AUM | AUBURN UNIVERSITY AT MONTGOMERY

OUT OF THE BOX

Teaching and Learning Workshop

14-15 May 2025 • Taylor Center

Conference Overview

Wednesday, May 14

Time	Taylor 221	Taylor 222	Taylor 223	Taylor 230
11:30 AM				Poster Set-up
12:00 – 1 PM				Lunch
1:00 – 1:30 PM	Casey Giordano	Krystal Niel		
1:40 – 2:10 PM	Jennifer Go Thaddeus Hoffman	Jason Shifferd		
2:20 – 2:50 PM	Katherine Irwin	Tamela Thomas		
3:00 – 4:00 PM				Poster Session
4:00 – 5:00 PM				Keynote: Kevin King
5:00 PM				Dinner

Thursday, May 15

Time	Taylor 221	Taylor 222	Taylor 223	Taylor 230
8:00 AM				Continental Breakfast
8:20 – 9:20 AM				Keynote: Nathan King
9:30 – 10:00 AM	Beziat, Grilliot, Breitman, & Ward	Heather Adams		
10:10 – 10:40 AM	Jennifer Bullock	Michelle Aitken	Lacey Sloan	
10:50 – 11:20 AM	Eric Sterling	Arms-Chavez, Carol, Bodily, & Giordano		
11:30 – 12:00 PM	Shirley Toland-Dix	Nikhil Ghodke		
12:00 PM				Lunch
12:30 – 1:30 PM				Keynote: Joshua Caulkins

Kevin King

Kevin King is a community-rooted leader, creative strategist, and cultural organizer based in Montgomery, Alabama. He's the founder and Executive Director of The King's Canvas, a gallery and studio that creates space and opportunity for independent artists to grow, thrive, and share their gifts. Since 2018, he has led the transformation of a once-vacant building in the Washington Park neighborhood into a vibrant, welcoming creative hub—where art drives connection, entrepreneurship, and community renewal.

Kevin's work is grounded in creative placemaking—an approach that puts artists at the center of community development. He uses arts and culture to reimagine public spaces, celebrate local heritage, strengthen social connections, and stimulate economic activity. His projects have helped spark neighborhood pride, support local entrepreneurs, and attract new business investment into historically overlooked areas.

In 2024, Kevin led the grand opening of The King's Canvas' new gallery on Oak Street, located on the historic Selma-to-Montgomery March Trail. The space stands as both a platform for creative expression and a symbol of what's possible when community, vision, and collaboration come together.

Through his consulting firm, Creative Community Strategies, LLC, Kevin partners with cities, nonprofits, and cultural districts across the U.S. to design arts-based strategies for revitalization. From cultural district planning to artist development and neighborhood activation, he brings a unique ability to bridge vision and implementation—always centering people, place, and purpose.

At the core of his work is a drive to inspire communities to see what's possible—sparking imagination, amplifying creativity, and building momentum toward a more vibrant and equitable future.

Rooted in Place: How Washington Park Is Shaping Its Future Through Creativity

What happens when creativity becomes part of a neighborhood's strategy for renewal?

In this session, you'll hear how creative placemaking is showing up in real time in Washington Park, a west side Montgomery neighborhood rich in history, culture, and resilience. Kevin King, founder of The King's Canvas Gallery and Studio and Creative Community Strategies, LLC, shares how art, culture, and consistent community engagement are helping reimagine what's possible. From transforming vacant spaces to opening a permanent gallery and studio, this work is creating a blueprint for how creativity can drive long-term impact in place.

Nathan King

Nathan King is Professor of Philosophy and Edward B. Lindaman Endowed Chair at Whitworth University (Spokane, WA). His research interests include the theory of knowledge, the philosophy of education, and business ethics. He has published papers in such venues as *Philosophical Quarterly*, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, and *Synthese*. He is author of *The Excellent Mind: Intellectual Virtues for Everyday Life* (Oxford University Press, 2021).

Making Good Minds: Educating for Intellectual Virtue

This talk explores the motivation and means for educating for virtues of intellectual character, such as curiosity, intellectual carefulness, humility, and open-mindedness. An education focused on these traits takes us beyond teaching for job preparation, knowledge, and skills. After considering why universities should educate for intellectual virtues, we will consider how they can do so.

Joshua Caulkins

Joshua Caulkins is the Director of Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) in Prescott, Arizona. He runs faculty support programs at ERAU that encompass all aspects of professional development for instruction, including new faculty initiatives, the scholarship of teaching and learning, students-as-partners, and reflective and evidence-based teaching practices. Prior to his work at Embry-Riddle, Joshua has supported several large public universities in various roles, all within the field of teaching and learning (e.g. Arizona State University, the University of Rhode Island, and the University of British Columbia, Vancouver). Joshua's degrees are in the geosciences and his areas of expertise include geoscience education, STEM education, course and assessment redesign, gateway course transformation, and the professional development of faculty and administrators seeking to improve student engagement, learning, and retention. Joshua is the recipient of a 2024 Menges Award, a national research award for innovation in the field of educational development.

Prioritizing Wellness in Academia:
How to be of Service to Ourselves and Others

Our sense of well-being significantly shapes how we view ourselves and our work in academia. If we neglect self-care and fail to prioritize our needs, we risk setting unrealistic expectations and overcommitting to others. This session offers an opportunity to reflect on our well-being, set healthy boundaries, and prevent burnout—for ourselves, our students, our colleagues, and loved ones. Balancing teaching, research, service, and personal commitments is challenging, but regular reflection helps ensure our work aligns with our personal and professional values. Through discussion and self-exploration, we will gain insights and practical strategies to integrate well-being into our daily lives, fostering a healthier, more sustainable approach to our work in academia.

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Making Powerful Points, Not Powerpoints:
Student Podcasts as an Active Learning Assessment

Wednesday, 1 - 1:30 PM   Casey Giordano   Taylor 221

This workshop explores student podcasts as an interactive, collaborative, and skill-building course assessment tool. By working in small groups to create a shared podcast, students develop essential skills in synthesizing complex research and communicating it in an accessible way. This approach fosters critical thinking, teamwork, and creativity while reinforcing course concepts. After briefly hearing about the presenter's journey implementing a podcast assignment in a Master's level science course, participants will brainstorm in small groups how they can incorporate a podcast in their own courses. All course materials, instructions, podcast resources, and an example podcast the presenter created for their students will be shared with attendees.

Feedback Reimagined: Mastering Asynchronous Feedback Techniques

Wednesday, 1 - 1:30 PM   Krystal Niel   Taylor 222

Feedback Reimagined is an engaging presentation on enhancing scholar learning through audio/video feedback, a powerful teaching method that fosters real-time engagement and personalized learning. We will explore the advantages and challenges of both asynchronous and synchronous feedback formats, discuss strategies for providing authentic and constructive feedback aligned with assignment objectives, and highlight how this approach can humanize and enrich the online and hybrid learning experience. Discover practical tools and techniques to effectively integrate audio/video feedback into your teaching practice, transforming the way you connect with and support your scholars.

Building Confidence through Connection
in First-Year Experience Seminars

Wednesday, 1:40 - 2:10 PM   Jennifer Go
Thaddeus Hoffman   Taylor 221

In UNIV 1000, our focus isn't just on academics. We facilitate learning environments that foster collaborative learning and curiosity, introducing our students to a variety of learning experiences and opportunities to connect with the AUM campus, their peers, and university and community professionals. By presenting learning as a collaborative act between the student, their peers, faculty and staff, and their communities, we encourage students to step out of their comfort zones and find the courage to try, whether that's joining a club or organization, utilizing campus resources, asking for help, or just doing

something new. In this session, we discuss how we design lessons and activities with connection in mind, encouraging students to build their confidence, develop trust, and establish a rapport to form meaningful relationships both in and outside of the classroom.

Crayons in College? Using Play to Reinforce Learning Goals

Wednesday, 1:40 - 2:10 PM   Jason Shifferd   Taylor 222

Throughout the summer 2024 HHMI program, I worked on different in-class activities to help students practice and reinforce course learning outcomes and scaffold toward their major assignments. In my master's thesis, I argued for the pedagogical benefits of fun and play in the classroom. In a return to my roots, I will be showcasing some of the playful and fun in-class activities I have developed for my English Composition and Literature courses, each of which ties into the course learning outcomes while also being fun and engaging for the students.

The Immediacy and Accuracy of News, the Analog Way

Wednesday, 2:20 - 2:50 PM   Katherine Irwin   Taylor 221

This HHMI session focuses on why it's important to share news accurately and quickly. It includes a tricky news lead writing activity, identifying what matters most to the reader. Next, we will discuss wireless telegraphy and the first U.S. radio law, both of which facilitated the rapid spread of information, saving lives in the process. These brief excerpts come from communication courses including media writing and media and culture that I revamped during the 2024 HHMI summer fellowship. The purpose was to add more reflective activities throughout class to help students retain key concepts for long-term memory and recall, meeting learning objectives in the process.

Building Civic-Minded Instructional Leadership through Community-Engaged Research

Wednesday, 2:20 - 2:50 PM   Tamela Thomas   Taylor 222

This interactive workshop invites participants to explore a model for cultivating civic-minded educational leadership grounded in community engagement, critical inquiry, and collaborative learning. Drawing from the framework of a graduate-level instructional leadership course, this session will emphasize how leaders in various educational settings can use needs assessments, action research, and Communities of Practice to address problems of practice in their local contexts. Briefly, we will explore how leaders can respond to problems through data-informed, justice-oriented practices. This workshop is designed as a condensed participatory learning space where attendees will

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engage in reflective dialogue, discussion, and collaborative activities that mirror the methods used in the course. Participants will leave with adaptable strategies for fostering civic virtues—such as justice, solidarity, and hope—in their own educational or professional settings.

Using Coursework as a Means for Encouraging Community Involvement and Improvement

Wednesay, 3 - 4 PM
Poster Session   Tracey Bark   Taylor 230

Many AUM students are passionate about a variety of causes and issues in their community, but are unsure how to address them. As a result, the choice for many is to do nothing, believing they lack the skill set or influence to make an impact. To address this trend, I restructured a course on Grant Writing to provide an opportunity for students to build a practical skill while engaging in their community in a meaningful way. The class centered on a group project in which students wrote a grant proposal from the perspective of a local nonprofit organization. In doing so, students researched current social problems as well as the efforts of organizations that are working to solve them. At the end of the semester, students were encouraged to get involved by sharing their ideas and proposals with the organizations they wrote about. My poster describes the elements of the project, challenges and benefits of this approach, and students' responses to the course being structured in this way.

Introducing Civic Virtues into Teaching History

Wednesay, 3 - 4 PM
Poster Session   Lee Farrow   Taylor 230

Dr. Farrow will discuss how her participation in the CRCV workshop in 2024 led to revisions in her World History course, a new initiative in her department, and her participation in the Virtues and Vocations conference at Notre Dame in March 2025.

Raising Awareness of Implicit Bias to Educate Students about Bias

Wednesay, 3 - 4 PM
Poster Session   Matthew Grilliot   Taylor 230

Most of my students are going into a medical field (nursing, PT, dental, DVM, MD, etc.). Although, I teach the content that is covered in the course objectives, I believe I am

missing an important opportunity to introduce and teach my students about implicit bias, in particular as it pertains to the medical fields. This project was conducted in two different freshman Biology 1010 (Introduction to Cells, Molecules, and Life) classes that I taught in Spring 2025. As part of the project, we spent time building community, discussing bias, taking the Harvard Implicit Association Test, reflecting, and exploring case studies with and without bias. Implementation of the project is still ongoing and results will be presented at the workshop.

Framing Justice: Media's Role in Covering Civil Rights Movements

Wednesay, 3 - 4 PM Poster Session	Kendra Love	Taylor 230

This presentation highlights the work of my Civil Rights Reporting class as we critically examined how the media has historically covered major civil rights movements, both in the U.S. and globally. Through an in-depth analysis of media framing, bias, and impact, we explored coverage of the Civil Rights Movement, LGBTQ+ rights, women's rights, immigration, and international human rights struggles. Our deep dive included studying primary sources, comparing mainstream and independent media narratives, and evaluating how journalistic choices shape public perception and policy. This presentation will showcase key findings from our discussions, case studies we have analyzed, and the ethical considerations journalists face when reporting on civil rights. By reflecting on past and present media coverage, we aim to better understand how journalism can either advance or hinder social justice efforts.

Emergency Responses in Homeland Security and Emergency Management: An Examination of Civic Virtues

Wednesay, 3 - 4 PM Poster Session	Jackie McNett	Taylor 230

This project explores the integration of teaching strategies from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) workshops into online learning environments to enhance student engagement and success. These evidence-based strategies were applied in the Capstone in Homeland Security and Emergency Management course to help students develop emergency response plans for wildfires and school shootings. A key focus of the capstone project was the incorporation of civic virtues such as justice, courage, hope, perseverance, and solidarity into homeland security and emergency management response plans. Students demonstrated how these civic virtues can strengthen community resilience and support recovery efforts in the aftermath of disasters and terrorist attacks.

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Teaching Ecological Legacies: Civil Rights, Civic Virtue, and the Ecology of the AUM Forest

Wednesay, 3 - 4 PM
Poster Session

Claudia Stein
Nicholas Cuba

Taylor 230

The AUM Forest—a 500-acre secondary forest —serves as a living archive of Alabama's ecological and social histories. It reflects three transformative phases of human–environment interaction: a 19th-century plantation economy built on enslaved labor, mid-20th-century sharecropping, and its current role as an educational site focused on ecological recovery and social justice. We developed an upper-level ecology teaching module where students used Google Earth Pro to reconstruct land-use history over the past 60 years, mapped 15 x 15 m vegetation plots, and recorded woody species diversity. Results show that non-native woody species richness increases with past disturbance, highlighting the ecological consequences of historical land use. Reflective discussions on ecosystem services, resilience, and restoration ethics help students explore science's role in addressing environmental and social challenges—fostering both ecological literacy and civic awareness.

Perceptions of AI-Facilitated Creativity in Civic Education: A Study on Digital Storytelling

Wednesay, 3 - 4 PM
Poster Session

Lei Wang

Taylor 230

This study explores how graduate students perceive the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in enhancing creativity within a civic education context through collaborative digital storytelling. Set in a computer-based instructional technology course, students co-created a multimedia digital book focused on Montgomery's civil rights history and civic virtues. AI tools such as Claude were integrated into the storytelling process to support ideation, narrative construction, and multimedia production. Data were collected through surveys, reflective journals, and final author statements. Findings indicate that students viewed AI as a powerful creative scaffold—enabling idea generation, improving narrative structure, and fostering multimodal expression. However, they also expressed nuanced concerns about authorship, ethical use, and overreliance on AI-generated content. The study concludes that when guided responsibly, AI can serve as a catalyst for creativity.

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Ethnic Racial Identity, Resilience, and Collective Self-Esteem: Factors Influencing Academic Engagement Among Black College Students

Wednesay, 3 - 4 PM
Poster Session

Eryn Smith & Clarissa J. Arms-Chavez

Taylor 230

Research indicates that a positive racial climate, increased support from educators, more interracial interactions, and a stronger sense of school belonging enhance academic curiosity and persistence among young Black girls. Although being recognized as a high-achieving Black student can be challenging, it is attainable with adequate support and positivity from schools and administrations (Butler-Barnes et al., 2018). Additionally, ethnic-racial identity (ERI) can be cultivated in youth as a source of resilience and resistance against racism and xenophobia (Rivas-Drake et al., 2021). This study extends previous findings to higher education by examining these effects on college students. The goal is to advance the understanding of representation, resilience, ethnic-racial identity, collective self-esteem, and academic engagement among Black college students. Results will be reported and discussed, highlighting the importance of these factors in academic engagement.

Designing Teaching Practices Centered on "How We All Learn"

Thursday, 9:30 - 10 AM

Tara L. R. Beziat, Matt Grilliot, M. Flor Breitman, & Chelsea Ward

Taylor 221

College faculty are rarely trained in how learning occurs yet are expected to teach effectively in higher education environments. This workshop addresses that gap by offering a practical framework for lesson planning grounded in a simplified memory model drawn from cognitive and educational psychology theories. In this workshop we will present two tools to aid instructors design effective lesson plans for college-level courses that are based on three key principles: attention, encoding, and retrieval. The first tool is a lesson plan that aims to help students understand how learning works and fosters metacognitive awareness. The second tool is a lesson plan template that aligns instruction with these cognitive principles. These tools are intended to be accessible, minimizing the cognitive load for faculty who are often asked to make large-scale pedagogical shifts. Instead, we focus on manageable, evidence-based changes. We provide guidance on organizing class time to reflect how the human brain processes and retains information, emphasizing attention spans, dual coding, chunking, and retrieval practice. Several faculty at our institution, which serves a high percentage of Pell grant recipients and first-generation college students, have adopted these strategies with remarkable success. Notably, courses that implemented the approach have seen dramatic reductions in DFW (Drop/Fail/Withdraw) rates, increased student engagement,

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and enhanced knowledge retention across course sequences. Students report greater satisfaction, improved academic confidence, and an appreciation for the intentional structure of their classes. This workshop offers an actionable model for transforming teaching practices, grounded in how we all learn, and adaptable for use across STEM disciplines.

Beyond Laziness: Insights and Interventions for Academic Procrastination

Thursday, 9:30 - 10 AM   Heather Adams   Taylor 222

Academic procrastination is a complex issue that negatively impacts student outcomes and frustrates instructors. The underlying causes of procrastination are more nuanced than mere "laziness," and include factors such as educational background, self-efficacy, self-regulation abilities, digital distractions, and fear of failure. This workshop will both provide a comprehensive overview of the research on academic procrastination and offer evidence-based strategies applicable across various disciplines. Through interactive discussions and hands-on problem-solving exercises, participants will explore academic interventions designed to help students understand and overcome academic procrastination. By demystifying academic procrastination, instructors not only provide opportunities for students to improve their academic and personal success but also uphold civil rights principles in education ensuring that our students receive the support they need to be successful.

Learner Centered Teaching: Putting Students First

Thursday, 10:10 - 10:40 AM   Michelle Aitken   Taylor 222

Learner Centered Teaching focuses on putting the students — the learners — at the heart of the classroom, while the teachers take a step back. We let the students take the stage and actively engage in the process of learning. This short workshop focuses on tips on how to take a step back as teachers and instructors and put our focus on the learning process for our students, allowing them space to try and make mistakes and grow as learners and individuals.

Symbiosis (OR a Group Project Where Everyone Pulls Their Weight)

Thursday, 10:10 - 10:40 AM   Jennifer Bullock   Taylor 221

From fungi to board games to projects, how we teach matters. This is especially true of older non-traditional students who may think they have it already figured out. So, making a lesson fun and accessible while giving instant rewards is always going to stick. For

example, natural selection over many eons may make some students question it, but what if you can show this in action in only two weeks' time easily? What if it was cheap, easy for you both, and could be done outside of the class, without too much time commitment on a student?

How do we think outside the box to find those? Leave it to someone who loves to ask why things connect in weird ways at 2 am in a classic research rabbit hole to Wonderland just for fun. The neurotypical mind is an already common part of our classrooms as research improves to diagnose them. Finding their "why" helps -everyone- by design. The symbiosis of fun & learning means greater outcomes, improved mental connections, & better retention!

Engaging Civil Rights through Human Rights Advocacy

Thursday, 10:10 - 10:40 AM   Lacey Sloan   Taylor 223

Students in a new Human Rights and Advocacy course engage with civil rights through three assignments: visit to a civil rights museum, email exchanges with students in Somaliland, and a class human rights advocacy project. These assignments are intended to engage students with civil rights and human rights at the personal (museum reflection), interpersonal (email exchanges), and societal (advocacy project) levels. Students begin with a trip to a local civil rights museum or park and write a reflection identifying the motivations, change strategies, and challenges of the people depicted at the site. This is followed by a six-week email exchange with social work students in Somaliland about human rights, women's roles/rights, and social work. Finally, students identify a local human rights violation and create an advocacy project to promote change. This semester, students have taken on the unconstitutional conditions in Alabama prisons.

Enhancing Student Success and Engagement in PSYC 1000: A Departmental Journey

Thursday, 10:50 - 11:20 AM   Clarissa J. Arms-Chavez, Rolando Carol, Jessica Bodily, & Casey Giordano   Taylor 222

The Department of Psychology has embarked on an ongoing journey to improve student success and engagement within the PSYC 1000 course. With over 470 students enrolled annually—primarily non-psychology majors—there was a pressing need to standardize content and improve student success. We addressed these challenges by implementing a standardized syllabus, Open Educational Resources (OER), and a "flipped" classroom format with online lectures featuring faculty experts. In-class time was optimized through active learning and repeated practice activities, significantly enhancing student

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engagement. In our workshop, we will highlight our redesign. We will also discuss the results from the two years of student data and outline our future development plans for PSYC 1000.

Textual Analysis In Groups And The Communal Sharing Of Ideas

Thursday, 10:50 - 11:20 AM　　　　　Eric Sterling　　　　　　　　　　Taylor 221

Using an idea I derived after an HHMI session, my assignment involves critical thinking, textual analysis, and the communal sharing of ideas (and respecting the diverse ideas of classmates). I want students to learn how to analyze a complicated text and think intentionally about how they analyze and think critically about a text. I see it as meta-analysis—students analyzing a text and then analyzing their analysis—why and how they use their critical thinking skills.

Community Projects: Design Solutions for Urban Connection

Thursday, 11:30 AM - 12 PM　　　　　Nikhil Ghodke　　　　　　　　　Taylor 222

This presentation explores classroom client-engaged design projects in which graphic design students created identity and apparel designs with the City of Montgomery. Graphic design students from the Department of Fine Arts engaged with city officials to understand urban spaces, community voices translating their ideas and insights into tangible apparel-based design solutions. Through a process of design inquiry, students addressed diverse community needs and narratives by celebration of local identity, and promoting positive impact through design.

Teaching African American Literature in 2025

Thursday, 11:30 AM - 12 PM　　　　　Shirley Toland-Dix　　　　　　　Taylor 222

I taught an African American author, Frederick Douglass, for the first time as a graduate assistant in the English Department at Auburn University in 1981. It caused a bit of a stir. African American history is by definition disruptive of a hagiographic nationalist narrative. African American literature was created in the 18th century to disrupt narratives that justified slavery by claiming that Africans were not fully human. I taught literature at Spelman College from 1994 to 2004 when I was hired to teach African American literature at the University of South Florida. The position had been vacant for 3 years and students were requesting a professor in that area. I am always aware of hostility, veiled and overt, toward the subject matter I teach. I will discuss approaches I have used in teaching this

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profoundly disruptive literature and how my approaches have changed, or not, in the overtly threatening environment we now face.

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Please scan the QR code to offer feedback. Some questions are related to assessment of the CRCV project, and others ask for your suggestions for future professional development.