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Dear Colleagues,

Hopefully by now you have established a rhythm in your courses and activities for this semester. Thanks to those of you who took the time to attend the Laker Welcome events on August 24. It was evident from the attendance and the engaged questions that our students greatly appreciated connecting with program faculty and staff.

A couple of weeks ago, at our fall kick-off meeting, we had a brief discussion about how we might acknowledge the complicated landscape of higher education while staying true to the tenets of academic freedom. We know that the challenges we face are shared across the breadth of higher education as reflected in a study of faculty perceptions of [Academic Freedom and Civil Discourse](#) by the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Here are a couple of resources that I have found particularly useful in guiding how we might foster civil discourse in our classrooms and other academic spaces. I hope you have a few moments to read this article titled "[Civil Discourse in the Classroom](#)" from the [American Association of University Professors](#) which dovetails well with our conversation. [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) also offers on "[How to Hold a Better Class Discussion](#)," which I found to be a broad enough guide with good nuggets to support engaged productive discussions in the classroom.



"Let us remember, one book, one pen, one child and one teacher can change the world."  
- Malala Yousafzai

NEW FACULTY AND STAFF

# Welcome to CECI!



**ZOHRA ASAD**  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



**EMILY BISHOP**  
VISITING FACULTY  
LITERACY, EDUCATIONAL  
FOUNDATIONS, AND TECHNOLOGY



**ASHLEY COPPERSTONE**  
VISITING FACULTY  
TEACHING AND LEARNING



**KAITHLYN KOOMSON**  
GRADUATE ASSISTANT  
OFFICE OF CERTIFICATION AND  
ACCREDITATION



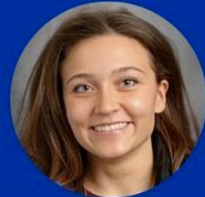
**HEIDI KOTSIFAS**  
GRADUATE EDUCATION PRACTICA  
& CAPSTONE SPECIALIST  
OFFICE OF CERTIFICATION AND  
ACCREDITATION



**KIMBERLY KRAMER**  
VISITING FACULTY  
TEACHING AND LEARNING



**KATE LALONDE**  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
TEACHING AND LEARNING



**RACHEL LAPPANO**  
GRADUATE ASSISTANT  
CECI BCPS EDUCATIONAL  
TRANSFORMATION PARTNERSHIP



**DANIEL MALAKOWSKY**  
VISITING FACULTY  
LITERACY, EDUCATIONAL  
FOUNDATIONS, AND TECHNOLOGY



**TRAVIS MILLBURN**  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY, CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE, AND LEGAL STUDIES



**ALLISON PHILLIPPE**  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
TEACHING AND LEARNING



**BILL SMITH**  
AFFILIATE FACULTY  
TEACHING AND LEARNING



**EMMA WESTOVER**  
CAREER NAVIGATOR  
CECI BCPS EDUCATIONAL  
TRANSFORMATION PARTNERSHIP



## Celebrations





**Doug Ferguson** and **Zoann Hallam, Master's of Public Administration (MPA (SCLD)) students**, were both named as recipients of the 2025 Robert R. Robinson Memorial Scholarship from the [Michigan Townships Association](#). This statewide scholarship for future local leaders aims to encourage today's students to pursue a career in public service. [Full press releases](#).

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**Leanne Kang, associate professor in the Literacy, Educational Foundations, and Technology (LEFT) department**, in partnership with the [Grand Rapids African American Museum & Archives](#) and the [Grand Rapids People's History Project](#), received a Community Collaboration Grant (\$11,000) from the [GVSU Kutsche Office of Local History](#). With the grant, they will be putting together and hosting a series of workshops that will engage the community with historical research and counter storytelling, investigating Grand Rapids Public Schools' history after desegregation efforts in the 1960s and 1970s. For more information, you can check out their website: [GRPSUncovered.org](#).

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**Pearlette Merriweather, Public Administration (SCLD) alum**, was [recently announced](#) as the interim city manager for the city of Muskegon Heights. The city manager is responsible for managing the department heads who oversee day-to-day operations of the city, including the police chief, fire chief, department of public works, inspections and planning. Previously, Merriweather worked for federal organizations such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and USAID in the realms of contracts, grants and licensing.

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**Cathy Meyer-Looze, associate professor and unit head in Educational Leadership and Counseling (ELC)**, was recently selected to join the American Council on Education Women's Network Michigan (MI-ACE) [Senior-Level Leadership Job Shadow program](#). This program provides mid-level women leaders who aspire to a senior-level position, the opportunity to gain impactful mentorship, learn from diverse institutional viewpoints and enhance professional knowledge and skills.

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The **Groundswell Summer Institute 2025 (CEP)** took place August 5-7, and was a three-day immersive professional learning experience for local pK-12 educators from Kent and Ottawa Counties, focused on the fundamentals of place-based stewardship education (PBSE). Day one at GVSU's Seidman Building included grade-level breakout sessions with seasoned Groundswell teachers, exploration of best practices for teaching outdoors, and a community scan culminating in a visit to new local murals created through a partnership with [Pleasant Peninsula](#). On day two at Riverside Park, participants learned about waterway stewardship, kayaked the Grand River to study its ecosystem, explored Anishinaabek cultural learning with the Grand Rapids Public Museum's Anishinaabe Curator, and began drafting outlines for potential PBSE projects and were given additional resources from Subject to Climate. The final day at Roselle Park in Ada involved planting seventeen trees, wading into a creek to study macroinvertebrates with Groundswell's partner [LGROW](#), and discussing volunteer

training for PBSE field excursions. Each day of the workshop blended collaboration, expert insight, and practical activities to inspire future classroom stewardship projects. Teachers left energized, equipped with new resources and free materials, raffle prizes, and classroom funding opportunities—thanks to generous support from the Wege Foundation, Great Lakes Fishery Trust, MiSTEM, Michigan Sea Grant, and Subject to Climate.

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## Important Notices



### CECI Dean's Innovation Grant Application and Requirements

CECI Dean's  
Innovation Grant  
Website

**Submission deadline approaching for the [CECI Dean's Innovation Grant](#)!** The Dean's Innovation Grant is designed to support **faculty** in developing innovative projects with the potential to secure external funding.

- **Eligibility:**
  - Faculty members (tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track)
  - Collaborations between faculty (internal and external to the College) and students are highly encouraged
- **Grant Use:**
  - Funding may be utilized for activities directly related to the development of a competitive proposal for external funding
- **Grant Exclusions:**
  - Funding cannot be used for standard operational expenses such as salaries, equipment purchases that are not directly related to the proposal development, or travel that is not specifically for proposal development

**CECI Dean's Innovation Grant Application Deadlines:** Monday, September 15, 2025 and Sunday, March 15, 2026.



### Windows 11

GVSU Windows 11  
Resources

**Windows 11: Now is the Time to Upgrade!** The upgrade rollout began for CECI back in May, but many have yet to complete. If you've been notified but haven't yet upgraded, please do so promptly to meet the deadline (October 15) and maintain optimal device performance. Visit the [Windows 11@GVSU website](#) for upgrade instructions and support resources. *If you wait until the deadline and have an issue, there is no guarantee IT will have staff to assist, and you may find yourself without a working computer.*

**Notice:** The Windows 11 upgrade requires [pre-upgrade preparation](#) and devoted time for the process. Estimated upgrade durations are below:

- Upgrade using **wired internet** connection **on campus**: 50 minutes
  - Upgrade using **wireless internet** connection **on campus**: 1 hour
  - Upgrade using **wired internet** connection **off-campus**: 2-4 hours (based on internet connection speed)
  - Upgrade using **wireless internet** connection **off-campus**: 2-4 hours (based on internet connection speed)
-



**Walk-up IT service support is available downtown in the L. William Seidman Center.** Whether you need help with Wi-Fi, password resets, setting up software, or troubleshooting a device, the team is ready to assist.

**Key GVSU IT resources for access and support:**

- [Service Portal](#): One-stop destination for IT Support - search the Knowledge Base, submit a ticket and track your results.
- [my.gvsu.edu](http://my.gvsu.edu): Centralized portal for quick, easy access to GVSU apps, tools, and tech resources.
- [Faculty & Staff Resources and FAQs](#): Essential links, helpful resources, and answers to frequently asked questions—all in one place.

**GVSU IT Service Desk | City Campus - Pew 2046 SCB (Seidman Center)**

**Monday - Thursday:** 7:30 AM - 7:00 PM | **Friday:** 7:30 AM - 6:00 PM

**Saturday/Sunday:** CLOSED

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## *Publications/Presentations*

**Didar Hossain, assistant professor in the School of Social Work (SSW)**, recently served as the keynote speaker at a national seminar organized by the Institute for Innovation in Policy and Development (IIPD). The event took place at the National Press Club, Dhaka, Bangladesh, where he presented his paper titled, "One Year of the Interim Government in Bangladesh: A Ministry-Wide Review." He also delivered a lecture at the Global Leap Seminar: From Classroom to World Stage, organized by the Center for Aid to Higher Studies Abroad at the University of Dhaka. That lecture was titled "Macro Practice and Policy Analysis in Social Work."





**Christine Ponzio**, assistant professor in the Literacy, Educational Foundations, and Technology (LEFT) department, recently published "[Marveling at the art of language: Centering adolescents in developing disciplinary literacy for ELA](#)" in the *Michigan Reading Journal*. As a part of the Assessment Learning Network Series *Illuminating Implementation of Disciplinary Practices and Student-Centered Assessment in the Secondary Classroom*, Dr. Ponzio also invited undergraduate secondary education students, Claire Emmert, Keri Herman, Emma Lelito, and Brendan Webster, to present as part of a panel discussion titled, "Early career teachers' perspectives of student-centered approaches to disciplinary literacy instruction and assessment."



## Campus Events

### Academic Affairs



### Strategic Framework

Strategic  
Framework Open  
Forums RSVP

**Join the conversation and let your voice be part of shaping GVSU's future together.** The Provost's Office is hosting several campus forums regarding the Academic Affairs Strategic Framework across the Valley and City campuses and via Zoom. Please complete the [RSVP form](#) to join as many sessions as you are able. *Participants are encouraged to pre-read the [Strategic Framework](#).*

#### Upcoming Open Forums:

- **Tuesday, September 16, 2:30 – 4:00 PM** | 2266 Kirkhof Center (KC) (Valley Campus)
- **Wednesday, September 17, 10:00 – 11:30 AM** | 2266 Kirkhof Center (KC) (Valley Campus)
- **Thursday, September 18, 1:00 – 2:30 PM** | Zoom
- **Monday, September 22, 5:00 – 6:30 PM** | Zoom
- **Tuesday, September 23, 1:00 – 2:30 PM** | 102E DeVos Center (City - Pew Campus)
- **Wednesday, October 1, 9:00 – 10:30 AM** | 1008 Seidman Center (City - Pew Campus)

Strategic Framework Feedback Form





Student

Register to  
Attend the  
September  
Project Update

**Workday Student September project update scheduled for Wednesday, September 24 at 3:00 PM in the Seidman Forum on the City - Pew Campus or via Zoom.** This is an all-faculty and staff Workday Student Project Update session, where you'll have the chance to:

- Learn about Workday Student technical design decision highlights so far and upcoming design priorities. Design will be completed in December 2025!
- Hear updates from various teams including Records, Curriculum & Advising, Admissions & Recruitment, Academic Foundations, Student Financials, and Financial Aid.
- Ask questions in real-time.

Attending the session is an excellent opportunity to stay informed about the project. If you can't make it, a recording will be available on the [Workday @ GVSU website](#).

### Workday Student Timeline



The 16th annual Undergraduate Research Fair (URF) will take place **Tuesday, October 7, from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM in 2250 Kirkhof Center (Grand River Room), Valley Campus.** The 2025 URF will feature GVSU faculty and staff from academic departments and research groups, as well as local organizations providing information about research projects and internships. Tables will be set up throughout the Grand River Room, enabling undergraduate students to circulate among the tables and learn about research opportunities by talking with faculty to explore possibilities and find out how to become involved. The interactive nature of URF provides opportunities for students to 'window-shop' research projects and teams to find the ones that resonate with them. URF enables students to make significant progress in their academic and professional lives.

**Reserve your department's table by Friday, September 26**



**Registration is filling fast for the [GV Technology Summit](#) on October 2, 2025.** This free event is open to all GVSU faculty, staff, and students and runs from Noon to 5:00 PM at the DeVos Center for Interprofessional Health (DCIH), rooms 102–104, on the City - Health Campus.

**Register by Friday, September 19.**



**The 2025 GVSU Teach-In is scheduled for Wednesday, November 12 on the City Campus and Thursday, November 13 on the Valley Campus.** Teach-In is a GVSU-centered social justice event, featuring sessions and posters that engage participants on a variety of important issues.

**Ways to support the 2025 Teach-In:**

- Review details of past/upcoming GVSU Teach-Ins at [gvsu.edu/teach-in](https://gvsu.edu/teach-in).



Submit Poster/Session  
Proposals by October 20

- Include Teach-In in your Fall schedule and encourage colleagues and students to attend.
- Consider presenting a session or poster. Each session or poster is intended as a collaboration and must therefore have at least two presenters, preferably one being a student. Additional guidelines for submitting proposals for sessions or posters may be found under the "Where to Start" tab on the Teach-In website. Proposals will be accepted until **Monday, October 20**.



**CECI QuickTalks on Scholarship is scheduled for Thursday, November 20!** Do you have scholarly or creative work you'd like to share with your CECI colleagues? QuickTalks gives you 5 minutes and 20 auto-advancing slides (15 seconds each) to showcase your ideas in a fun, fast-paced format. We only have room for **10 presenters**, so if you'd like to present, reserve your spot soon!

Not ready to present? You're warmly invited to come listen, learn, and celebrate the exciting work happening across CECI.

Please contact [BK Choi and Mary Bair](#) if you would like to participate.

## University Governance

CECI University Committees

Representation Slidedeck

Representation List



The **Faculty Facilities Planning Advisory Committee (FFPAC)** plays a role in identifying issues with teaching spaces and recommending improvements to ensure accessibility and functionality. A few helpful reminders as you start the academic year:

- If you experience any issues in your classroom or workspace and need *immediate assistance*, call **616-331-2101**.
- If the issue is not urgent, you can submit a report using the [FixIt website](#).
- If you would like to check out your assigned classroom or search for rooms based on specific attributes, visit the [Classrooms website](#).

Your CECI FFPAC Representative is Christine Kenney: [kennechr@gvsu.edu](mailto:kennechr@gvsu.edu).

## College Governance

CECI Governance Committees

Governance Website

Representation List

# Important Dates

## IMPORTANT DATES!



September 15 - [CECI Dean's Innovation Grant](#) applications due  
September 16 - [Strategic Framework Open Forum](#) | 2:30 PM | 2266 Kirkhof Center (Valley)  
September 17 - [Strategic Framework Open Forum](#) | 10:00 AM | 2266 Kirkhof Center (Valley)  
September 18 - [Strategic Framework Open Forum](#) | 1:00 PM | Zoom  
September 22 - [Strategic Framework Open Forum](#) | 5:00 PM | Zoom  
September 23 - [Strategic Framework Open Forum](#) | 1:00 PM | 102E DEV (City - Pew)  
October 1 - [Strategic Framework Open Forum](#) | 9:00 AM | 1008 Seidman Center (City - Pew)  
October 1 - [Faculty Workload Plans \(FWPs\)](#) due in [Digital Measures](#)  
October 2 - [GV Technology Summit](#) | 12:00 PM | DCIH (City - Health Campus)  
October 7 - [Undergraduate Research Fair](#) | 5:00 PM | 2250 Kirkhof Center (Valley Campus)  
November 12 - [GVSU Teach-In](#) | Seidman Center | City - Pew Campus  
November 13 - [GVSU Teach-In](#) | Kirkhof Center | Valley Campus  
November 20 - [CECI QuickTalks on Scholarship](#) | 2:00 PM | 138E DEV (City - Pew Campus)  
November 20 - [CECI Fall Social](#) | 3:00 PM | 105E DEV Hager-Lubbers Exhibition Hall (City - Pew Campus)

# CECI Resources

[Acronyms](#)

[CECI Connections Guide](#)

[CECI Newsletter Repository](#)

[Experts Guide](#)

[Organizational Chart](#)

[Student Flowchart](#)

## CECI HAPPENINGS

[CECI Happenings](#) is an informational form that can be submitted by any faculty, staff, or student to promote an event, publication, etc. that they would like shared to CECI social media platforms and/or the newsletter.

# Newsletter Contributions

**Thanks to all those who contributed to the September 2025 edition of *CECI Connections*:**

Mary Albrecht, Mary Bair, Neal Buckwalter, Mark Hoffman, Leanne Kang, Christine Kenney, Cathy Meyer-Looze, Cray Mulder, Christina Ponzio, Lynnea Santoyo, Sherril Soman, Mara Spears, Victoria Stubbs.

**Submit a story for the October edition [here!](#)**

You may also send items to share in future editions of CECI Connections to Victoria A. Stubbs at [stubbsvi@gvsu.edu](mailto:stubbsvi@gvsu.edu).

Questions? [cecidean@gvsu.edu](mailto:cecidean@gvsu.edu) | [\(616\) 331-6821](tel:(616)331-6821) | [gvsu.edu/ceci](http://gvsu.edu/ceci)

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