



## *Welcome!*

My name is Laina Lockett. I serve as the STEM Education Specialist at the Stearns Center. I am also the liaison for faculty in CEC and COS. We welcome the inclusion of any faculty teaching STEM courses in other colleges, including CCB and CPH to participate in STEM Education Programming. I have created this once-a-semester communication to highlight STEM faculty wins in their classroom, share a new teaching tip and to inform you of upcoming opportunities! I'd love to hear from you!

**Laina Lockett, PhD**  
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## *Teaching Essentials Survey*

The Stearns Center is developing a Level I STEM-Focused Teaching Essentials Workshop designed to support STEM faculty. These one-hour workshops will introduce foundational teaching strategies for instructors who are new to college teaching, as well as offer fresh approaches for experienced faculty looking to implement new instructional techniques.

Please complete this brief 2-minute survey to share your input on which topics would be most valuable to you by April 1st.

**Teaching Essentials Survey**



## *Innovations in Teaching & Learning*

Calling all STEM faculty doing innovative teaching with their students! STEM departments are often underrepresented at this event, so consider applying! Submissions can come from tenure, term, or adjunct faculty as well as post docs or grad students who teach. Submit a proposal for the 2025 conference. Proposals are due March 17, 2025. Click the link below for details about how to apply. Email questions about applications to [llockett@gmu.edu](mailto:llockett@gmu.edu).

**Innovations in Teaching & Learning**





## Summer Grants

Once again, Stearns Center will be offering STEM Education grants. Faculty can apply for up to \$5000 to go towards a course update or improvements to multi-section course capacity building. Please see the STEM Education Grant website for more details. Summer grant applications will be due April 7, 2025.

### **STEM Education Grants**



## Faculty Highlight: Kelly Knight

Kelly Knight is a professor in the Forensic Science Program and a STEM Accelerator. Passionate about inclusive teaching, she has been teaching courses in forensic DNA and forensic chemistry at George Mason University since 2013.

This semester, Kelly is serving as the STEM Faculty Fellow in Learning Design in the Stearns Center. In this role, she will develop tailored online resources and professional development for faculty.

We want to highlight you and your innovative classroom practices! If you have a story you'd like to feature in our upcoming newsletters, please submit your information to our highlight form. Let's celebrate and learn from each other!

### **Faculty Highlight**



## Tenure Track Faculty Mentoring

Are you interested in joining other tenure track STEM faculty in community? Sign up to participate in future speed mentoring sessions offered this semester. The program is based on the NCFDD Mentor Map Framework and is hosted by CEC and Faculty Affairs & Development, but is open to all tenure track STEM faculty.

### **Submit events here.**

## AI Guidelines

GMU published a set of AI guidelines which may impact your teaching.

### **Check them out here.**

## Teaching Tip: Enhancing Student Performance through Increased Course Structure

Have you ever assigned reading before class, only to find that most students haven't done it?

Research by Eddy and Hogan (2014) suggests that by increasing the structure of your course, more students are likely to engage with the content before class which can improve student performance and reduce achievement gaps.

In a "moderate-structure" course, pre-class assignments, like readings, require some level of active engagement with the content, such as low-stakes quizzes or reflections. Interactive in-class activities are designed to reinforce any pre-class materials and assessments are given regularly.

By increasing the course structure, Eddy and Hogan (2014) found that students were more prepared, had more consistent study habits, and had a stronger sense of community among students leading to a learning environment that supported all students' success.

### **Read the article here**

## Coming Soon

The STEM Education offerings are being updated to best serve STEM faculty. Based on survey feedback, you can expect to see the new workshop offerings in both a synchronous and asynchronous format.

Also, we will be launching a STEM Education webpage through the Stearns Center website to house STEM specific resources. These will include past issues of the newsletter, linked readings, information about current program offerings as well as faculty highlights.

If you have suggestions on additional STEM specific resources that you would like to see from Stearns Center, please email Laina.



## Future Submissions

Many departments and colleges are already hosting education focused workshops and programs. If you would like to include additional faculty at your event, submit your event information here. For events occurring during the summer (May-August) please submit information by April 29th for inclusion in the next newsletter.

### **Submit events here.**