deeper engagement and elevate diverse voices in the learning environment.

Websites and Publications Resources

- Smithsonian Faculty Fellowship Program
- Fostering Opportunity in a Time of Uncertainty: Taking the Digital Storytelling Internship Virtual
- Discovering Pathways for Digital Storytelling in Your Instruction

Discussion - Breakout 1
Theme: Engagement

Consider one of your courses where students often find concepts difficult because of the material's complexity, abstract ideas, or difficulty connecting the topic to their lives. These challenges may have led to low engagement, limited participation, or reduced performance.

Based on today's keynote and group discussion, reflect with your group on how storytelling could be used to support deeper understanding, increase student motivation, and make the material more accessible.

Group Discussion Prompts:

1. Jot down a list of approximately three difficult concepts from the course. Narrow to one you would like to address today.
2. Using the Student-Teacher, Multiple Means, or other Universal Design-inspired idea from today's keynote, brainstorm a new approach to helping your students unpack this concept.
3. Consider how you might guide or encourage your students to take the lead in exploring the concept and sharing their learning with you or their peers.

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Discussion - Breakout 2
Activity: Storytelling as a Tool for Learning and Engagement

During this breakout session, you will explore how storytelling can be used for learning and engagement courses. Use the provided SBCO framework—Strengths, Benefits, Challenges, and Obstacles—to your assigned group to guide your discussion.

The goal is to reflect on both the possibilities and the practicalities storytelling and explore meaningful strategies you can apply in your teaching.

What to do:

- Use the provided SBCO Worksheet to take notes and guide your conversation.
- Reflect on your own teaching experiences and insights from the keynote.
- Record your key points in the "Group Notes" column of the worksheet.
- Select one team member to report back during the full group debrief.

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About the HUB

Explore The Hub: Your Gateway to Teaching Resources and Growth

The Hub is a virtual platform that ELITE team developed. It serves as a centralized space where faculty and staff can access various instructional resources, professional development opportunities, and tools designed to enhance teaching and learning.

Why Should Educators Visit The Hub?

The Hub supports educators in meaningful, practical ways, offering inspiration, connection, and tools to grow professionally. Whether you are refining your teaching practices, integrating new technologies, or exploring leadership development, The Hub provides:

- Ready-to-use teaching resources
- Opportunities for ongoing professional development and training
- Resources for instructional innovation and student engagement
- Leadership tools and strategies for academic success
- A space to stay connected with peers and ELITE-led initiatives

The Hub provides educators with a space to reflect, grow, and reignite their passion for teaching within a supportive, collaborative environment.

https://mcblogs.montgomerycollege.edu/thehub/

About the Universal Design Center (UDC)

The Universal Design Center (UDC) at Montgomery College promotes a culture of inclusion and accessibility. Through the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), the UDC supports faculty, staff, and students in creating learning environments that are accessible, equitable, and welcoming to all.

Our Focus Areas:

- Universal Design for Learning: Supporting inclusive teaching practices for diverse learners
- Digital Accessibility: Ensuring all digital materials are accessible to everyone

Want to learn more or get support?

Visit the UDL website or contact ELITE to explore resources, training, and consultation services.

https://mcblogs.montgomerycollege.edu/udc/

Our mission is to cultivate a culture of inclusion and accessibility at MC. Through training, consultations, and an online knowledge base all centered on Universal Design principles, we help promote individual empowerment and social justice as well as regulatory and ethical compliance.

We developed a research-based model for promoting accessibility that integrates best practices in three main areas:

Universal Design (UD)

Guidelines for ensuring that all physical spaces are created or retrofitted to be accessible and usable by everyone, regardless of ability

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

An educational framework that provides flexible teaching methods to accommodate diverse learning styles

Digital Accessibility

Strategies to ensure that online content, tools, and resources are designed and optimized to be usable by everyone.